

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM | THURSDAY | 12 NOVEMBER 2020



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NCB grills Arjun Rampal's girlfriend

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Embarrassing Trump didn't concede: Biden

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Hand over T20 captaincy to Rohit: Gambhir

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WEATHER

Max: 27.0°C
Min: 22.0°C
RH: 79%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Humid and Overcast.
Max/Min temp.
27/22 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES
(+48,975)
86,83,316

DEATHS
(+574)
1,28,155

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,196)
TS: 2,53,651
(+1,732)
AP: 8,47,977

(+5)
1,390
(+14)
6,828

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

5,21,81,491
DEATHS
12,85,465
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
216

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana

Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Bahula Dwadasi till 9.26 pm

Star: Hasta till 1.52 am (Friday)

Varjyam: 11.54 am to 1.20 pm

Durmuhurtam: 10.08 am to 10.53 am; 2.37 pm to 3.22 pm

Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm

HILIRI CALENDAR

Rabbi-ul Awwal 25, 1442 AH

PRAYERS (ROYAL MOSQUE)

Fajar: 5.00 am

Zohar: 1.30 pm

Asar: 5.00 pm

Maghrib: 6.35 pm

Isha: 8.30 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.06 AM

SUNSET TODAY 5.28 PM

MOONRISE TODAY 2.53 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 4.06 AM

COUNTER POINT

He lost, but he got 420 more votes this time!

SHORT TAKE

India, China close to disengagement

New Delhi: India and China are moving towards an agreement on a disengagement plan which if implemented successfully could see restoration of the status quo of April 2020 at some of the flashpoints, including the most contentious one of Pangong Tso, in eastern Ladakh. It appears that China has agreed to move back from the Finger 4 area and take its troops beyond Finger 8. The PLA will dismantle all the structures between Finger 4 and Finger 8.

Report on Page 4

TD neglected minorities, but faking love now: CM

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday alleged that the previous Telugu Desam government had neglected the welfare of minority communities, but it is now trying to show love towards minorities in the Nandyal family suicide issue.

Participating in the National Education Day, which is also Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's birthday, and the minority welfare day programme at the CM Camp office on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that Chandrababu Naidu had allotted meagre

sum of ₹2,661 crore to minority welfare during his five-year rule but the YSRC government has spent ₹3,428 crore in the past 17 months for the upliftment of minorities.

He said the Direct Benefit Transfer and saturation mode has brought in transparency. "We have spent ₹3,428 crores till October 2020 on minority welfare. Of this, ₹2,585 crore was transferred using DBT and ₹843 crore through various welfare schemes. The previous TD government lacked sincerity and had spent ₹2,661 crore during its five-year term but we spent ₹3,428 crore in just 17 months. The

TD had no minority member in its Cabinet until the flag end of its term. We have given tickets to four Muslims who won the elections and are MLAs and even we have inducted a minority woman as MLC."

Terming the suicide of a family in Nandyal as unfortunate, the Chief Minister said that strict action was initiated against the perpetrators. "But some people have applied for bail and brought the remanded people out. We have moved to the court to cancel the bail," he said.

■ Page 2: Pastors will get honorarium from 2021: CM

AP TO GET 1.5 CR VACCINE DOSES FROM CENTRE

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

Andhra Pradesh is getting ready for Covid-19 vaccination programme with an expected sanction of nearly 1.5 crore doses from the Centre shortly.

State health officials are making all arrangements for taking up the vaccination programme for the targeted sections of the people in the state.

As the vaccine doses are supposed to be secured at 2°C to 8°C, the officials are making arrangements to enhance the existing capacity of the cold chain facility.

At present, the state is having 1.6 lakh litres capacity of cold chain facility for securing vaccines for routine immunisation programme.

■ Page 3: Centre to fund additional cold chain infra

ONLINE NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS UNDER I&B MIN

New Delhi, Nov. 11: The government has put OTT platforms like Netflix as well as news and current affairs content on online platforms under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and given it powers to regulate policies and rules for the digital space. There was no law or autonomous body governing digital content in India so far. Now, OTT and other platforms, including digital news websites, are expected to fall within a governmental framework of rules and regulations. A notification to this effect was issued by the Cabinet Secretariat on Tuesday night.

■ Report on Page 4

Sputnik doses in Hyd; 92% good

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 11

Sputnik V vaccine doses have arrived in the factory of Dr Reddy's Laboratories in Hyderabad and a video of the cold storage has gone viral on social media. The unloading of the cold chain from Russia in the factory had a lot of people excited as they have taken videos and circulated it around.

The arrival of vaccine doses means that the trials for the vaccine would soon begin. The phase 2 and 3 trials are to be conducted in India to understand the safety and efficacy of the virus.

Dr Reddy's Laboratories refused to comment on the viral video.

Data on its safety after trials in India will determine whether the vaccine can be given to the Indian population. The trial

results are important for India as that will decide its use in the Indian population.

So far, the journal *Lancet* has stated that the Sputnik V vaccine is effective despite the low number of people on whom it was tried in Russia. The vaccine is being given in phases to Russians and they are being monitored. According to interim trial results announced by Russia's health ministry on Wednesday, Sputnik V vaccine has shown 92 per cent efficacy in preventing Covid-19 disease.

The interim research data of Sputnik V has not been published or peer-reviewed yet.

"The calculation is based on the 20 confirmed Covid-19 cases split between vaccinated individuals and those who received the placebo," said Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF).

Telugu martyr cremated



The last rites of the martyr Army jawan Ch. Praveen Kumar of Reddyvaripalle in Irala mandal of Chittoor district in AP were performed on Wednesday.

■ Report on Page 2

Bihar win endorses our Covid care, says Modi

Nitish to be CM; Sabka saath, sabka vikas winning 'secret'

YOJNA GUSAI | DC NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

Hailing Bihar Assembly poll results as a "saaf-suthra (neat and tidy)" mandate, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the secret behind the NDA's victory is "Sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas (Marching together for development of all, with the trust of all)."

Addressing BJP workers at the party headquarters in Delhi, Mr Modi also gave rest to speculation about whether or not incumbent Chief Minister and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar will continue to hold the top post in the state due to his party's dismal performance. Mr Modi insisted that the ruling NDA will fulfil its promises made under Mr Kumar's leadership.

Facing major anti-incumbency against the Nitish Kumar-led government and the Chief Minister himself, the BJP heavily depended on its "star campaigner" Mr Modi's charisma and Central government schemes to woo voters. Mr Kumar also thanked the Prime Minister for his support.

While the NDA retained power with the BJP outnumbering ally JD(U), the latter registered its worst performance in two decades.

Praising Bihar's voters as "paarkhi (good at judging)" and "jaagrook (aware)," Mr Modi, who was showered with flower petals and chants of "Bharat Mata ki Jai" upon his arrival, said Bihar is "most special" and its voters have once again proved why the state is called the land of democracy. Mr Modi said the BJP's



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses party workers after the NDA garnered majority in Bihar Assembly polls in New Delhi on Wednesday. Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP National President J.P. Nadda are also seen.

— PTI

BJP gaining in two states: MLA

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, NOV. 11

Newly elected Dubbaka MLA Raghunandan Rao said his victory is evidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party is strengthening in both the Telugu states as well as on other states of southern India.

Raghunandan, who had won the Dubbaka by-election

two days ago defeating the ruling TRS candidate, arrived at Tirumala for offering prayers to Lord Venkateswara.

Speaking to media persons, the newly elected MLA maintained that BJP under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will strive hard for development of both the Telugu states.

governance model is the reason behind its success and that the development plank won the polls.

"The secret of winning the election is sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas. This victory is of the

youth, women, poor, farmers, aspiration and pride... Bihar has once again proved why it is called the land of democracy," said the PM. He said 21st century voters are making it clear that they will vote

GREEN CRACKERS ONLY FOR TWO HOURS IN STATE

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

The AP government has officially permitted bursting of only green crackers for two hours from 8 pm to 10 pm on the Diwali day in Andhra Pradesh.

In this regard, the state government has issued GO RT No. 692 dated 10-11-2020, permitting the sale of only green crackers and their bursting restricted to only two hours on festival day.

The GO listed guidelines for those selling and bursting green crackers. All shops will have to be separated by 10 feet from the next shop.

■ Page 2: Don't use sanitiser on Diwali: GO

Centre's sops for more production

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

Aiming to enhance domestic manufacturing and job creation, mindful of the economy being in a tail-spin, the Union Cabinet Wednesday approved a Productivity Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for 10 key sectors, with an outlay of ₹1,45,980 crore, which is part of the government's "Atma Nirbhar Bharat" pitch.

Under the five-year scheme that will continue till 2025, extra domestic production will be encouraged in sectors like advanced chemistry cell (ACC) batteries, white goods, speciality steel, pharmaceuticals, auto components, food products, tele-

com, textiles and electronic products and solar photo voltaic modules.

ACC batteries are widely used in e-vehicles and is being promoted as a pet project of the NDA. The Centre feels the scheme will boost exports and make domestic manufacturers globally competitive. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, elaborating on the scheme after the Cabinet meeting, said there would not be any cap on the number of firms participating.

However, any new sector that has to be included in this will need fresh Cabinet approval. The 10 sectors were included as India has a significant marketshare in production for global markets.

Hyd devotee gets porn link from TTD channel

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, NOV. 11

A few contractual employees working with the TTD's Sri Venkateswara Bhakthi Channel (SVBC) have landed in a controversy after a Hyderabad-based devotee complained that he had received a link related to a pornographic site instead of religious material from the official email ID of a particular programme of the spiritu-

al channel. Following the complaint, the top brass of the TTD has ordered a probe into the issue and identified the employee, who had sent the porn site link to the devotee. He was immediately dismissed and a legal action has been initiated against him.

Confirming this development to *Deccan Chronicle*, TTD additional EO and SVBC managing director A.V. Dharma Reddy said the incident came to their notice two days ago, after

the Hyderabad-based devotee Venkata Krishna, who received a link related to obscene videos from the channel's official email ID, lodged a complaint with the TTD.

"Following the complaint, TTD chairman Y.V. Subba Reddy and EO Jawahar Reddy ordered a high-level probe into the incident," the additional EO said.

■ Page 2: More employees found watching porn

GENDER | BENDER

Conditioned not to express feelings taking mental, physical toll

Men endure harassment at workplace

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 9

Talking about harassment at the workplace, the focus shifts to women. Men dealing with the same are often ignored.

However, psychologists opine that men are at higher risk of hypertension and high blood pressure than women as they endure a lot silently due to societal upbringing.

Men in khakis, too, are not immune. Two officials

killed themselves recently due to harassment. Men are conditioned from a young age to "man up" and "not to cry like a girl" while expressing their feelings. This impacts their mental and physical health later, says Yamuna Pathak, a research scholar and social activist from Hyderabad.

"Men have the same feelings like women and are often exploited a lot. Pain — be it emotional, physical or mental — does not differ based on gender. Statistics

● PSYCHOLOGISTS OPINE that men are at higher risk of hypertension and high blood pressure than women as they endure a lot silently due to societal upbringing.

prove that men are more subjected to the pressure and the hardwired childhood lessons about 'not to cry or feel sad' has taken a toll on their adult lives.

While women definitely face harassment at work, there are also women who exploit men. The empathy is totally lost for a man sharing his plight," she said.

The Sexual Harassment Act for workplace lays down principles, rules, and remedies for women who are sexually harassed. This Act was specifically made for women, but there is no remedy for men sexually harassed at the workplace. Laws were framed to protect women, but the society does

not realise that even men get harassed.

On December 2, 2019, K. Narasimha, an assistant sub-inspector from Balapur police, succumbed to injuries, nearly 10 days after he set himself ablaze in front of Balapur police station. Narasimha had alleged that he took the extreme step as he was harassed by the Balapur police inspector P. Saidulu. Later, he climbed up the water tank and doused himself with petrol and set himself on fire.

SHORT TAKES

3 SMUGGLERS NABBED; 20 RS LOGS SEIZED

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 11

Sleuths of AP Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) arrested three smugglers and seized 20 red sander logs during a combing operation at the forest area near Bakarapeta on Wednesday.

According to the RSASTF SP G. Anjaneyulu, a taskforce team led by RSI Vasu and FBO Jani Basha has launched a combing operation in Bakarapeta forest area on Tuesday. In the late hours, the team had encountered a group of 20 smugglers carrying red sander logs in the forest area.

When the team tried to nab the smugglers, they left the logs behind and fled away from the spot. The team, however, arrested three smugglers Madayyan, 47, from Salem, Murugan, 35, and Perumal, 49, from Kallakurichi district in Tamil Nadu.

During interrogation, the accused confessed that one Nagaraju and Andinatar have deputed them into the forest to cut down and smuggle red sander logs. The taskforce had launched a manhunt to nab the smugglers who fled deep into the forest.

HC GRANTS BAIL TO SEVEN FARMERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

AP High Court granted bail to seven farmers who were arrested by the police earlier and were in judicial remand, here on Wednesday.

High Court bench headed by justice K. Lalitha while hearing the case granted bail to the seven farmers hailing from Krishnayapalem of Mangalagiri mandal in Guntur district.

MOTHER KILLS ALCOHOLIC SON IN VIZIANAGARAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIZIANAGARAM, NOV. 11

Fed up with alcohol related violent behaviour, a 65-year-old woman killed her son in Kondabuchammappeta village in Makkuva mandal in Vizianagaram district on Wednesday. The woman was identified as K. Eswaramma.

Reports said her 35-year-old son Gowri Shankar became addicted to alcohol and has been harassing her for the past few years. His violent behaviour increased after his wife deserted him and went back to her parents' house.

YSRC READY TO DISTRIBUTE HOUSES: BOTSA

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

Minister for municipal administration Botsa Satyanarayana has accused a TD leader and advocate of seeking bail for policemen accused in the suicide committed by the family of Abdul Salaam in Nandyal.

Mr Satyanarayana stated that the government had swiftly responded to the suicide by arresting the two policemen accused of compelling the family to commit suicide. But the TD has deployed its leader and advocate Vedurga Ramachandra Rao to seek a bail for the accused. He criticised TD chief Chandrababu Naidu for his double standards in dealing with the Nandyal incident.

Addressing another press conference here on Wednesday, Mr Satyanarayana and civil supplies minister Kodali Nani stated that in the Nandyal case Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy ordered policemen to react swiftly after the incident. The cops were arrested and remanded to custody.

The two ministers also flayed TD leaders for moving the court to stall distribution of house sites on one hand and then setting deadlines for distribution of houses on the other. They demanded that Chandrababu Naidu get vacated the stay granted by the High Court on distribution of 30 lakh house sites. Once that is done, the state government will immediately start distributing the house pattas, they stated.

They ministers said TD leaders claim to have constructed 13 lakh houses during their regime.



Muslim Youth forum convener Altaf Raza, minister Amzath Basha present a memento to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy during Maulana Abul Kalam Azad birth anniversary celebrations on Wednesday.

IPL betting kills one
Another in critical condition after suicide attemptDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

One youth died and another is battling for life in a hospital in Guntur district after the two cousins tried to commit suicide following losses in IPL betting. The incident took place on Monday in which the two recorded a selfie-video while consuming pesticide and sent the clip to relatives.

According to reports, Vura Suresh, 22, belongs to 75 Tyallur village of Pedakurapadu mandal and Komaraiah, 21, of

Budagajangala colony of Bellamkonda were cousins and they did petty works.

The two went to a place near the railway track at Bellamkonda Monday evening, made a selfie about incurring losses of up to ₹1 lakh in cricket betting and pressure from bookies to pay the ₹80,000 balance. They lamented that they were unable to pay the amount and the pressure from bookies was forcing them to suicide by mixing pesticides in a cool drink. They showed the glasses and consumed

them while recording the selfie. The video clip was received by the relatives, who tracked them and shifted the two to the area hospital at Sattenapalli. However, as the condition turned critical, the two were shifted to a private hospital in Guntur. Suresh died while undergoing treatment on Tuesday and as the condition of Komaraiah deteriorated, the relatives shifted him to GGH.

Komaraiah's brother Satish alleged that IPL betting organisers had warned of dire consequences forcing Suresh and Komaraiah to take the extreme step. He demanded swift action against the betting organisers.

Suresh's mother Venkatamma alleged that her son committed suicide due to unbearable pressure from bookies. She demanded stern action against the betting organisers.

GGH superintendent Dr Prabhavathi said that Komaraiah's health condition is serious and the doctors are providing treatment for the recovery. The police are conducting further investigation.

Don't use sanitiser on Diwali: G.O.

FROM PAGE 1

Persons purchasing crackers must maintain six-feet social distance while standing in a queue before the shops.

Purchasers have been advised not to use hand sanitisers while bursting crackers and lighting diyas or candles, as they are highly inflammable.

People have been asked to use soap for washing their hands before bursting crackers.

AP currently has 8.2 lakh Coronavirus-infected patients who are recovering from the disease. There are also 20,915 patients who are still active with the virus with weakened lungs. State health authorities have

thus asked them to stay away from fireworks and smoke.

The GO mentioned that as per the AP Pollution Control Board, many cities and towns of the state are in the good-to-moderate range of when it comes to pollution levels. The state government has thus allowed bursting of only green crackers, in

accordance with orders issued by the National Green Tribunal.

The government order said the same rule will be applicable for other festivals like Guru Nanak Gurupurab from 8 pm, to 10 pm., Chatt Puja from 6 am to 8 am and during Christmas and New Year eve from 1.55 pm. to 12.30 am the next day.

Legal metrology works with just 50% inspectors

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

Staff crunch affects the functioning of the legal metrology department in Andhra Pradesh.

The department keeps a tab on all trades to ensure that the weights and measures being used are stamped every year after a thorough inspection and also monitors any violation of norms to dupe the consumers. The officials inspect industries, rice mills, weighing bridges, shopping malls, supermarkets, fair price shops, Rythu Bazaars, fuel dispensers, bullion trade and so on.

At present, the department is having 26 posts of inspectors lying vacant for some time, out of a sanctioned strength of 52 inspectors recruited directly through Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission. The last recruitment of inspectors was done in 2006. Out of a sanctioned strength of 26 assistant controllers, seven posts are lying vacant for some time while 19 posts are filled up. At senior positions like deputy controllers and joint controllers, out of sanctioned strengths of 11 and four respectively, all posts are filled up.

Though the posts of assistant controllers get filled up through the department promotion committee with the serving and senior officials, the posts of inspectors are to be filled up through direct recruitment with those who studied either B.Tech or M.Sc Physics.

The candidates who get selected through screening test by APPSC, are supposed to undergo four months compulsory training at Indian

Institute of Legal Metrology, Ranchi in Jharkhand.

Legal metrology sources say that with 50 per cent of posts of field level staff of inspectors have been lying vacant for a long time, having a major impact on the functioning of the department as the existing officials are bearing the additional workload by taking responsibility as in-charge officer. For instance, East Godavari is having the sanctioned strength of six inspectors and at present, there are only four inspectors. Out of the two sanctioned posts of assistant controllers, there is only one assistant controller at present in the district.

As the legal metrology authorities have taken up a challenging task of inspection of nearly 3,500 fuel dispensing machines having about 20,000 nozzles to keep a tab on short delivery of fuel by 20-30 ml per litre, the inspectors and assistant controllers play a crucial role to inspect them and replace the tampered machines and stamp them. As the authorities have filed a deadline to complete inspection and replacement of tampered ones by the end of December, some inspectors in Rayalaseema region are even inspecting machines up to early hours of 1 am the next day.

As the legal metrology authorities keep a tab on short delivery of essentials like rice at fair price shops, under weighing of gold/silver ornaments in gold shops and even keep a tab on MRP violations of various products and avoid duping of consumers.

22-year-old man allegedly killed by tiger in Telangana

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 11

The discovery of a partially eaten body of Sidam Vignesh, a 22-year-old young man, in the forest near Digda village of Dahagaon mandal in Kumrum Bheem-Asifabad district of Telangana on Wednesday, raised fears of predatory tiger in the forest area.

According to a Telangana Forest Department official, if confirmed after a post-mortem exam of the man's body that he was killed by a tiger, this would be the first such instance in about 15 years that a human being killed by a tiger in Telangana, and in united Andhra Pradesh before Telangana was formed.

Principal chief conservator of forests R. Shobha said it was suspected that a tiger may have killed the man based on preliminary enquiries with the villagers, who reported hearing some growls and roars when they went to retrieve the body. By the time forest department

officials and staff reached the spot, it was late evening and with darkness falling, a thorough search of the area is expected to begin as soon it is daylight on Thursday. Fifteen animal trackers from the department have been rushed to the village even as some trap cages have been sent to be placed with baits to lure the tiger, or any other wild animal that may have killed the young man. "Our officials and staff will search the area for pug marks, tracks and coupled with information from the post-mortem exam, we will have more certain information on how the young man died," Shobha said.

According to officials, the deceased, Vignesh, had gone into the forest with two other young men from the village for fishing in the village tank, part of which falls into the reserve forest area next to Digda village.

After catching some fish, as per information collected by forest department officials who rushed to the scene after they received

PASTORS WILL GET HONORARIUM IN 2021, SAYS JAGAN

FROM PAGE 1

"A close associate of TD leader Chandrababu Naidu was the lawyer, who filed a bail petition. Now, we are going to a Sessions Court to get the bail cancelled," he said, adding that the opposition's influence seems to be surpassing the government's.

"We have increased allowance for pilgrims going to the Haj and the Holy Land. Students studying in the 900 madrasas will be getting Goru Mudda and other schemes will be applicable for madrasas imparting modern education. Wakf lands are being digitised and action is being taken against encroachments."

The Chief Minister also assured that the property of Christian Missionaries will also be protected. The honorarium of imams and mouzims will be hiked and honorarium will be paid to pastors along with YSR Pelli Kanuka from next year, he said.

ADVOCATE WHO SECURED BAIL TO COPS QUILTS POST

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL NOV. 11

Nandyal advocate V. Ramachandra Rao who secured bail to Circle Inspector of Nandyal town-1 Somasekhar Reddy accused in the suicide of Abdul Salam family has said that he was withdrawing his appearance memo for the accused. He has also resigned to the position of general secretary of the Telugu Desam.

Speaking to the media along with former minister and MLC N.M.D. Farooq at Nandyal, Mr Ramachandra Rao said, "As the case has become sensational and my name has been dragged into the public sphere as a TD functionary, I do not want this unwanted attention and tendering my resignation to the party position offered by TD."

Last rites of soldier performed with military honours

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 11

The last rites of army jawan Ch. Praveen Kumar, who was killed in an anti-terror operation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Machil sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, were performed with full military honours at his native village Reddyvaripalle in Irala mandal of Chittoor district on Wednesday.

Praveen Kumar, 37, was working as a havildar and was part of the team, which had gone to neutralise militants last Sunday. He and three other army personnel were martyred in the fierce encounter that also killed three terrorists.

The last rites were performed in the presence of army officers, district and state officials and political leaders. Amid chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram", people from across the district participated in the funeral procession and bid a tearful farewell to Praveen Kumar.

Deputy Chief Minister



K. Narayana Swamy, minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and district collector Narayan Bharat Gupta and other officials were among those who paid their last respects.

Earlier, senior army officials paid floral tributes to the martyred soldier, after his mortal remains were brought to the village on Tuesday night.

The martyr was given a gun salute while the Army band performed during the last rites. The pyre was lit by Praveen's five-year-old son in the presence of wife Rajitha, father Ch. Prathap Reddy, mother Sugunamma, friends and relatives.

Village bids tearful farewell to Mahesh

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, NOV.11

An emotional and tearful farewell was given to army jawan Ryada Mahesh at his native Kompanpally village in Velpur mandal on Wednesday.

People in large numbers took part in the funeral of the soldier, who was killed in a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir and whose mortal remains were brought late Tuesday night.

The last rites of Mahesh were performed with full state and military honours. Youth clubs in Armour division set up

flexi boards hailing the brave-heart. His widow Suhasini, wept inconsolably seeing her husband's body.

Minister for Roads and Buildings V. Prashanth Reddy, Nizamabad MP D. Arvind, district collector C. Narayana Reddy, commissioner of police Kartikeya paid tribute to the jawan.

Prashanth Reddy said that ₹50 lakh financial aid will be given to the family members of Mahesh besides a government job to one of them. Chief Minister K. Chandrabab Naidu assured all possible help to the family, he said.

More staff found watching porn

FROM PAGE 1

During the probe, it was found that one of the employees of SVBC, identified as Ananda Krishna, had sent the link to obscene videos to the devotee.

He was immediately removed from the services permanently and a legal action was initiated against him.

Highly-placed sources in SVBC told this newspaper that Anand Krishna was working in the place of his deceased father on compassionate grounds. He had access to the official email ID of a particular programme and he was in a highly inebriated condition when he emailed a porn site link to a devotee's email.

Meanwhile, the incident also forced the TTD to launch a probe into the activities of other SVBC employees during their office hours. Experts from the TTD's cyber cell wing are found to have been shocked to learn that some more SVBC employees are watching TV serials, movies and a few obscene videos in the office computers during office hours.

"Experts from the cyber cell wing and vigilance and security department were roped in to conduct a complete audit of all computers being used by the SVBC staffers. In the audit, we found that about five staffers have watched such obscene videos and a few others were watching serials and movies in the office computers during the office hours. A stringent action would be taken against those errant employees and they will be removed from services permanently," Mr Dharma Reddy noted.

This incident, meanwhile, has triggered protests by opposition parties. While former board member and BJP leader Bhanu Prakash Reddy demanded TTD to immediately remove SVBC employees, who were involved in the murky episode, the Congress leader Naveen Kumar Reddy questioned the vigilance and supervision in the SVBC affairs.

BJP state secretary Nagotu Ramesh Naidu has demanded the state government and the TTD to sack the employees of the SVBC.

TUNGABHADRA | PUSHKARAM So far no work has started to lay roads: Villagers

Material shortage for Pushkaralu work

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, NOV. 11

Works for the Tungabhadra Pushkarams are going on at a brisk pace in Kurnool. Panchayat raj, roads and buildings and municipal departments are racing against time. The departments concerned are carrying on works at a cost of ₹156 crore. ₹2 crore has been sanctioned for drinking water needs. Officials say they would finish the

works in the next four to five days.

However, road works face problems as contractors are finding it difficult to find gravel. In Nandikotkur mandal, a CC road was sanctioned at Nagatur village at a cost of ₹60 lakh. So far no work has started, people of the village said. Roads at Jupad Bangla and Tarigoppula road is full of potholes. No works have been taken up there causing inconvenience to the

villagers. Kurnool municipal engineer said water pipeline works have been going at a pace. He said in three to four days all the works would be completed.

Meanwhile, district collector G. Veera Pandian told officials not to compromise on the quality of the works and he directed officials to complete all works of Tungabhadra Pushkaram ghat works within 48 hours. The district collector

along with concerned officials inspected ongoing works at Gundrevula, Panchalinga, Pandrapadu, and Kurnool city on Wednesday, the collector told them to focus on special tents, toilets, and bathrooms everywhere to maintain clean and green in the entire River belt villages. They would be arranged in a temporary hospital, temporary sheds, traffic controlling lines, bus services, cultural events, water, and food dis-

tribution counters, and Central Control Room at every Pushkar spot during the Pushkaram days, he added. While not allowing for Pushkar ghats, the district collector told officials to be focused on the e-ticket website, water supply for baths by taps and saver baths, and other facilities at all the Pushkar ghats. The collector however said that the pilgrims and devotees would strictly allowed as per guidelines of Covid-19.

OTHER STORIES

VSP CONTRACT WORKER MURDERED

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 11

A 30-year-old-man was murdered by unidentified persons near Gangavaram under New Port police station limits in Vizag city on Tuesday night. The deceased was identified as Yerripalli Raju (27), a contractor worker employed in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant and of Gangavaram.

Raju was found in a pool of blood near his residence with severe head injuries and injuries to his face. The locals said that on Tuesday night a group of people attacked Raju with sticks and beat him to death.

The police are suspecting that old-rivalry might have been the reason for the murder of Raju. The police have taken few persons into their custody in connection with the case to ascertain the exact reasons for the murder. Raju is survived by wife and two children.

The police shifted the body to KGH mortuary for autopsy after registering a case.

SEVEN HELD FOR CRICKET BETTING IN KAVALI

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 11

A team of police led by trainee IPS Officer K.V. Maheswar Reddy nabbed seven persons involved in betting in the IPL Cricket match at Kaveli late on Tuesday night.

The team seized ₹17,000 cash, seven mobile phones and two bikes from the offenders at Musunuru in the outskirts of Kaveli town.

The accused have been identified as Guntupalli Venkata Vamsi Krishna, 30, of Chowdavaram in Kondepi mandal of Prakasam district, Vangallu Venkata Suresh Babu 23 of Thettu in Gudlur mandal, Vallur Siva Reddy 32, Bachhu Praveenkumar Reddy 35, Cherukuri Koteswar Rao, 40, of Kaveli town and Uppala Mahesh, 23, of Amudaladinne village in Kaveli mandal. Kaveli rural SI's J. Malyadri and K. Veera Pratap nabbed the betting gang at Indiramma Colony in Musunuru under the supervision of Trainee IPS Officer Maheswar Reddy, Kaveli DSP D. Prasas and rural CI P. Akkeswar Rao.

RAINS, COVID DAMPEN DIWALI SPIRIT IN N ANDHRA

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 11

Rains forecast for the next two days and prevailing Covid conditions dampened the spirit of Diwali celebrations in north coastal Andhra Pradesh this year.

The firecracker traders have put up less number of stalls and also decreased the procurement of the crackers from Tamil Nadu owing to the pandemic.

After the GO was issued, they have further reduced the shops which they planned last week.

The Visakhapatnam Steel Plant Employees Cooperative Society which sells over ₹2 crore worth crackers have closed the shop this year expecting stringent conditions and because of the Covid.

Regional Fire officer of GVMC Niranjan Reddy said the number of shops could be less compared to that of previous years. He said the police are yet to clear the permissions. The traders are not showing much interest.

President of Star Fire Merchants Welfare Society, Sayyed Siraj said that there could be few stalls to sell the green crackers which might not fetch much profit for them.

A. Prasad of Ayyanna Fireworks said that they would reduce the stalls by over 60 per cent and sell only green crackers which they fetched from Sivakasi of Tamil Nadu. The firecrackers will produce a dazzling effect of light, rather than sound.

Meanwhile, the IMD forecast that under the influence of trough in easterly at lower levels located over West Central Bay of Bengal, heavy rains are likely over north coastal Andhra during the next two days.

● **THE FIRECRACKER** traders have put up less number of stalls in Vizag and surrounding areas, and also decreased the procurement of the crackers from Tamil Nadu owing to the pandemic.

Nellore at the forefront in Covid recovery rate, tests

Authorities deny allegations against Red Cross over Plasma supply

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 11

With a 98.34 per cent recovery rate as against the state average of 96.62 per cent, Nellore district is in the forefront with respect to recovery rate as well as Corona tests per million population.

Similarly, Nellore recorded the lowest Covid related death rate in the state with 0.8 per cent as against the state average of 0.92 per cent.

Nellore district is also on the top in the state by conducting 1,92,000 Covid tests as against the state average of 1,54,000 tests per million population.

While sharing the information to *Deccan Chronicle*, district collector K.V.N. Chakradhar Babu said they are focusing on increasing the sample collection to 8,000 per day to arrest the spread of the virus although the positive cases came down to less than 100 per day in the recent past.

According to the collector, the death rate came down considerably from September 15 and there were no deaths for 10 days in October while crediting the medical and paramedical staff for containing the death rate.

Reacting to a question on allegations against Indian Red Cross Society over supplying Plasma to a Chennai-based hospital, he struck down the charges while reminding that scores of infected persons including legislators from Nellore were treated in Chennai hospitals.

Only 30 units of plasma



Covid-19 warriors stage protest against non-payment of salaries for the last three months, at Dharna Chowk in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

AP records 1,732 Covid cases, 14 deaths

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 11

Andhra Pradesh registered 1,732 new Covid-19 cases increasing total number of cases to 8,47,977 and 14 deaths taking the toll to 6,828 in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities issued Covid-19 bulletin here on Wednesday reporting that out of 70,405 samples tested, 1,732 persons were found infected with Covid-19. Out of a total of 88,63,340 samples tested so far in the state, 8,20,234 patients have recovered while 20,915 patients are still

● **The state health authorities discharged 1,761 Covid-19 infected patients after recovery from various hospitals in the last 24 hours**

active with the virus.

Among daily cases, East Godavari registered the highest of 344 followed by 246 in Krishna, 227 in West Godavari, 198 in Chittoor, 195 Guntur, 97 Anantapur, 89 Nellore, 88 Kadapa, 75 Visakhapatnam, 66 Vizianagaram, 59 Srikakulam and 24 each in Kurnool and Prakasam.

East Godavari continues to be the worst hit with more number of cumulative confirmed

coronavirus cases with 1,19,501 followed by 89,428 in West Godavari, 81,360 in Chittoor, 70,182 Guntur, 65,819 Anantapur, 60,689 Prakasam, 60,608 Nellore, 59,815 Kurnool, 56,989 Visakhapatnam, 53,369 Kadapa, 44,820 Srikakulam, 42,394 Krishna, 40,108 Vizianagaram, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery of Covid-19 infected patients has been good in East

Godavari with 1,14,045 followed by 86,322 in West Godavari, 78,985 in Chittoor, 67,011 Guntur, 64,403 Anantapur, 59,329 Nellore, 59,293 Prakasam, 59,048 Kurnool, 54,940 Visakhapatnam, 52,152 Kadapa, 43,673 Srikakulam, 39,519 Vizianagaram, 38,619 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

Among daily cases of deaths, Krishna registered three followed by two each in Anantapur, Chittoor, Visakhapatnam and West Godavari and one each in East Godavari, Guntur and Nellore.

Centre to fund additional cold chain infra facilities

From Page 1

The Centre is expected to sanction 1.7 lakh litres capacity of cold chain facility exclusively for securing Covid-19 vaccine in the state.

The authorities are planning to arrange such cold chain facilities in Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Tirupati, Guntur, Kurnool and Kadapa so that the vaccine can be transported to the neighbouring districts in small ice-lined refrigerators for administering to the targeted people.

The health authorities are also taking all necessary measures to avoid the use of regular cold chain facilities for storing Covid-19 vaccine and it will be stored only in

dedicated cold chain facilities.

The health authorities are collecting details of all frontline health workers working in both the government and private establishments to arrive at an estimate for the need for Covid-19 vaccine doses and also to accord top priority for administering the vaccine to them to save them from getting infected with the virus.

However, both the administrative and ministerial employees in the health department are learnt to have been excluded from Covid-19 vaccination programme causing concern to them. They claim that they too are vulnerable for getting infected with

the Covid-19 as they come into contact with them either by discharging their duty or by exposing them to infected persons elsewhere and want the state government to include them also in the vaccination programme on a priority basis.

Meanwhile, the state health authorities are working out all logistics in minute detail and also on the safe storage and transport of vaccine doses to the destinations to administer them.

A senior health official said, "We are making all the necessary arrangements for taking up Covid-19 vaccination probably in the first quarter of next year in the state."

vested interests levelled false allegations against Red Cross, Mr Chakradhar Babu said that Red Cross got the

details of Plasma supplied to the hospital in Chennai and there is no secrecy in the transaction.

TD BLAMES YSRC LEADER FOR ILLEGAL MINING

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, NOV. 11

TD state spokesperson Anam Venkataramana Reddy squarely blamed Sarvepalli legislator and YSRC district convenor Kakani Govardhan Reddy for widespread mining on the mountains at Prabhagiri patnam near Podalakur town in SPSR Nellore district.

He alleged that the legislator who vehemently opposed mining on the mountain at Prabhagiri patnam, which is dotted with scores of ancient temples built by Chola kings, during TD regime but remained silent when contractors ransacked the shrines and idols of the gods as part of mining after YSRC came to power.

The TD leader produced some paper and video clippings of the past and present to justify his allegations against the YSRC leader over mining and damage to the 101 shrines built 1,500 years back at Prabhagiri patnam. Mr Reddy demanded the Collector and SP of Nellore district should take steps to stop the illegal mining on the remaining mountains and restore the ancient temples.

Bhavanapadu Port works from Jan: Min

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIKAKULAM, NOV. 11

The first phase of Bhavanapadu non-major Port located on the coast under Santabommali mandal of Srikakulam district is likely to begin in the first week of January next year, said the minister for fisheries Seedari Appala Raju, who is closely monitoring the progress of the project. The port is located about 160 km from Visakhapatnam.

Tenders have been called for the detailed project report and the entire process would be completed within six weeks, the minister said while talking to this correspondent on Wednesday.

The entire project will come up in 2,489 acres and the crux of the land where the port would come up belonged to the government. The land acquisition process would be completed by the end of this month.

The first phase would cost around ₹3,570 crore and will have five berths. The

remaining eight berths would be completed in the subsequent phases.

"The state government will build the project and initially operate on its own and plan for investment partners later," the minister said.

The project was initiated in 2012 but several factors including bifurcation stalled the progress. In 2015 Adani group bid for the project but later withdrew.

Meanwhile, the special chief secretary of industries and commerce Karikala Valavalan visited the portland in Bhavanapadu along with senior officials on Wednesday.

He inquired with joint collector Sumit Kumar about the government land, salt land and the private land that would be acquired by the government.

The special chief secretary also sought information on the lifestyle and business of the fisherfolk, number of people to be relocated and other basic information of the local villages.



Water recharge pits in Kadapa.

Kadapa tops in Jal Shakti Abhiyan

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, NOV. 11

Kadapa district stood first in water conservation among 255 districts in south India under Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) 2019. JSA is a time-bound campaign with a mission mode approach intended to improve conditions around 1,500 blocks that are drought-affected, water-stressed or over-exploited falling in 255 districts with water conservation-related Central programmes in all over India.

Twenty-three of these districts are aspirational districts. In Andhra Pradesh, nine districts 68 blocks (mandals) were covered, and in YSR Kadapa district 13 mandals. These are Chinnamandem, Pullampeta, Kamalapuram, Rajampet, Railway Kodur, Sambapalle, Lingala, Simhadripuram, Obulavaripalle, Vempall, Penagaluru, Vemula and Porumamilla. Five prime works were undertaken in this JSA, which includes water conservation and rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional water bodies/tanks, reuse bore-

well recharge structures, watershed development, and intensive afforestation.

The YSR Kadapa district bagged 1st rank in the country as against 255 participated districts. The top ten districts are 1. Kadapa (Andhra Pradesh), 2. Sangareddy (Telangana), 3. Thanjavur (Tamil Nadu), 4. Banaskantha (Gujarat), 5. Thoothukudi (Tamil Nadu), 6. Gaya (Bihar), 7. Tirunelveli (Tamil Nadu), 8. Kurukshetra (Haryana), 9. Mahoba (Uttar Pradesh) and 10. Mahaboobnagar (Telangana).

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme district wing and the Groundwater Department separately submitted their reports to the Central government. The Central teams visited our district and verified field level and finally selected YSR Kadapa district for the best water conservation National award. District collector Chevuri Hariikiran congratulated the District water management authority project director Yadubhusan Reddy to secure the national award continuously in the second consecutive year.

AP includes 'Tribal religion' in survey

PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, NOV. 11

Adivasis in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are elated; that the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government in Andhra Pradesh, has included 'Tribal religion' as an option, in the ongoing household survey in Andhra Pradesh.

The AP government listed 'Tribal Religion' as the 10th option of the 12, in the religion column in the household survey under the title Grama - Wardu Volunteer. Surprisingly, there is the option for 'Atheist,' in the 8th option.

Other options in the religion column include, 'refused to say', 'not known' and 'others'.

Madavi Nehru, a representative of the National Adivasi - Indigenous Religion Coordination Committee, said, "The Andhra Pradesh Government by including 'Tribal Religion' column in the household survey, has respected the feelings of the Adivasis. This is a stepping stone, for Adivasis demand for the restoration of 'Tribal Religion' option, in the Census-2021."

Adivasis, for a long time, were demanding the Central

government to restore 'Tribal region' or 'Aboriginal' as an option in the religion column along with other religions in the Census-2021.

They allege that the Central government is not giving them a chance to decide what should be their religion. Instead, it is trying to bring them under the 'Hindu' religion.

Madavi Nehru said, "AP is the first state to include 'Tribal Religion' option in the survey. Other states, despite having an Adivasi Chief Minister and a higher Adivasi population failed to respond to the Adivasis' demand."

From 1871 to 1951, Tribal religion column was there in the census. Later, the option of 'Tribal religion' was removed, from the census. The government till 1921, used 'Aboriginal' and, 'Animist' thrice, to describe 'Tribal religion' in the census. In the 1931 census, 'Tribal religion', in 1941 'Tribes', and 1951 'scheduled tribe' was used to describe 'Tribal religion'.

Adivasis allege that those illiterate among them, are unable to tell enumerators, that their religion is Gondi-Koya dharma or tribal religion since there no such option is given in the census form.

RABI | SEASON Agri tools are used for plowing, spraying of seeds, etc.

Farmers await promised tech implements

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, NOV. 11

From Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to all his Cabinet colleagues state that the welfare and overall development of farmers is their avowed mission. That apart, the advisor at the state level, Department of Agriculture and members of the Agriculture Advisory Council at the district level provide guidance to them. However, even though the Rabi season started a month back, the farmers are yet to receive agricultural mechanisa-

tion tools, on which they are overly dependent.

Machines are used for plowing, spraying of seeds, weeding, harvesting and threshing. This makes the task easier and faster. Given the increase in their use, the Union and state governments decided to provide subsidised agricultural machinery to farmers, which, as things stand, have not been implemented in over two years.

The YSRC government set up Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBK) across the state claiming to be farmer-friendly agricul-

tural schemes. The RBKs are part of farmer welfare programmes, which include periodic cash transfers and other support mechanisms. More than 10,500 RBKs have been set up across the state. The government provides machinery costing ₹12 to ₹15 lakh to each RBK.

Of this, 10 per cent is paid by the farmer group as their share, while the government subsidises 40 percent. The remaining 50 per cent is raised by way of borrowings from banks. The government has approved this

new scheme to provide farm equipment through RBKs.

Rabi general cultivation area in Kadapa district is around 1.08 lakh hectares.

Officials believe that the area under cultivation is likely to increase further this year due to heavy rains and bore wells getting plenty of water. The government has announced that farm machinery will be made available to farmers by the end of October. However, the machines have not been sent, as yet. Agriculture officials have directed

district-level officials to send proposals on each RBK's requirement for tools. Unfortunately, there has been further progress on that front.

Juttiga Murali Krishna, joint director agriculture, Kadapa, speaking to *Deccan Chronicle* said "We have already sent proposals to the higher authorities. We are expecting to get the farm implements within a week"

"As soon as the orders are received from the government these implements were distributed to the farmers," he said.

SHORT TAKES

TOP COURT
GRANTS BAIL TO
ARNAB GOSWAMIPARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted interim bail to the Republic TV's Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami observing that denying bail to a person in such a matter is a travesty of justice.

Holding that the High Court was in error in rejecting the plea for interim bail, the court directed that Arnab Goswami, Feroz Mohammad Shaikh and Neetish Sarda shall be released on interim bail. They will furnish a personal bond of ₹50,000 each and will co-operate with the investigation and not interfere with witnesses.

Goswami is accused of alleged abetment to suicide by interior designer, Anvay Naik and his mother Kumud Naik.

Justice D.Y. Chandrachud heading a bench also comprising Justice Indira Banerjee said, "Assuming that we must take FIR and the case as gospel truth, the point is that in a matter like this can a person be sent to custodial interrogation. It will be a travesty of justice to deny bail to a person in such a matter."

Venting its strong view on the denial of bail to Goswami both by the lower court and the High Court, Justice Chandrachud in a daylong hearing said, "If we don't interfere in this case today, we will walk on a path of destruction of livery."

Apparently saying that the political or ideological differences can't come in the way of liberty, Justice Chandrachud said that "You may like his ideology or don't like his ideology, forget the way he speaks, but constitutional courts will have to protect such freedoms, otherwise we will be walking on the path of destruction of liberty". "Our democracy is extraordinarily resilient and strong", he said, telling that the state government must ignore such barbs against it.

NCB GRILLS
ARJUN RAMPAL'S
GIRLFRIENDSAURABH JOSHI | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 11

Two days after conducting raids at the residence of former actor Arjun Rampal, in connection with the probe of drug consumption in Bollywood, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) grilled his girlfriend Gabriella Demetriades on Wednesday.

The officials said that Rampal will also be questioned and that he is likely to appear on Thursday. The live-in duo was summoned after the NCB arrested Gabriella's brother Agisilaos Demetriades over his alleged links with the international drug ring.

The NCB officials said that she reached the south Mumbai office for questioning at around noon. Gabriella was grilled over her brother's drug links and on her possible connection with his illegal activities.

The officials had on Monday conducted searches at Rampal's residence based on the revelations in the case by Agisilaos.

GANJA PEDDLERS
ARRESTED;
PROPERTY SEIZEDAKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
NABARAGINPUR, NOV. 11

In a massive crackdown against the ganja mafia, Odisha's Nabarangpur police on Wednesday arrested two inter-state ganja-peddlers and seized illegally acquired property worth approximately ₹4.77 crore and traced cash transaction of around ₹4.59 crore.

According to Deputy Superintendent of Police Chandra Sekhar Hota, three persons namely Prabhakar Mali, Anirudha Mali and Sana Mali were peddling ganja since long with their accomplices in other states. The police nailed two of them after tracking their movement for the past few days.

"We have arrested two of the accused Prabhakar Mali and Ramesh Mali in connection with inter-state ganja peddling. They have been booked under various sections of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. Efforts are being made to nab the third culprit — Anirudha Mali," the DSP Hota said.

The police has sealed four buildings, four acres immovable property, four wheelers and two-wheelers from the accused.

India, China firm up steps
to restore April status quo

The PLA may dismantle all its structures between Finger 4 and Finger 8

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

India and China are moving towards an agreement on a disengagement plan which if implemented successfully could see restoration of the status quo of April 2020 at some of the flashpoints, including the most contentious one of Pangong Tso, in eastern Ladakh.

It appears that China has agreed to move back from the Finger 4 area and take its troops beyond Finger 8 on the northern bank of Pangong Tso. Under this plan, the PLA will dismantle all the structures it has built, including the bunkers between Finger 4 and Finger 8 after illegally occupying the area in May 2020. The Chinese Army's occupation of the area between Finger 4 and Finger 8 on the north bank of Pangong Tso was one of the stickiest points in resolving the six-month military standoff between India and China.

Another meeting of the two corps commanders is likely to be held soon to thrash out the disengagement plan, and if all goes smoothly, the entire disengagement process in Pangong Tso can even be completed by the end of November, sources said, but then added: "These proposals are under consideration... but there is no agreement yet."

Going by the plan under discussion, the area between Finger 4 and Finger 8 will be designated as a "no-go zone" and troops from neither India or China will patrol it. This plan was discussed during the eighth round of the corps commanders' meeting on November 6 in Chushul, on India's side of the LAC. Under the proposal, the Indian and Chinese armies will remove their heavy artillery and tanks from the forward positions and move them back to their depth areas. There are many places where Indian and Chinese tanks are in close proximity. As per the third proposal, which will be discussed soon, India will withdraw its troops from the strategically important heights on the southern bank of Pangong Tso, which they occupied in a pre-emptive action in August.

However, India will move extremely cautiously in implementing these steps and will verify each move before taking the next one.

Army Chief Gen. M.M. Naravane had said Tuesday he was hopeful that the Indian and Chinese militaries will be able to reach an agreement on disengagement and de-escalation of tensions in eastern Ladakh.



Army chief General M.M. Naravane on a two-day visit to Army formations in Uttarakhand to review the security situation and operational preparedness along LAC with China.

He had said senior military commanders of India and China were holding talks to iron out the modalities for de-escalation of tensions in eastern Ladakh. "We are hopeful of reaching an agreement which is mutually acceptable and is beneficial in keeping with the overarching policy guidelines," Naravane said.

It is important to note that earlier too, first in June and then in July, India and China had agreed to mutually move back from the Galwan Valley, Gogra Post, Hot Springs and Pangong Tso. But it was only in the Galwan Valley that troops from both sides had moved back to some extent. In Pangong Tso, the Chinese Army had refused to move back from the ridgelines of Finger 4. In Gogra Post and Hot Springs, there was no clarity on the disengagement. Besides, in Depsang plains, the Chinese troops have been preventing the Indian Army from conducting patrols. The Depsang issue will be separately discussed with the PLA.

It remains to be seen if this time the Chinese Army will fulfil its promise and restore the status quo at the LAC, which it violated in May 2020.

No Chhath Puja
this year in
public placesDC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

The total number of Coronavirus cases in India reached over 86.50 lakh on Wednesday with 44,281 new detections with Delhi, Kerala and West Bengal reporting highest cases among all other states and union territories.

The total number of deaths in the country is a little over 1.27 lakh out of which 512 fatalities were recorded in the last one day.

The active caseload of India has fallen under the 5 lakh mark for the first time after 106 days. The total burden of active cases is 4,94,657 (it was 4,96,988 on July 28) and now stands at 5.73% of the total positive cases. The total recoveries have crossed the 80 lakh mark and Recovery Rate has increased to 92.79%.

The Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan held meeting with seven states — Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya and Goa — and urged them to focus on enhanced testing, especially in districts with higher Covid-19 positivity and places of large gatherings like markets and workplaces.

The minister had earlier held discussions with Delhi and Kerala governments on virus containment measures.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan noted that although the active cases have come down in Maharashtra, it continues to have a large active caseload, with a high Fatality Rate (2.6%) which increases to 3.5% in and around Mumbai.

Meanwhile, the DDMA has instructed officials to ensure that Chhath Puja this year is not performed at public places, river banks and temples in Delhi, citing the recent rise in Covid-19 cases in the national capital.

An order issued by Chief Secretary and Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) executive committee chairman Vijay Dev on Tuesday issued directions to all district magistrates and deputy commissioners of police for strict compliance and to encourage people to celebrate Chhath at their homes during the pandemic.

Additional reinforcements
rushed to Indo-Pak borderDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

Additional seniority reinforcements have been rushed to the Indo-Pak border to further tighten any infiltration attempts by militants from across the border.

The decision comes following a high level security review in wake of the Machil encounter two days ago in which four security men and three militants were killed while trying to infiltrate.

The incident took place while the militants were trying to infiltrate into India from one of the launch pads in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. These militants were backed by the Border Action Team (BAT) of the Pakistan Army which was assisting in their infiltration bid.

This resulted in a fierce encounter in which four brave Indian security personnel were killed.

Following this incident and amid specific Intelligence inputs that 250-300 militants were waiting at the launchpads,

● **THE DECISION** comes following a high level security review in wake of the Machil encounter two days ago in which four security men and three militants were killed while trying to infiltrate.

● **FOLLOWING** This incident and amid specific Intelligence inputs that 250-300 militants were waiting at the launchpads, a major review of security along the Indo-Pak border was done and additional reinforcements were rushed to certain strategic locations.

Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir are already hopeful that the overall security scenario in the Valley would improve considerably during the winter season as they have been able to successfully thwart major infiltration attempts from terror outfits in PoK.

This, sources claim, would have a direct impact on the security situation as militant groups were facing a severe crunch of both men and material.

Sources have confirmed that in the past two months despite more than 20 infiltration attempts not a single one has been successful.

Senior security officials claimed successfully checking infiltration will have a direct impact on the Kashmir security situation as militants here were facing severe shortage of both men and material.

"The total number of active militants in the Kashmir Valley is now less than 200. We are confident now that no reinforcements are coming from across the border we will launch a fresh operation to eliminate the remaining active militants in the region," the official added.

Many won with
razor-thin victory
margins in BiharSREEPARNA
CHAKRABARTY | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 11

The battle for Bihar which saw the NDA pip the Opposition grand alliance by just 15 seats was also unique in the unusually low winning margins of individual candidates pointing to the tough fight on the ground between the ruling and Opposition sides.

The razor thin margins, some as low as of 12 votes, saw many heartburns among the losing side with Opposition parties like RJD, Congress and CPI-ML (Liberation) even approaching the Election Commission claiming last minute malpractice by district authorities.

In the Hilsa Assembly segment, JD(U)'s Krishnamurari Sharan defeated his rival RJD's Shakti Singh Yadav by a mere 12 votes, the thinnest victory margin in these polls.

There were 10 constituencies apart from Hilsa, which saw a close contest with the victory margin remaining below the 1,000 mark. Of this, the NDA won five — JD(U) in four and BJP one — while the RJD won three while the CPI, LJP and an independent bagged one each.

In three constituencies each, the RJD and the JD(U) were the runner-up while the BJP came second in two. CPI, Congress, CPI(ML)L and BSP were the nearest rival to the winner in one each seat.

A further break-up of the 11 seats showed that the victory margin in six were below 500 votes, including Hilsa. RJD and JDU had two such seats while BJP and LJP had

one each. Among the highest margin, there were four seats which saw victory margin over 50,000 with CPI(ML)L, AIMIM, RJD and JD(U) winning one each. The highest margin was in Balrampur where CPI(ML)L's Mahboob Alam won by 53,597 votes against Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP).

The second highest victory margin went to AIMIM in Amour where its candidate won by 52,515 votes against JD(U). It was a sitting Congress seat, which it won by 51,997 votes in 2015 polls but sitting MLA Abdul Jalil Mastan could bag only 31,863 votes while the winner Aktharul Imran got 94,459 votes and the runner-up Zaba Zafar won 41,944 votes.

An analysis showed that the victory margin in 76 seats were in the range of 10,000-20,000 votes while it was 20,000-30,000 in 44 seats, 30,000-40,000 in 22 and 40,000-50,000 in 14 constituencies.

The narrow margins propelled the Opposition to make allegations of irregularities in the counting process in these seats.

RJD's Manoj Jha alleged that leaders from the ruling JD(U) and BJP were "misusing their official power" to delay the handing over of certificates to winning candidates, and thereby leaving the scope for tampering with the final results in the elections held amid the Covid-19 curbs.

The charges were denied by the ECI, which said they were going about their duties with all procedures followed impartially.

'LJP's intention was
to make BJP stronger'DC CORRESPONDENT
PATNA, NOV. 11

Lok Janshakti Chief Chirag Paswan on Tuesday credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the victory of NDA and said that people have expressed their faith in him for the development of Bihar.

Chirag Paswan who had left the NDA ahead of Assembly elections citing ideological differences with Nitish Kumar said that "the grand victory for NDA shows that people have faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi and it is important that the BJP gets stronger for the development of the

state". While talking about his party's defeat in the elections, Chirag Paswan said that his party fought the election to strengthen the BJP and damage the JD(U). He, however, clarified that his party's vote share increased and that party would do well in 2025 Assembly elections.

"I think my party has been strengthened and it would be easier for us to perform well in future elections. Our party's goal was to strengthen the BJP which we have achieved", LJP chief Chirag Paswan said during a press conference at his party's office in Patna on Tuesday.

Govt brings news, films, audiovisual content
on online platforms under I&B ministry

New Delhi, Nov. 11: The government has brought films, audiovisuals, news and current affairs content on online platforms under the domain of the ministry of information and broadcasting.

According to a notification issued by the cabinet secretariat on Tuesday night, content made available by online providers such as Netflix will also come under the ministry.

The notification, signed by President Ram Nath Kovind, said the decision has been taken in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (3) of Article 77 of the Constitution, by amending the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 and it will come into effect immediately.

With this, the ministry of information and broadcasting has the power to regulate policies related to news, audio, visual contents and films available on online platforms.

These rules may be called the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Three Hundred and Fifty Seventh Amendment Rules, 2020. They shall come into force at once.

In the Government of India (Allocation of Business, 1961, in THE SECOND SCHEDULE,

under the heading 'MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SPOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANT-RALAYA)' after entry 22, the following sub-heading and entries shall be inserted, namely:- VA. DIGITAL/ONLINE MEDIA. 22A. Films and Audio-Visual programmes made available by online content providers. 22B. News and current affairs content on online platforms, it said.

The decision to put OTT platforms under the I&B ministry could put Indian content creators at a disadvantage on the world stage and curtail the creative and personal freedom of makers as well as viewers, a cross-section of writers and directors said.

creators, we want to ensure this act not only takes cognisance of the nature of content being released, but also ensures that we safeguard creativity in this rapidly growing sector, Bedi said.

Several other major OTT platforms declined to comment on the development when contacted. "It puts Indian content creators at a disadvantage when they are competing on the world stage. I don't know what one can do...I don't know the legal ramifications of this. It is too premature to talk what can be done. We should wait and hope things will get clear when the guidelines or whatever is the intent comes into play," Kagi said.

Kagi, who has made *Honeymoon Travels Pvt Ltd*, was one of the directors on Amazon Prime Video's show *Made in Heaven* along with Zoya Akhtar and Alankrita

● **THE DECISION** to put OTT platforms under the I&B ministry could put Indian content creators at a disadvantage on the world stage and curtail the creative and personal freedom of makers as well as viewers, a cross-section of writers and directors said.

Shrivastava.

However, nothing specific has been said regarding censorship, except that it is coming under the ambit of I&B ministry. I should wait to hear what exactly this means," she said, adding that creators are asked for many cuts even though films are certified 'A'.

Shrivastava, known for *Lipstick Under My Burkha* and *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare*, said she did not know the details of the decision but was fundamentally opposed to censorship.

"I believe there should be no censorship regardless of the medium. Films and series can be age certified and classified but a free and democratic country should let its adult citizens decide what they would like to watch or not watch in a theatre, or on their phones and computers. The choice must belong to the citizen," Shrivastava said.

"*Aligarh*" director Mehta, who made his streaming debut recently with the acclaimed *Scam 1992* on SonyLIV, said the decision wasn't unexpected but was a reason for despair.

"This desperation for control of free speech and expression does not augur well. I am currently very

disappointed," Mehta said.

Anshuman, the director-writer of *Mirzapur* and *Inside Edge* on Amazon Prime Video, termed the move unacceptable and appealed to viewers and creators to band together and challenge the censorship in any and every manner.

"Whatever happened to the understanding with (Prakash) Javadekar that OTT will be self-regulated? The govt is giving in to the basest demands of prudes. How is this progress in any manner? Don't like it, don't watch it. Don't impose your regressive views on a billion people. Where is the public discourse before this autocratic decision was announced? And what's the process to appeal, if there's one at all?" he wrote on Twitter.

With OTT, he said, you have enough tech to ensure children can't access whatever it is you consider objectionable content.

The state has no business interfering in personal choices of viewers and creative expression of makers. It's really simple: educate people to turn off their device if they don't like what they see — they have a million other choices today," he said. — PTI

IN BRIEF FIRE BURNS TENTS IN GREEK CAMP

Athens, Nov. 11: A fire has burnt through tents and some structures in a refugee camp on the eastern Greek island of Samos. There were no immediate reports of any injuries.

The fire department said the blaze, which broke out Wednesday morning, was limited in size and was tackled by 18 firefighters using nine vehicles. There was no immediate information on how many tents were destroyed. Many of the tents are packed closely together in the overcrowded camp, and camping gas canisters the residents use for cooking caused small explosions. It wasn't immediately clear what caused the fire.

More than 3,800 people live in and around the Samos camp, a facility originally built to house just under 650. In September, fires destroyed Greece's largest refugee camp, Moria, on the island of Lesbos, leaving more than 10,000 people in need of emergency shelter. Authorities said those blazes had been set by a group of the camp's residents protesting isolation and lockdown orders after Covid outbreak.

POPE FRANCIS VOWS TO END SEXUAL ABUSE

Rome, Nov. 11: Pope Francis pledged Wednesday to rid the Catholic Church of sexual abuse and offered prayers to victims of ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, a day after the Vatican released a detailed report into the decades-long church cover-up of his sexual misconduct.

Francis concluded his weekly general audience Wednesday by recalling that the report into the "painful case" of the former high-ranking American cardinal had been released the previous day.

"I renew my closeness to victims of any abuse and commitment of the church to eradicate this evil," Francis said.

He then paused silently for nearly a minute, apparently in prayer.

The Vatican report blamed a host of bishops, cardinals and popes for downplaying and dismissing mountains of evidence of McCarrick's misconduct starting in the 1990s.

The report blamed St. John Paul II, however, for having appointed McCarrick archbishop of Washington in 2000, and made him a cardinal, despite having commissioned an inquiry that found he had shared his bed with seminarians. In his remarks Wednesday, however, Francis held John Paul up for praise.

Noting that Wednesday marked Poland's independence day, Francis quoted John Paul as telling young people what it means to be truly free.

"While we thank the Lord for the gift of national and personal freedom, what St. John Paul II taught young people comes to mind," Francis said.

BAHRAIN'S PM PRINCE KHALIFA DIES

Dubai, Nov. 11: Bahrain's Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, one of the world's longest-serving prime ministers who led his island nation's government for decades and survived the 2011 Arab Spring protests that demanded his ouster over corruption allegations, died on Wednesday. He was 84.

Bahrain's state-run news agency announced his death, saying he had been receiving treatment at the Mayo Clinic in the United States, without elaborating.

The Mayo Clinic did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Prince Khalifa's power and wealth could be seen everywhere in this small nation off the coast of Saudi Arabia home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet.

His official portrait hung for decades on walls alongside the country's ruler. He had his own private island where he met foreign dignitaries, complete with a marina and a park that had peacocks and gazelle roam its grounds.

The prince represented an older style of Gulf leadership, one that granted patronage and favours for support of the Sunni Al Khalifa family.

That style would be challenged in the 2011 protests by the island's Shiite majority and others, who demonstrated against him over long-running corruption allegations surrounding his rule.

Though less powerful and frailer in recent years, his machinations still drew attention in the kingdom as a new generation now jostles for power.

Biden embarrassed Trump didn't concede poll defeat

Says it will not help President's legacy, transition plans remain unaffected

Washington, Nov. 11: Donald Trump not conceding defeat in the US election is "an embarrassment" and that "will not help the President's legacy," President-elect Joe Biden has said, asserting that his transition plans have remained unaffected and he has started talking to world leaders.

Trump has declined to concede the closely-fought November 3 presidential race to Democrat Biden and is mounting legal fights in several states, but there has been no evidence of voter irregularities or widespread fraud in the election — billed as one of the most divisive and bitter in recent American history.

The president-elect was asked by a reporter on Tuesday what he thought of President Trump's refusal to acknowledge defeat. "I just think it's an embarrassment, quite frankly," Biden said while speaking in his hometown in Wilmington, Delaware.

"The only thing that, how can I say this tactfully, I think it will not help the president's legacy," 77-year-old Biden said.

The Trump administration's refusal to initiate the transition process "does not change the dynamic at all in what we're able to do," Biden said. "We don't see anything that's slowing us down, quite frankly," he said.

"At the end of the day, you know, it's all going to come to fruition on January 20," he added, referring to inauguration day.

"Between now and then my hope and expectation is that the American people do know and do understand that there has been a transition. Even among Republicans...who voted for the president, I understand the sense of loss, I get that," he said. — PTI

● **GEORGIA OFFICIALS** have announced an audit of presidential poll results that will trigger a full hand recount. Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said that his office wants the process to begin by the end of the week and he expects it to take until Nov. 20.



Lawmakers at a press conference in a Legislative Council office in Hong Kong on Wednesday. — AFP

PRO-DEMOCRACY HK LAWMAKERS RESIGN EN MASSE

Hong Kong, Nov. 11: Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers have resigned en masse following a move by the city's government to disqualify four pro-democracy legislators. The pro-democracy camp announced their decision in a news conference Wednesday, hours after the Hong Kong government said it would be disqualifying four pro-democracy legislators — Alvin Yeung, Dennis Kwok, Kwok Ka-ki and Kenneth Leung — from the legislature. The disqualifications came after China's National People's Congress Standing Committee, which held meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, passed a resolution stating that those who support Hong Kong's independence or refuse to acknowledge China's sovereignty over the city, as well as commit acts that threaten national security or ask external forces to interfere in the city's affairs, should be disqualified.

"Today we will resign because our partners, our colleagues have been disqualified by the central government's ruthless move," Wu Chi-wai, convener, said. — AP



US President-elect Joe Biden listens as Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris addresses the media about the Trump administration's lawsuit to overturn the Affordable Care Act at the Queen Theater in Wilmington, Delaware on Tuesday. Biden also answered questions about the process of the transition. — AFP

Pompeo: Smooth transition to 2nd Trump administration

Washington, Nov. 11: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Tuesday asserted that there will be a smooth transition to a second Trump Administration, indicating that he believes Donald Trump has won the November 3 presidential elections.

"There will be a smooth transition to a second Trump administration. We are ready. The world is watching what's taking place here. We're going to count all the votes..."

Pompeo said. He was responding to questions from reporters at the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State Department if his department is preparing to engage with the Biden transition team and if not at what point does it delay or hamper a smooth transition or pose a risk to national security.

● **POMPEO WAS** responding to questions from reporters at the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State Department if his department is preparing to engage with the Biden transition team and if not at what point does it delay or hamper a smooth transition or pose a risk to national security.

a risk to national security.

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has been declared the winner of the elections by major media networks, as is the tradition in the United States. President-elect Biden has quickly moved on to the transition phase. Pompeo said that the

world should have every confidence that the transition necessary to make sure that the State Department is functional today, successful today, and successful with the president who's in office on January 20th a minute after noon will also be successful.

"I went through a transition on the front and I've been on the other side of this. I'm very confident that we will do all the things that are necessary to make sure that the government, the United States government will continue to perform its national security function as we go forward," he said.

Responding to questions if he believed there is widespread voter fraud, Pompeo said that he has been getting calls from all across the world. — PTI

KASH PATEL IS CHIEF OF STAFF TO DEF SECY

Washington, Nov. 11: Indian-American Kash Patel has been named as the Chief of Staff to the Acting US Defence Secretary Chris Miller, the Pentagon has announced. The new appointment from the Pentagon comes a day after Trump fired Defence Secretary Mark Esper and designated the National Counter Terrorism Center Director, Chris Miller, as the Acting Secretary of Defence.

Miller took over the functions and responsibilities of the new role on Monday, the Pentagon said on Tuesday. "Kash Patel, currently on the National Security Council staff, has been named by Acting Secretary Miller as his Chief of Staff," the Pentagon announced on Tuesday.

— PTI

Scientists find proof of two-way virus transmission in mink farms

London, Nov. 11: An analysis of outbreaks of the novel Coronavirus on 16 mink farms in the Netherlands has revealed that the Covid-19 virus is capable of transmission between humans to minks, as well as from these mammals to people.

While the virus was initially introduced from humans to the minks, the researchers, including B as B. Oude Munnink from the Erasmus University Medical Center in the Netherlands, said it has since evolved. "More research in minks and other mustelid species is important to understand if these spec-

ies are at risk of becoming a reservoir of SARS-CoV-2," they wrote in the study, published in the journal *Science*. According to the scientists, the virus was first diagnosed on two mink farms in late April of 2020 in the Netherlands.

In response, they said an extensive surveillance system was set up. The researchers performed an in-depth investigation among the first 16 infected mink farms in the Netherlands using a combination of coronavirus diagnostics, whole-genome sequencing, and in-depth interviews with farm workers. By the end of June,

● **MORE RESEARCH** in minks and other mustelid species is important to understand if these species are at risk of becoming a reservoir of SARS-CoV-2.

BAS B. OUDE MUNNINK, Researcher, Erasmus University Medical Center, the Netherlands

they found that 66 of 97 of the mink farm residents, employees and/or contacts tested had evidence for SARS-CoV-2 infection.

According to the study,

the mink virus genome analysis revealed a diversity of sequences. These large clusters of infection were initiated by Covid-19 cases with viruses that bear the "D614G mutation", which has come to dominate human infections in several parts of the world, the scientists said. They also found that some people were infected with strains of the virus with an animal sequence signature, providing evidence of animal to human transmission. However, they did not find any evidence of spillover to people living in close proximity to mink farms. — PTI

REVIEW | ODYSSEY

Given challenges, next launches being considered from 2026 to 2028

Nasa needs time to bring back Mars rocks

Cape Canaveral (US), Nov. 11: NASA is underestimating the amount of time and money it will take to bring Mars rocks back to Earth in the coming decade, an independent panel said Tuesday. The review board suggested that NASA and the European Space Agency consider bumping the next launches in the sample-return effort from 2026 to 2028, given all the technological challenges.

These delays will increase costs, pushing the planning budget to \$4 billion or more — \$1 billion more than currently envisioned by NASA.

● **DELAYS WILL** increase costs, pushing the planning budget to \$4 billion or more — \$1 billion more than currently envisioned by NASA.

● **THE GOAL IS** to get the samples back in the early 2030s. In order to do that, the space agencies have teamed up to develop a lander to fetch the samples.

February. It's aiming for Jezero Crater, believed to be an ancient river delta that may have once harbored microscopic life.

Scientists want to analyze these samples in the best labs on Earth, in hopes of ascertaining whether life ever existed in the

planet's lush, wet past. The goal is to get the samples back in the early 2030s. In order to do that, the space agencies have teamed up to develop a lander to fetch the samples, a rocket to get them off the Martian surface and an orbiting spacecraft to accept them and return them to Earth.

All this gear will require two separate launches from Earth. The chairman of the review board, David Thompson, retired chief executive of Orbital ATK, told reporters a two-year launch delay is advisable for the best chances of success. At the same time, however, no one is suggesting that NASA slow down, stressed panel member Maria Zuber of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. — AP

Asteroid samples escaping from jammed NASA craft

Cape Canaveral, Nov. 11: A NASA spacecraft is stuffed with so much asteroid rubble from this week's grab that it's jammed open and precious particles are drifting away in space, scientists said Friday.

Scientists announced the news three days after the spacecraft named Osiris-Rex briefly touched asteroid Benu, NASA's first attempt at such a mission. The mission's lead scientist, Dante Lauretta of the University of Arizona,

Explosions mar WW-I ceremony at Saudi cemetery

Paris, Nov. 11: Multiple people were wounded on Wednesday when an explosive device hit an international ceremony commemorating the end of World War I at a cemetery in the Saudi Arabian city of Jiddah, according to French government officials. Several countries had representatives at the ceremony, held at a cemetery for non-Muslim dead, the officials from the French Foreign Ministry said.

The identities of the victims were unclear. Wednesday's attack follows on the heels of a stabbing on October 29 that slightly wounded a guard at the French Consulate in the city of Jiddah. The stabbing was carried out by a Saudi man, who was arrested. His motives remain unclear. Wednesday marks the 102nd anniversary of the armistice ending World War I and is commemorated in several European countries.

The French officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, condemned the attack.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the explosion. Saudi officials and state-run media in the kingdom have not commented on the attack.

Jiddah, the Red Sea port city, saw its Ottoman tro-

ops surrender to the local troops backed by the British in 1916 amid the war. That sparked the start of the Kingdom of Hejaz, which later became part of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Jiddah's Non-Muslim Cemetery sits nears this port city's docks, hidden behind trees alongside a major thoroughfare in the city.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission shows just one soldier buried at the cemetery. Pvt John Arthur Hogan, who died in June 1944. Across France, which was particularly devastated by years of trench warfare in World War I, ceremonies were held Wednesday to mark the anniversary of the armistice but also to honor all those who have died for France, including during the Second World War and in current military operations abroad and at home, where troops are deployed to protect against terrorist attacks.

France has suffered two deadly Islamic extremist attacks in the past month. Three people were killed in a church in the southern city of Nice, and a teacher was beheaded outside Paris for showing caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad to his class for a debate on free expression. — AP

Pak US embassy goofs up on PM

Islamabad, Nov. 11: The United States embassy in Islamabad on Wednesday issued an apology for sharing a Twitter post which indirectly called Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan a "demagogue and dictator." On Tuesday night, the US embassy re-tweeted a post by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Ahsan Iqbal, where he shows a screenshot of an article by *The Washington Post* titled "Trump's defeat is a blow for the world's demagogues and dictators".

Along with the screen grab, Iqbal wrote: "We have one in Pakistan too. He will be shown the way out soon." Iqbal's lines were a clear reference to Prime Minister Khan. The embassy's post went viral within minutes and it faced severe backlash from the supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party.

On Wednesday, the embassy on its Twitter account said, "The US embassy Islamabad Twitter account was accessed last night without authorisation. The US embassy does not endorse the posting or re-tweeting of political messages. We apologise for any confusion that may have resulted from the unauthorised post." Since then the embassy has deleted the post. On Tuesday, #ApologiseUS Embassy trended on Twitter.

Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazarri and Sindh Governor Imran

12 BILLIONAIRES IN PAKISTAN'S NAT'L ASSEMBLY

Islamabad, Nov. 11: There are 12 billionaires in Pakistan's National Assembly while most of the other lawmakers were also wealthy, possessing large properties in the country and abroad and massive investments in stocks, according to a media report on Wednesday. The lawmakers who are rolling in money and are holding precious assets include top politicians from almost all the mainstream parties, the *Dawn News* reported.

Landlords and capitalists dominate Pakistan's 342-member National Assembly — the lower legislative house — with the majority of members possessing huge pieces of land and massive investments in stocks, shares and industrial units, it said, citing the statement of assets of the lawmakers for year 2019. — PTI

Ismael have demanded an apology from the US embassy. US embassy is still working in Trumpian mode in support of convicted absconder and intervening brazenly in our internal politics," Mazari said, referring to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif. — PTI

DECCAN Chronicle 12 NOVEMBER 2020

Something for everyone, except for Congress, LJP

It is a signal political achievement for the NDA, powered by the BJP, to win a fourth straight term in Bihar. The results were announced in the early hours of Wednesday, so fierce was the contest. The exit polls got it all wrong, having predicted a sweeping victory for the challengers, such was the electrifying response, especially among young voters, elicited by the tornado-style campaigning of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and his promise of 10 lakh government jobs. All things considered, however, the median voter appeared to choose the tried and tested NDA led by the staid CM Nitish Kumar.

Although Mr Kumar's JD(U)-BJP coalition government had spectacularly failed to rise to the challenge posed by the twin crises produced by Covid and reverse migration, it managed to pull off a wafer-thin win. It does say something about the state of governance, though, and about the voters' despair with the political system, that some seven lakh voters chose "NOTA".

Perhaps the energetic campaign of Prime Minister Narendra Modi helped to turn the tide against the challenger since the PM's speeches — aside from routinely invoking development — did not neglect to polarise votes, invoking religious symbols, while another star BJP campaigner, the UP CM Yogi Adityanath, was outright communal in his pitch.

The Hyderabad-headquartered MIM, which appears to be trying to emerge as the country's so-called Muslim party with a nationwide spread, also threw its hat in the ring in the Muslim-dominated Seemanchal districts of Bihar, and cut into anti-NDA votes. The same is the case with locally influential individual politicians who in the past have been on the same side as the various Mahagathbandhan parties. The votes polled by the "others" category was nearly as high as 20 per cent, in the main hurting the NDA's principal challengers — the Magathbandhan alliance of RJD, Congress and the Left parties, including the CPI(ML).

The LJP, led by Chirag Paswan, widely suspected to have opted out of NDA in Bihar at the BJP's behest, energetically opposed CM Kumar in order to give the saffron party a chance to have its own CM in Bihar for the first time. This marginal player succeeded in substantially damaging Mr Kumar's JD(U). But the BJP by itself could not win enough seats to be in the striking range of power. As a result, the game can be thought of as having misfired. BJP has no option but to let Mr Kumar return as CM, although the JD(U) has 43 seats as against BJP's 74. How this affects the JD(U)-BJP dynamics within government is a future discussion.

RJD has emerged with 75 seats, the highest for any party, and Bihar can said to have found a new political leader in Mr Yadav. He went beyond his father Lalu Yadav's "social justice" plank, invoked "economic justice", and fielded upper caste candidates. The Congress, aside from helping consolidate a good section of the minorities' vote for the Opposition alliance, failed to make serious inroads among the upper castes.

The Left parties — CPI(ML), CPI and CPI(M) — have done quite well and could make a mark by joining a non-Left alliance. It is to be seen if with their agitation culture, they can keep the government on its toes. This election had a little bit for everyone, except LJP, and was not unduly partial to any party.

Bypoll wins overrated

The BJP resoundingly won the Assembly byelections in several states for which results were announced on Tuesday, and this has led not a few party leaders to believe that their political grip over the country has once again been demonstrated. A closer look reveals, however, that this is an exaggerated case of self-exaltation.

The BJP's self-praise had some takers since the byelection results came on the same day that the NDA in Bihar retained the government in a bruising fight, the equivalent of ferocious trench warfare in a military encounter. After the BJP took hold of the government in Madhya Pradesh by inducing large-scale defections through the use of money power earlier this year, there was never any doubt over the byelection results since state legislature byelections are typically won by the party ruling the state, exceptions apart. In the context of MP, and in particular the part played by Congress defector Jyotiraditya Scindia in delivering MLAs loyal to him to the BJP, it can now be said that his chances of being made a minister in the Narendra Modi government as reward have brightened. He has helped the Chouhan government gain an Assembly majority. However, three BJP ministers were defeated.

In the byelection the BJP won all the eight seats in Gujarat, six on seven in UP, two out of two in Karnataka and the lone seat in Manipur, where its nominee was elected unopposed. These were all bypoll deliverables. But the saffron party surprised the ruling TRS in Telangana by wresting the lone Assembly seat from it for which byelection was held — no doubt for local reasons.

In contrast, it lost the lone seat in Haryana to the Congress for which byelection was held, although it is the governing party in the state. In Odisha, the ruling BJD kept the BJP at bay for the seat for which there was polling, and the Congress comfortably won byelections in Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand. It is best not to read too much into state byelection results.

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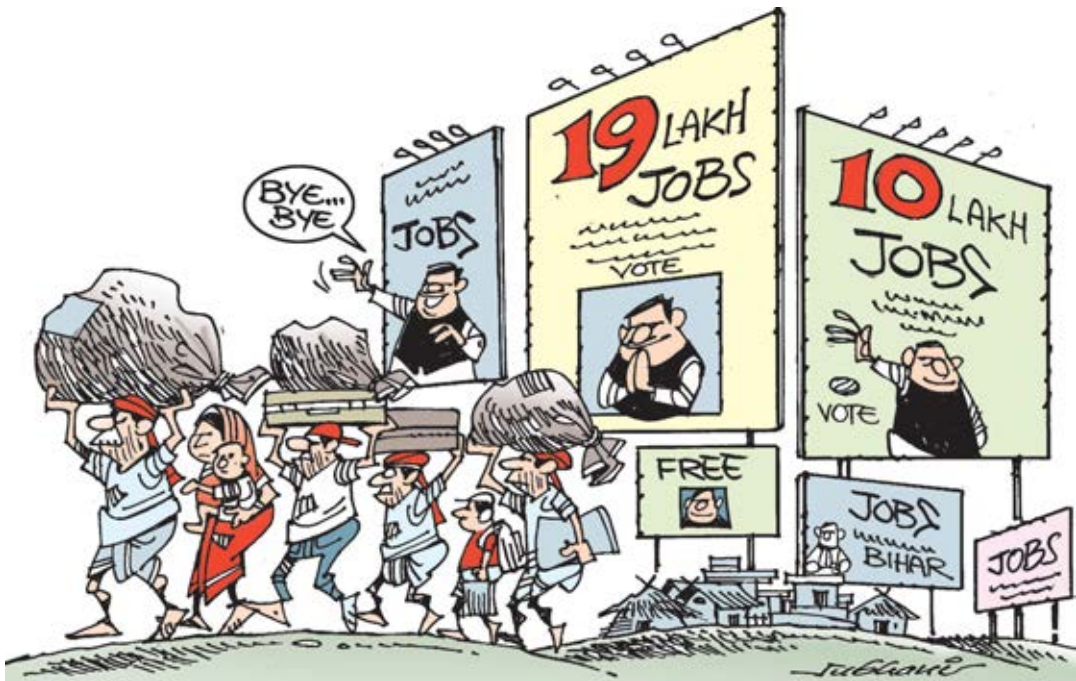
KAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

K. SUBHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

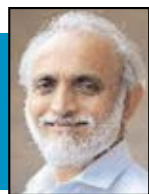
DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234
Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904
Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220453
Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burrampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255
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Subhani



No real winner in Bihar; Nitish, Tejashwi lose out



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

The 2020 Bihar Assembly election has ended without any real winners. Political analyst and psephologist Yogendra Yadav had rightly observed on NDTV that no party or leader has got a mandate in this election. There is no hung Assembly, true, and the National Democratic Alliance comprising mainly the Janata Dal (United) and the BJP just managed to get past the winning line, even as the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)-led Mahagathbandhan lost a closely fought electoral battle. But the poll outcome has left the leaders in the battle in the lurch, as it were.

Chief minister Nitish Kumar has lost the battle because his JD(U) fared rather badly, winning just 43 to the 70 seats his party had won in 2015, which was less than that of the JD(U)'s then ally, the RJD, which had won 80 seats then, but he retained his chief minister's post. And he will be doing so again this time as well. For more reasons than one, the BJP has decided that Nitish Kumar would remain the chief minister, even though the saffron party has now got many more seats than the JD(U) and has thus become the senior partner in the alliance. It is a strange situation, where a chief ministerial claimant in a coalition gets what he wants despite his party not commanding a majority. It remains to be debated whether this is due to the political stature of Nitish Kumar. But his position is a political anomaly, for all that.

For the second time in a row, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Midas touch failed to work as well as hoped for in the Bihar Assembly election, the first time being in 2015. Somehow, his messianic zeal seems to leave the Bihar voter cold. And it has shown once again that the BJP cannot ever hope to win on its own, though it has struck a good strike rate winning 74 of the 101 seats it has contested in a House of 243. Tejashwi Yadav, 31, heading the Rashtriya Janata Dal, is indeed the new star on Bihar's political horizon, though the RJD's limitations, as that of the BJP and JD(U), have become clear once again. The RJD had won 80 seats in 2015, though it had contested only 100-odd seats then. This time around, the party had contested 144 seats, but it has won a little more than half of them, 75.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party colleagues have declared themselves to be the winners in Bihar, which is technically true, and it is a fact that at the end of the day it is what matters. As the anchor of a major English television news channel, crowed in approval of the BJP and NDA, more for the BJP than for the NDA, that winning even with a narrow margin is okay because "jo jeeta wahi sikandar".

But Bihar's political chequerboard remains defiant, where no one party or leader seems to find approval from the people in the state. Each party and each leader is confined to a demarcated sphere of influence. The challenge for any claimant to political

For the second time in a row, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Midas touch failed to work as well as hoped for, the first time being in 2015. Somehow, his messianic zeal seems to leave the Bihar voter cold.

leadership in the state is whether he or she can reach out to the people at large across the state. The BJP in 2015 tried to test its strength on its own, as a matter of fact it was forced to do so, and it had won just 54 seats, and that too after Mr Modi's impressive performance in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. And it has happened again. Mr Modi's success in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls was not of much help for his party in the Assembly election a year later. It is an interesting political fact that Mr Modi seems to find acceptance across the state in a parliamentary, but not in an Assembly, election.

The voter in Bihar can be blamed for narrow-minded caste fidelity, but in a society where different castes or social groups jostle for power it also ensures a certain democratic balance of power. And the quality of democracy in Bihar is higher because of this untidy caste equilibrium, and unlike in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, no single party can hope to take the spoils home.

The BJP cannot be the domineering and divisive force in Bihar that it is in Uttar Pradesh. In Bihar, the BJP has no choice but to share political space with the Communist parties and minority-based ones like that of the All India Majlis Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM). The democratic space in Bihar is accommodative of political diversity.

There is no ignoring the disparity between a democratically savvy

Bihar, and Mr Modi was right to recall the democratic heritage of Bihar which precedes the founders of Jainism and Buddhism, and the economically backward and socially retrogressive polity of today. The paradox cannot be explained away. Vaishali in ancient Bihar was not only a proud republic but it was also a prosperous city-state. And the province was also an enviable seat of Buddhist and Brahminical learning. Present-day Bihar, caught as it is in the throes of impoverishment and casteism, is a far cry from the old, sophisticated politics of the region.

The people of Bihar have shown in this election, as they have in previous ones, that they hold the overweening politicians through their voting power. And it is they who will have to transform Bihar in the economic and social spheres. While caste can be useful in keeping democracy alive because the political competition among the different caste groups keeps democracy vibrant, it becomes a barrier to achieve prosperity and well-being.

They should keep away caste in the workplace and classroom but put it to good use in the political arena. Its political sophistication is of little use if the people remain poor.

It is possible that politicians would perforce usher in economic and social modernisation in the state as Nitish Kumar has been trying to do in the past 15 years, and Lalu Prasad Yadav did, however erratically, in the 15 years before. But it is the people who have to take charge of the state's economic development and direct the political leaders to do what needs to be done.

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

LETTERS

BIHAR RESULTS

It was a hard fought election and RJD has become the single largest party (DC, Nov.11). However, what is remarkable and impressive is the Left parties -the CPI(M), CPI and CPI-ML(Liberation) did better than the GoP. It is a harbinger of cadre based alliance being realised by the younger generation.

Dr C. Ghanshyam Visakhapatnam

It is a matter of great joy that the BJP won a big role in Bihar elections (Modi magic wins Bihar, DC, Nov. 11). The RJD, under the leadership of Tejaswi Yadav, managed to outwit the BJP.

B.S. Sharma Visakhapatnam

TELANGANA BYPOLL

The bypoll result in Dubbaka in Telangana is special on many accounts. Generally the ruling party will have an advantage over rivals when the demise of a serving member is involved. The sympathy factor will still be there. Despite all favourable factors, the TRS lost.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao Vizianagaram

BIDEN'S ERA

Joe Biden appears to be a go-getter with his vast experience in administration for the last 50 years. He is also a humanist mellowed down due to his own family tragedies. Vishnu Prakash's article 'India-US ties might be stronger under Biden', (DC, Nov. 11) also highlighted this aspect.

K. Nehru Patnaik Visakhapatnam

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

New Soviet moon probe launched

MOSCOW, Nov. 11 Russia has launched a new automatic spaceship towards the moon, Tass News agency announced today.

Tass said the ship, Luna 17, had left for the moon "from the orbit of an artificial earth satellite" and had reached a trajectory close to the one calculated.

The aim of the flight was to check on new on-board systems and carry out further scientific exploration of the moon, Tass added.

The previous launching in this series, Luna-16 landed on the moon on September 21 and picked up samples of moon dust before returning to earth.

Sriram Karri



Dubbaka nailbiter may have changed Telangana politics

Away from the scrutinising glare of most of the national media, which was riveted on the electoral verdict of Bihar, the results of a bypoll to Dubbaka Assembly constituency in Telangana unfolded like a last-over thriller of an IPL match.

The voters of the predominantly rural constituency, which lies between the VIP constituencies of Gajwel (represented by chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao) and Siddipet (represented by finance minister T. Harish Rao and nephew of CM Rao), and close to Sircilla, represented by IT and industries minister K.T. Rama Rao (son of CM Rao), opted for the BJP's Madhavaneni Raghunandan Rao over TRS candidate Solipeta Sujatha, widow of Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, whose death a few months ago necessitated the bypoll by a margin of 1,079 votes.

The 23 rounds of counting saw a see-saw battle, with the BJP leading in all but one of the first 12 rounds, the TRS pulling back the lead between rounds 13 and 19, and taking a slim lead, with the BJP bouncing back in the last four to

bag 62,772 votes against TRS, which bagged 61,302 votes. The Congress was a distant third with 21,819 votes.

Since its formation in 2001, the TRS has been a champion in winning byelections. It has built an enviable election machinery, not too unlike the BJP nationally, with a combination of perfect campaign strategy and messaging, phenomenal online media dominance, micro-management at booth level, an enthused cadre, a well-crafted narrative, peerless orators as star campaigners, backed by money power and misuse of official machinery, which adds up to its unbeatable track record, especially since it came to power in 2014.

It helps that while CM K. Chandrashekar Rao is the tallest leader in the state, there are no measurable rivals to take on him. The first setback the TRS suffered in a long time was in the Lok Sabha elections of 2019, where it lost eight of the 17 seats it contested but blamed it on the Modi wave. After all, the pink party, which had successfully led a campaign for a separate statehood for Telangana, had

swept the Assembly elections which they called for ahead of schedule in December 2018.

With the win in Dubbaka, BJP now has a second MLA in Raghunandan Rao, after Raja Singh, in the 119-member legislative Assembly, which reveals how powerfully the TRS is perched for the rest of its three years term in office.

Yet, the TRS is nervous, unusually and extremely nervous. Since N.T. Rama Rao made his political debut in the early 1980s founding the Telugu Desam, ending the Congress monopoly over power in the Telugu region, no party or leader has won a third consecutive term, which TRS would attempt in the next Assembly elections.

Surmounting history defying odds might not be too daunting for TRS, which succeeded in the struggle for a separate Telangana where all others failed in the past, but the anti-incumbency is visibly taking a toll. In Nizamabad Lok Sabha constituency, K. Kavitha, CM Rao's daughter and sitting MP lost to a debutant in 2014, a statement of personal anger of the voters

against a single family with too many members in office.

Today, the TRS will rue that it precipitated the decline and uprooting of several parties in the state — YSRC, Telugu Desam, and finally the Congress, its last rival in the state. The 19-MLA Congress legislative party was split and two-thirds merged into the TRS, reducing it to a symbolic Opposition. The TRS was elated it had achieved a no-Opposition polity but missed the looming danger ahead; nature abhors a vacuum and the BJP was willing to fill it, optimistic Telangana could be the second state in south after Karnataka where it could form a government.

Under a new aggressive party president, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the Telangana BJP has been able to create a look of a potential challenger to TRS. They won Dubbaka under an excruciating set of challenges.

There is a statewide shift of youth, a large number of them unemployed and angry, towards the saffron party. The twin narratives of development and Hindutva are fuelling a surcharged political

atmosphere akin to the days of the struggle for statehood. With the pink party being pushed to the back-foot for the first time.

In coming months, anti-TRS forces — which had become despondent and dismayed — have an address to congregate — the BJP office.

Political leaders, cadre and commoners are abuzz with excitement because the BJP is more than capable of responding to the usual arm-twisting tactics of the TRS, or even better them.

With the MIM being an ally of the TRS, the BJP has fodder aplenty to explain grievances nursed, real or imagined, and pin it on the doorstep of CM Chandrashekar Rao's appeasement politics.

BJP has two MLAs now, but TRS knows its history — after all, with two MPs in Lok Sabha in 1984 — Dr A.K. Patel (Mehsana, Gujarat) and Chandupatla Janga Reddy (Hanamkonda, Telangana, then Andhra Pradesh) — could rise to win absolutely majority in Parliament within three decades. Three years might be sufficient for BJP to conquer a small state.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	43,593.67	0.73
Nifty 50	12,749.15	0.93
S&P 500*	3,570.69	0.71
Dollar (₹)	74.37	-0.24
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.63	-0.37
Euro (₹)	87.69	-0.13
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,114*3	0.005
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	44.43	0.82
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.903	-0.014
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.960	0.00

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Taiwan processor chipmaker to set up \$3.5 bn US arm

A Taiwanese maker of processor chips for Apple and other customers plans to invest \$3.5 billion to set up a US subsidiary amid American concern about relying too heavily on sources in Asia for high-tech components. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co, the world's biggest contract producer of semiconductors, said its board approved the plan to set up the subsidiary in Arizona.

Murugappan steps down as chairman of Tube, Chola



Noted industrialist and chairman of diversified conglomerate Murugappa Group M. M. Murugappan has stepped down from two of the group entities' to pursue philanthropy and other interests, the two companies said. Group firm Tube Investments said Murugappan has stepped down as chairman and resigned as director on Wednesday on reaching 65. The board appointed M. A. M. Arunachalam as additional director.

Brokers unhappy with T+1 settlement move

Stock brokers' association Anmi has raised concern on the proposal to lower the settlement cycle for completion of share transactions to T+1. In its letter to Sebi, Anmi said the implementation of the new system would increase working capital requirements for brokers and enhance the workload on the banks and depository participants (DPs). Currently, trades are settled after two working days (T+2).

ICICI Bank retail mortgage book crosses ₹2 L cr

Second largest private sector lender ICICI Bank said its retail mortgage book has crossed the Rs 2-lakh crore mark recently and October witnessed the highest ever disbursements. The bank said it had touched the Rs 1 lakh crore mark in 2016 and expects the Rs 3-lakh crore mark to happen sooner. Its executive director Anup Bagchi attributed the growth to digital processes, which aid a third of the loans.



Incentives to help India emerge as a mfg hub Industry lauds PLI

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 11

Industry finds that with the Rs 1.45 lakh crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the government has rightly identified the high potential sectors to make the country a manufacturing hub.

"The PLI announcement of Rs 1,45,000 crore across 10 key sectors till 2025 is a strategic policy intervention. Coming at the back of Covid-19 and the general slowdown, this is expected to boost production, lead to job creation and ultimately be a major kicker for GDP and taxes," said Sangita Reddy, president, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industries (Ficci). "The government has carefully chosen the sectors for the PLI scheme. There could be more sectors that would receive the PLI benefits in the future," she added.

"The new PLI policy is transformational and timely and will facilitate India becoming a global manufacturing hub. The policy is strategically targeted and will go a long way to boost production, make Indian goods competitive and expand exports as part of global value chains," said Uday Kotak, president, Confederation of India Industry (CII).

As for textiles, the PLI scheme for man-made fibre will support the much-needed shift in Indian textile exports that will help it cater to the global market skewed towards man-made fibre products. In the case of technical textiles, the National Technical Textile

The government has carefully chosen the sectors for the PLI scheme. There could be more sectors that would receive the PLI benefits in the future



Sangita Reddy, president, Ficci

The industry was eagerly awaiting for this scheme to increase its competitiveness and take the growth of the sector to the next level



Kenichi Ayukawa, president, Siam

This will pave the way for the pharma industry to move into newer areas. The industry had set a target to achieve \$130 billion exports by 2030 from the current \$42 billion. Now we can aspire for it



Dinesh Dua, chairman, Pharmexcil

Mission aims at more than tripling production to \$50 billion in four years and achieving export revenues of Rs 20,000 crore in two years and the PLI scheme will help the industry achieve the target. The government has announced a Rs 10,683 crore PLI scheme for the textile sector for the next five years.

"The future of Indian textile exports is MMF as the share of MMF-based textiles and clothing products would account for 80 per cent of the global export market by 2030. The government has rightly identified the segments within textiles," said the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (Citi).

George Paul, CEO, Manufacturers' Association of Information Technology (Mait) says that with the PLI, the government has boldly declared that the next 10 years will be the decade for manufacturing. It is recognises disabilities in the system and

looks at Indian companies in a fresh light. Manufacturers of semiconductor fabrication, display fab, laptop/ notebooks, servers, IoT devices and specified computer hardware will receive Rs 5,000 crore PLI.

For pharmaceuticals, the government had earlier announced a PLI scheme for active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and bulk drugs. The new PLI scheme has covered a large spectrum of pharma products. "This will pave the way for the pharma industry to move into newer areas. The industry had set a target to achieve \$130 billion exports by 2030 from the current \$42 billion. Now we can aspire for it," said Dinesh Dua, chairman, Pharmaceuti-cals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil).

The government has provided PLI of Rs 12,195 crore for telecom and networking products, including core transmission equipment, 4G/5G, next

generation radio access network and wireless equipment, access and customer premises equipment (CPE), internet of things (IoT), access devices and other wireless equipment and enterprise equipment: switches and routers.

"We are yet to receive details of the scheme from the DoT, however, we appreciate the proposed outlay of Rs 12,000 crore for telecom and networking equipment and are confident that the government would have designed the scheme in such a manner to ensure that the demand for telecom equipment from the local market is enhanced and remains robust as well as exports from India are suitably supported and incentivised," said Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, director general, Cellular Operators Association of India.

The largest chunk of the incentive of Rs 57,042 crore will be provided for automobiles and auto components. "The industry was eagerly awaiting for this scheme to increase its competitiveness and take the growth of the sector to the next level," said Kenichi Ayukawa, president, Siam.

"We are hopeful that the outlay announced will encourage the industry to become net-exporter and help reduce import dependence," said Deepak Jain, president, Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (Acma). "Whilst the auto component industry exports over 25 per cent of its production, our ambition is to capture a significant proportion of global trade," added Jain.

12 firms to be part of MSCI India Index

New Delhi, Nov. 11: As many as 12 companies, including Trent and Kotak Mahindra Bank, have been added to the MSCI India Index, while Bosch and LIC Housing Finance will move out, according to the latest MSCI Global Standard Index rejig announcement.

The stocks which made their way to the MSCI India Index are ACC, Adani Green Energy, Apollo Hospitals, Balkrishna Industries, Ipca Laboratories, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Larsen & Toubro Infotech, MRF, Muthoot Finance, PI Industries, Trent Limited and Yes Bank.

The changes in constituents for the MSCI global standard indices will take place at the close of November 30.

Bosch and LIC Housing Finance will move out from the list on that day.

Shares of Trent jumped 11.66 per cent, Apollo Hospitals 6.19 per cent, Adani Green Energy 5 per cent, Balkrishna Industries 4.99 per cent, Yes Bank gained 4.95 per cent, Ipca Laboratories 3.86 per cent and PI Industries 3 per cent on Wednesday.

Kotak Mahindra Bank rose 2.97 per cent, L&T Infotech 2.61 per cent, Muthoot Finance 2.41 per cent, MRF 1.58 per cent and ACC 1.22 per cent on the BSE.

— PTI

Bank staff to get 15-20% pay hike



FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, NOV. 11

As a Diwali gift to 8.5 lakh bank employees, the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) on Wednesday announced the conclusion of the 11th bipartite wage negotiations with nine bank unions and officers' associations. The wage revision agreement will be effective from November 1, 2017 and provides for a 15-20 per cent increase in pay slip.

In a first, the banks will also put in place a performance-linked incentive scheme

C.H. Venkatachalam, general secretary of the banking sector's largest union, All-India Bank Employees' Association (Aibea), told *Financial Chronicle*, "The arrears will result in Rs 7,900 crore additional outgo for banks per year, covering 8.5 lakh employees and officers of 29 public sector banks, private sector banks and foreign banks. It would result in 15 to 20 per cent increase in the salary per month for the employees. So, if an employee's salary is Rs 40,000, his increase would be Rs 6000.

"In addition, employees will get leave benefit,

leave travel concession benefit and other service conditions are also being improved upon and family pension will also nearly double. A new feature is the performance-linked incentive, scheme which is being introduced under this settlement. Hence this settlement is highly satisfactory."

Giving the breakup of the yearly outgo, Venkatachalam said, "Rs 3,385 crore are the arrears for workmen employees, clerks and peons while Rs 4,515 crore is for officers."

"To inculcate a sense of competition and also to reward the performance, the concept of Performance Linked Pay has been introduced for the first time. A detailed bipartite settlement/joint note has been signed with the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), representing four workmen unions and four officers' associations and also Bank Karamchhari Sena Mahasangh (BKSM), who were parties to agreement," Sunil Mehta, chief executive of the Indian Banks Association said.

However, the demand of public sector employees to implement five-day banking was not among the changes announced.

Gland Pharma gets poor retail, HNI response

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 11

Gland Pharma's initial public offering was over-subscribed more than two times on the final day, with qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) coming to the issue's rescue, as the retail individual investors and high net worth investors portion were undersubscribed.

Gland Pharma's Rs 6,479.55-crore issue was priced at Rs 1,490 to Rs 1,500 for a Re 1 face value share.

As per the NSE data, the public issue was subscribed 2.06 times till 1800 hours.

According to the persons closely working with the merchant bankers for the issue, QIB portion was subscribed 6.39 times while HNI portion was subscribed 0.5 times and retail individual investors category was subscribed 0.24 times.

Last Friday, Gland Pharma had raised Rs 1943.86 crore from 70 anchor investors ahead of the IPO. Gland's public offer was the largest pharma company IPO in recent times.

Retail still in recovery mode, durables see modest growth

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 11

Buoyed by festive demand, organised retail sales of consumer durables and electronics posted a positive growth in October. Other retail categories too continued to recover towards last year's levels but still stayed in the contraction phase.

Overall, retail made a steady month-on-month recovery with sales at -31 per cent in the month of October from -50 per cent in the September quarter and -78 per cent in June quarter, as per the data from the Retailers Association of India.

Till September, all the major categories have been reporting de-growth. However, categories such as consumer durables and electronics registered a muted growth of 2 per cent in September and further 8 per cent year-on-year sales growth in October.

In the month of October, Samsung claimed to have seen 68 per cent growth in premium sales while overall sales grew by 36 per cent.



Samsung has seen consumers in small towns in India buying premium television, refrigerators, washing machines and microwave ovens this festive season. Its consumer electronics business too grew 32 per cent in October.

"We are beginning to see green shoots of recovery with a steady month-on-month improvement for businesses. However, we are yet to catch up to last year's levels. Further improvement in business will depend upon how the pandemic situation further plays out and how fast the businesses can go towards recovery," said Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers

Association of India.

Quick service restaurants, which had been degrowing 75 per cent in September, made a major recovery to -35 per cent in October. Apparel and clothing recovered from -52 per cent to -30 per cent.

According to Motilal Oswal Financial Services, apparel retailers have been looking to take a large part of their businesses and assets online. Retailers want to use stores as an inventory sourcing point and for pickups and drops.

The RAI survey found that food and grocery sold by organised retailers too has recovered from -24 per cent to -10 per cent.

Market sees flood of dollars post-US polls

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 11

Sensex and Nifty-50 marked eighth straight day of gains, closing at new all-time high on the back of heavy foreign portfolio investor (FPI) buying post-the US elections.

The Sensex gained 316 points to close at new all time high of Rs 43,593.67 after touching an all-time high of 43,708.47. The Nifty-50 closed at 12,749.15, up 118 points or 0.93 per cent after touching an intra-day high of 12,769.75.

FPIs were net buyers of equities worth Rs 6,207.19 crore while the domestic institutional investors booked profit worth Rs 3,463.86 crore.

Counter-shifting to left out sectors was again seen in the market on Wednesday, as index heavyweight Reliance Industries fell 4.20 per cent on the BSE. Other heavyweight losers included HDFC Bank (-0.28 per cent), Hindustan Unilever (-0.34 per cent), IndusInd Bank (-5.62 per cent) and Titan Industries (-2.33 per cent).

The top Sensex gainers included Tata Steel (7.39 per cent), Axis Bank (4.28

per cent), Bajaj Finserv (3.94 per cent), ITC (3.87 per cent), Kotak Bank (3.12 per cent) and Sun Pharma (3.01 per cent).

Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services, said, "The domestic market displayed positivity, largely owing to sectors like pharma, metals and IT while some volatility was exhibited in the broad market. The latest update on Covid vaccine has lifted the spirit of western markets, with Europe showing fast recovery in anticipation of rapid roll-out. In the US, markets witnessed a shift in investment from technology based to cyclical & small-cap companies in order to take benefit from a reviving economy.

"We feel that the world's financial market is getting a lot of new money, which was on-hold during the US election period while the actual outcome is much better. Markets have rapidly reached to premium level with over-optimism supported by easy money. Caution is advised in the short-term, as production and distribution wise the real benefit will take time," Nair said.

Vehicle sales in October			
Total No. of units sold			
	Oct 2019	Oct 2020	
Passenger cars	9.68%	1,66,568	1,82,692
Two-wheelers	16.88%	17,57,180	20,53,814
Three-wheelers	60.91%	66,985	26,187
Total passenger vehicles*	14.16%	2,71,737	3,10,294

*BMW, Mercedes, Tata Motors & Volvo Aug. data is not available Source: Siam

LTC SCHEME: GOVT STAFF'S KIN ALSO ELIGIBLE

New Delhi, Nov. 11: Central government employees availing the of the LTC cash voucher scheme can purchase goods or services in the name of spouse or other family members eligible for Leave Travel Concession fare.

The second set of FAQ issued by the Department of Expenditure also clarified that an employee can claim reimbursement for the purchase of goods and services attracting GST of 12 per cent or more, on or after October 12 even if s/he has not exercised the option of availing the scheme.

The government on October 12 announced the LTC cash voucher scheme under which employees can purchase any goods or services with a GST rate of 12 per cent or above to avail the benefit.

To a query on whether purchase receipt can be in the name of any dependent, the FAQ said, "The invoices of the goods and services purchased as per the scheme may be in the name of spouse or any family member who are eligible for LTC fare as declared in the service records".

The department said the special cash package scheme in lieu of one LTC is to "compensate and incentivise consumption" by government employees and the benefits can be availed of up to March 31, 2021.

The FAQ also clarified that purchase of goods or services on EMI is also permissible. — PTI

Honda says will be first to mass produce level 3 autonomous cars

Tokyo, Nov. 11: Japan's Honda Motor Co said on Wednesday it will be the world's first automaker to mass produce sensor-packed level 3 autonomous cars that will allow drivers to let their vehicles navigate congested expressway traffic.

"Honda is planning to launch sales of a Honda Legend (luxury sedan) equipped with the newly approved automated driving equipment" before the end of March 2021, Honda said in a press release.

The race to build self-driving cars is a key technology battleground for automakers, with technology companies such as Google parent Alphabet



Inc also investing billions of dollars in a field expected to boost car sales.

Japan's government earlier in the day awarded a safety certification to Honda's autonomous "Traffic Jam Pilot" driving technology, which legally allow drivers to take their eyes off the road.

"Self driving cars are expected to play a big role

in helping reduce traffic accidents, provide transportation for the elderly and improve logistics," said Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

There are six levels of vehicle autonomy, from 0 to 5, ranging from manual cars or those with simple functions such as cruise control to fully self-driving vehicles that would not need steering wheels, or brake and acceleration pedals.

Level 2 cars, which are currently on public roads, can control their own speed and steering, but must have an alert driver able to take control at all times. — Reuters

SHORT TAKES

Babar elated over Pak captaincy

Karachi: Handed Test captaincy along with leadership role in the limited overs format, young Pakistan batsman Babar Azam remembered his days as a ball-picker in a Test match, saying he is living a dream.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday announced that Babar had replaced Azhar as Test captain, just one year after it had appointed the senior batsman to lead the Test side in place of Sarfaraz Ahmed.

"I remember being a ball picker in a Test match and at that time I thought what an honour it would be to play for Pakistan. The dream has come true and I thank the PCB for showing faith in me as a captain as well," he said.

Babar said he will not mind reaching out to his predecessors Azhar Ali and Sarfaraz Ahmed for becoming a good captain.

"I have played under and learnt a lot from Azhar and Sarfaraz. And I will definitely seek their advice," he added. — PTI

Malik, Aamir miss out on Kiwi tour

Karachi: The Pakistani selectors on Wednesday dropped veteran all-rounder Shoaib Malik and pacer Muhammad Aamir from a 35-member squad for the upcoming New Zealand tour. The Pakistan Cricket Board announced a combined squad, which includes players for the senior team and the Shaheen's side. It did not specify which player belongs to which squad.

Pakistan play three T20Is on December 18, 20 and 22 before their ICC World Test Championship fixtures to be held in Mount Maunganui and Christchurch from December 26-30 and January 3-7 respectively. The scheduled of the Shaheens is yet to be confirmed by New Zealand Cricket though it is expected to be played concurrently. The squad will depart for New Zealand on November 23. — PTI

Maradona needs family support

Buenos Aires: Diego Maradona's psychologist Diego Daz says the Argentine football hero is in a stable condition in a private health clinic where he is recovering from surgery. Maradona last week had an operation for a subdural hematoma, which is an accumulation of blood between a membrane and his brain. His personal doctor, neurologist Leopoldo Luque, said the problem likely was caused by an accident, but Maradona said he didn't remember the event. Daz, who is taking care of Maradona during his time at the Olivos private clinic, on Tuesday said the 1986 World Cup champion needs doctors, therapy and "fundamentally family support." — AP

Brazil, Argentina gear up for WC

Rio De Janeiro: Brazil must confront a growing injury list that includes Neymar as they resume World Cup qualifying this week, while Argentina are out to extend their perfect start at home to neighbours Paraguay. Brazil host Venezuela in Sao Paulo on Friday chasing a third win in as many matches after launching their Qatar 2022 campaign with victories over Bolivia and Peru. However, Brazil coach Tite will be without Neymar after he injured his thigh while on Champions League duty with PSG in Turkey last month. Argentina, who began qualifying with narrow wins over Ecuador and Bolivia, are hoping Lionel Messi will be fit for both their games against Paraguay and Peru. — AFP

Live on TV

GOLF

Augusta Masters: From 10.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Euro Qualifiers (play-off finals): Georgia vs North Macedonia from 10.30 pm on Sony Ten 2.

International Friendlies: Moldova vs Russia from 10.30 pm on Sony Six; Wales vs USA from 1.15 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1; England vs Ireland from 1.40 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2

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ALLROUND SHOW

Hunger and working on nitty gritty did it for MI

Dubai, Nov. 11: An insatiable hunger to succeed, the willingness to put in the extra yards and extensive work on the nitty-gritties culminated in an unprecedented fifth IPL title for Mumbai Indians, the players responsible for the triumph said after a clinical demolition of Delhi Capitals in the final here.

Opener Quinton de Kock said after the final, "Mumbai have a great set up, so we've been able to move with the gym work and training and stuff. We're reaping the rewards today for it. It's a great feeling."

"It's a great feeling. I've been here 11 years, fifth trophy. No one sees the planning and training, it's pressure playing for a franchise like this," MI veteran Kieron Pollard.

The West Indian swash-buckler added: "The amount of trophies, the amount of work, the amount of players who go on to play for their countries, I think we'll have to say so (that this is the best T20 franchise)."

Elder of the Pandya brothers, Krunal pinned it on the hunger of the players.

"It's the hunger. The way we went about the games, there was always 100 per cent. A lot of credit goes to how we prepared. One month before we came, everyone knew their roles," he added.

Another MI star, Suryakumar Yadav attributed the success to preparation and following the process.

"Preparations, processes and routine is important. The team just said one thing — we'll take care of this. You go and express yourself," the MI rising batsman Suryakumar concluded.

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah said the title is more special because of the tough circumstances the tournament was played in given the challenges posed by the deadly Covid-19 pandemic.

— PTI



Krunal Pandya (left), Ishan Kishan (centre) and Hardik Pandya celebrate after Mumbai Indians beat Delhi Capitals by five wickets to lift their fifth Indian Premier League trophy in Dubai on Tuesday.

Captain all praise for bowlers

Dubai, Nov. 11: His fluent half century made the chase look effortless in the IPL final but Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma said it was his bowlers who set up the crushing win over Delhi Capitals, which fetched an unprecedented fifth title for the side.

New Zealand pacer Trent Boult snared the dangerous Marcus Stoinis and Ajinkya Rahane while off-spinner Jayant Yadav dismissed the in-form Shikhar Dhawan to leave Delhi Capitals reeling at 22 for three, early setbacks from which the

team couldn't quite recover.

"We got a wicket on the first ball and we got a couple more after that. We just wanted to keep the pressure, the execution was perfect from all the bowlers," Rohit said at the post-match press conference.

"We knew Stoinis and Dhawan are Delhi's key batters, so we wanted to bowl our key bowlers at them, getting early wickets was the key, we wanted to take early wickets, when you have the best new ball bowler in your squad, why not go with

that?" he said.

Rohit applauded each and every bowler for his contribution in the team's success throughout the tournament. Boult (25) and Jasprit Bumrah (27) were at their lethal best the entire season.

"Boult has been fantastic for us this season and so has Bumrah. They are the ones who kept us in the game throughout. (James) Pattinson, (Nathan) Coulter-Nile, (Rahul) Chahar, and Krunal Pandya also did their job," he added.

Also, Rohit Sharma believes that his style of

leadership is not a dictatorial one, which is precisely the reason behind Mumbai Indians' stupendous success in the Indian Premier League.

"I'm not someone who'll run with a stick behind someone. The only way you can do it is by giving them confidence. So you have to strike that right balance," Rohit said when asked about what kind of captain he is.

The humble leader remembered the back-room staff and praised them for the work that goes behind the scene.

— PTI

ROHIT RUES SURYA'S RUN OUT IN FINAL

Dubai, Nov. 11: "I should have sacrificed my wicket for him," said Rohit Sharma as he regretted Suryakumar Yadav's dismissal in the IPL final while attempting an improbable single that was actually called by the Mumbai Indians skipper.

Rohit led from the front with a 51-ball 68 as MI defeated DC by five wickets, effortlessly chasing down a target of 157 in 18.4 overs.

"The kind of form he was in, I should have sacrificed my wicket for Surya. But throughout the tournament he has played some incredible shots," Rohit said.

Yadav, who accumulated 480 runs this season averaging 40 with a strike rate of 145, said he didn't mind the sacrifice as he knew the skipper would lead the team through.

Yadav had said no to the run when Rohit called for it in the 11th over but crossed over nonetheless when he realised that the captain would be dismissed if he didn't. — PTI

Bowlers lost it in powerplay: Iyer

Dubai, Nov. 11: Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer says his otherwise outstanding bowlers "lost it in powerplay" after a disastrous start prevented them from posting a challenging total in the IPL final against Mumbai Indians.

Losing three early wickets pegged the Capitals back as they could post only a modest 156 for seven which was easily chased down by MI in 18.4 overs.

"It's just the fatigue that crept in may be, bowlers just lost it in the Powerplay," a disappointed Iyer said at the post match press conference.

DC captain said he does not regret his decision to bat first. After being reduced to 22 for 3, Iyer (65 off 50) and Rishabh Pant (56 off 38) stitched 96 runs for the fourth wicket to stabilise the innings.

"I thought it was very good decision (to bat first). When you enter the final, it's very important to get off to a good start and that's what we lacked in this game," he said.



It's just the fatigue that crept in may be, bowlers just lost it in the Powerplay. When you enter the final, it's very important to get off to a good start and that's what we lacked in this game.

— SHREYAS IYER
Delhi Capitals captain

"I think we reached to a very decent total in the Powerplay and after that we capitalised there onwards and got to a decent total until 15th over I guess but after that everything came down."

Iyer was effusive in his praise for his bowling unit despite an off day in the summit clash. — PTI

Make Rohit T20 captain: Gautam

New Delhi, Nov. 11: Cricketer-turned-politician Gautam Gambhir and England's Michael Vaughan have called for Rohit Sharma's elevation to India's T20 captaincy with the former national team opener going to the extent of saying that it would be a "shame" if the star batsman does not get the role.

Rohit led Mumbai Indians to a fifth IPL title on Tuesday, impressing not just with a graceful half century but also shrewd captaincy. He is currently the national vice-captain for the white-ball formats. "If Rohit Sharma doesn't become India's captain, it's their loss, not Rohit's," Gambhir told ESPNcricinfo's T20 Time Out programme.

"Yes, a captain is only as good as his team and I completely agree with that, but what are the parameters to judge a captain on who is good and who isn't? The parameters and benchmark should be the same. Rohit has led his team (MI) to five IPL titles," he added. MI won an unprecedented fifth IPL title by beating DC by five wickets in Dubai on Tuesday night.

"We keep saying MS Dhoni is India's most successful captain. Why? Because he has won two World Cups and three IPLs," Gambhir said.

"Rohit has won five IPL titles, he is the most successful captain in the history of the tournament. Going forward, it'll be a shame if he doesn't get India's white-ball or just T20 captaincy."



If Rohit Sharma doesn't become India's captain, it's their loss, not Rohit's. Rohit has won five IPL titles, he is the most successful captain in the history of the tournament. Going forward, it'll be a shame if he doesn't get India's white-ball or just T20 captaincy.

— GAUTAM GAMBHIR
former India player

"Because he can't do much more than this. He can only help the team he captains to victories. So if he doesn't become India's regular white-ball captain, it will be their loss," he added.

Gambhir had earlier said that Virat Kohli should be made accountable for RCB's failure to make the IPL finals in 13 efforts, eight out of which were under Kohli's leadership.

But the cricketer-turned-politician clarified that he never meant Kohli's captaincy is "poor", instead he only suggested that split captaincy model is the need of the hour. — PTI

INDIGENOUS JERSEY FOR AUSSIES IN T20 vs INDIA

Melbourne, Nov. 11: The Australian men's cricket team is set to wear specially-designed Indigenous shirts in the upcoming T20 series against India, a move aimed at recognising and encouraging the Indigenous Australians' role in the sport.

Cricket Australia on Wednesday unveiled the design, a collaboration between manufacturer ASICS and two Indigenous women, Auntie Fiona Clarke and Courtney Hagen.

"Clarke is a direct descendant of late cricketer 'Mosquito' Couzens (known as Grongarrong), one of the Aboriginal players who toured England in 1868 as part of the first sporting team from Australia to play abroad," cricket.co.au reported.

The design is an ode to the ancestors and past, present and future aboriginal cricketers.

The Australian men's team, thus, will be following their women counterparts, who first wore an Indigenous shirt of their own in a match against England earlier this year.

Australia premier fast bowler Mitchell Starc, who displayed the first look of the jersey, said he was excited about sporting the new shirt. — PTI

WI players breach bubble, bear brunt

Wellington, Nov. 11: The West Indies cricket squad has been stripped of the right to train while in managed isolation after players were found to have breached rules around their 14-day quarantine.

New Zealand's Ministry of Health said CCTV footage from the team's Christchurch hotel showed players mingling in hallways and sharing food in violation of managed isolation regulations. The ministry said all incidents occurred within the hotel and there was no danger to the public.

The West Indies squad, which has completed 12 of its scheduled 14 days of isolation under Covid-19 regulations, will not be able to train again until its

full managed isolation period has been completed. The isolation period might be extended if any further concerns arise, the ministry said.

Evidence of the breaches has been provided to West Indies Cricket, which has been encouraged to conduct its own investigation and apply any disciplinary sanctions it considers necessary.

The West Indies squad required a government exemption to enter New Zealand for their upcoming series of three Twenty20 internationals, starting on Nov. 27, and two tests beginning on Dec. 3. New Zealand's borders are currently generally only open to returning residents and citizens. — AP

Mediation needed to keep sports clean: Justice Sikri

New Delhi, Nov. 11: There have been several cases of gender discrimination and sexual exploitation in sports, which needed to be resolved immediately and mediation was needed for it, former Supreme Court Judge A K Sikri said on Tuesday.

The judge, who said that online disputes resolution (ODR) has been seen as the next step in Indian legal system in litigation, arbitration and mediation during the pandemic-induced lockdown and restrictions, was also of the view that commercialisation of

sports has given rise to various kinds of disputes and mediation was one such process which facilitated level playing field.

Justice Sikri, who is acting as a judge of Singapore International Commercial Court, spoke on the Scope of mediation in sports disputes at an international webinar organised by mediators of the Supreme Court of India, Commonwealth Lawyers Association, Sports Dispute Resolution Centre and the Youth Bar Association of India.

He said neither the

courts, that is litigation, nor arbitration that can deal with it effectively and mediation was needed for that. While speaking about cases of gender discrimination and sexual exploitation in sports, Justice Sikri said There are many such cases where the coach has tried to indulge in such practices and several complaints have come up against them. What is more important is that these issues need to be resolved immediately. They cannot wait even for a few days sometimes. That is why many sports

committees have ad hoc judges or arbitrators in the events. We need on the spot resolution. It is neither the courts, that is litigation, neither arbitration that can deal with it effectively. We need mediation for that, the judge said.

He said that time has come, as far as India was concerned, to have specialised mediation, including sports mediation, and the country should now gear up and start thinking as to how we can do mediation.

Covid-19 situation in the country has given us a

chance to look into mediation. Of course it is a pandemic which has created panic all over the world, many have died, livelihoods and lifestyle have been affected. In the whole process we have realised that technology can play an important role. And now ODR is seen as the next step even in Indian legal system, whether litigation or arbitration or mediation. And according to me, some of the cases which are proper for online mediation, apart from consumer disputes, are sports disputes, the

judge said.

He further said what was felt now and being highlighted was that it was not necessary to go to courts and there should be self regulation and mediation plays an important role in the process.

He said there cannot be a society without conflicts but what was needed was an early and peaceful mediation of those conflicts.

Mediation is one such process which goes into the reason why disputes have arisen. It not only looks into the past, it looks

into the future also so that relationship between the parties is maintained.

Discussions are always better than arguments because arguments are to find out who is right and a discussion is to find out what is right. It is only the mediation which brings about this. It heals the past, lives in the present and dreams the future, the judge added.

Justice Sikri said that mediation has come a long way in the last 15 years and it was here to stay as the legal system is enlarging its scope. — PTI