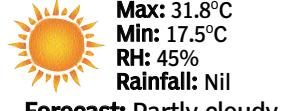


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | MONDAY | 2 NOVEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 31.8°C
Min: 17.5°C
RH: 45%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Mist likely. Max/Min temperature 32/18°C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+47,927)	(+556)
82,27,177	1,22,621

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,416)	(+5)
TS: 2,40,048	1,341
(+2,618)	(+16)
AP: 8,25,966	6,706

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,67,09,156
DEATHS
12,03,771
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

worldometers.info/coronavirus



NATION | 7

Scindia mistakenly seeks votes for Congress



SPORTS | 12

Dhoni says he'll be back on field next year

TABLOID

Ghosts spook men in tinsel town



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TRS sits tight in Dubbak, race open for second place

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The TRS goes into the November 3 Dubbak byelection with a good track record of winning such exercises, with the campaign ending on Sunday. The battle appears to be for the No. 2 spot between the Congress, which ended up second in the 2018 Assembly election, and the BJP which came third.

The results will be declared on November 10. The TRS and the BJP focused the campaign in the last days over the issue of Central funds for state welfare schemes.

● THERE ARE 23 candidates in the fray for the Dubbak bypoll but the main fight will be between Solipeta Sujatha of the TRS, Ch. Srinivas Reddy of the Congress and the BJP's Raghuandan Rao.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao joined issue by offering to resign if the BJP could prove that the Centre was funding certain programmes.

If the TRS accused the BJP-led Centre of ignoring Telangana state, the BJP and the Congress charged the government with ignoring the Dubbak

constituency. The biggest talking point towards the end of the election was the seizure of cash allegedly belonging to BJP candidate M. Raghuandan Rao and the fallout which included TS BJP president Bandi Sanjay being turned away from Siddipet district and his subsequent deeksha.

There are 23 candidates in the fray but the main fight will be between Solipeta Sujatha of the TRS, Ch. Srinivas Reddy of the Congress and the BJP's Raghuandan Rao.

● Page 2: Paramilitary forces at 89 poll stations

BJP activist sets himself on fire

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

A BJP activist who identified himself as Srinivas attempted self-immolation at the party state headquarters here on Sunday. Security personnel promptly put off the fire and rushed him to hospital.

He suffered 50 per cent burns and is in a critical condition.

Srinivas said he was protesting against TS BJP president Bandi Sanjay's recent arrest in Siddipet. He alleged that

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao had harassed his party president.

Srinivas, from Tammalani Gudem village in Yacharam Mandal, is stated to be active in the party's local wing.

Police said he brought the diesel from a petrol bunk near MJ Market and came to the BJP office between 12.20 and 12.30 pm. Shouting slogans like 'BJP Zindabad' and 'Sanjayanna Zindabad', he set fire to his vehicle using the diesel.

● Page 2: Activist shifted to private hospital

The Hyderabad police put on display ₹1 crore seized from two BJP sympathisers at the Basheerbagh office in Hyderabad on Sunday.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

KTR SMELLS BJP PLAN TO CREATE TROUBLE IN HYD

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday accused the BJP of conspiring to create violence and law and order problems in the city on Monday, a day before polls in Dubbak.

Addressing a press conference, he said that the BJP was resorting to such tactics after its "money drama" had failed.

He said that the Hyderabad police had confiscated ₹1 crore hawala cash in Secunderabad while on their way to Dubbak. The police revealed that it belonged to a close relative of BJP candidate M. Raghuandan Rao.

Citing the incident of a BJP worker attempting to set himself ablaze in front of the BJP state office in protest against the recent detention of BJP state chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Rama Rao said that the BJP leaders could use the incident to incite trouble in the city.

He pointed out it could start as a 'Chalo DGP office' or 'TRS office' protest and eventually lead to a lathi-charge or even police firing.

Stating that information regarding these plans had come from state BJP leaders, he urged the Director General of Police to ascertain the facts. He said TRS leaders will meet the Election Commission and the Chief Election Officer seeking action against the BJP. He exhorted Dubbak voters to be alert as the BJP would stoop to any extent to incite law and order problems. Later, he wrote to the CEC Sunil Arora, stating, "We received reliable information that the BJP is planning to incite violence and create law and order issues in view of the upcoming Dubbak bypoll."

missioner Anjani Kumar said that those arrested were Surabhi Srinivas Rao (47) and T. Ravi Kumar (33), residents of Chandanagar in Ranga Reddy district. Officials seized their SUV (TS09 EF 6909) and two phones. "Srinivas Rao is the brother-in-law of BJP Dubbak candidate M. Raghuandan Rao."

● Page 2: Money collected from Vishaka Industries

Cops seize ₹1 crore from BJP backers

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC HYDERABAD NOV. 1

The city police on Sunday seized ₹1 crore of unaccounted cash which was being shifted to Dubbak by two BJP sympathisers allegedly for distribution among voters in the November 3 byelection. The police nabbed them in Begumpet and placed them under arrest.

Hyderabad police com-

mander Anjani Kumar said that those arrested were Surabhi Srinivas Rao (47) and T. Ravi Kumar (33), residents of Chandanagar in Ranga Reddy district. Officials seized their SUV (TS09 EF 6909) and two phones.

"Srinivas Rao is the brother-in-law of BJP Dubbak candidate M. Raghuandan Rao."

● Page 2: Money collected from Vishaka Industries

94 seats in 17 districts that will go to the polls on Tuesday ended on Sunday evening.

The first phase of elections was held in Bihar on October 28. In the second phase, voting for 94 seats will be held on November 3. In the third phase, 78 seats will go to the polls on November 7. The results for all 243 Assembly seats will be declared on November 10.

This was Modi's third tour of Bihar for the ongoing Assembly elections. The PM's visit to Chapra on the eve of the second phase is significant as it has been a stronghold of RJD supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, referring to the sons of Bihar.

While addressing his political rallies, Mr. Modi tore into the Opposition's grand alliance chief ministerial candidate Tejashwi Yadav and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, referring to the previous government in Bihar.

them as "double yuvraj", and saying that they are fighting against the "double engine government" in Bihar (BJP and JD-U) to save their thrones.

"The double engine government is working for the development of Bihar but the double yuvraj are fighting the election only to save their thrones," he said.

During his public meetings, he also reminded people of the "jungle raj" during the 1990s when the RJD was in power and said that several development projects were stuck for many years due to the policies of the previous government in Bihar.

Indians begin to splurge yet again

First time since Feb, GST crosses ₹1-L cr

SANGEETHA G. | DC CHENNAI, NOV. 1

● THE GROSS GST revenue collected in the month of October stood at ₹1,05,155 crore, which is 10 per cent higher than ₹95,379 crore collected in the same month last year and ₹95,480 crore collected in September 2020.

● THE TOTAL revenue earned by the Centre and the state governments after regular settlement in October 2020 is ₹44,285 crore for CGST and ₹44,839 crore for the SGST. The government has settled ₹25,091 crore to CGST and ₹19,427 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement.

● ALMOST ALL the states and Union Territories, except Delhi, Sikkim, Daman Diu, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands, registered year-on-year growth in October. Among the larger states, Gujarat grew 15 per cent, Tamil Nadu 13 per cent and Maharashtra and Karnataka five per cent each.

GST collections registered growth both on a year-on-year and month-on-month basis, which experts claim indicates recovery in the economy.

"This up tick in (GST) collections on a month-on-month basis and over the same month last year is quite a welcome one for the government and the economy in particular. Some potential reasons for this surge could be the splurged demand on account of the festivities and input tax credit/other similar reconciliations which were due for businesses in September," said Abhishek Jain, Tax Partner, EY Abhishek Jain, Tax Partner, EY.

The gross GST revenue collected in the month of October stood at ₹1,05,155 crore, which is 10 per cent

higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

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GST collections had dropped well below the psychological mark of ₹1 lakh crore since the lockdown. After making a recovery to ₹90,917 crore in June, collections had dipped in July and August. However, in the past two months, collections have once again improved, mostly due to the festive season demand and normalisation of businesses.

HIZBUL CHIEF KILLED IN J&K ENCOUNTER

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, NOV. 1

The security forces on Sunday killed the operational chief of Jammu and Kashmir's frontline militant organisation Hizbul Mujahideen during a fire fight on the peripheries of Srinagar.

The slain man, Saif-ul-Islam Mir, a resident of Malangpora of south Kashmir, who was known among the militant ranks by pseudonyms of Dr Saifullah and Ghazi Haider had assumed the role of the commander of the Hizb after its 'operation commander' Riyaz Naikoo was killed in a gunfight with security forces on May 6 this year.

"Naikoo in May is a big achievement of the security forces in their fight against militants in J&K," said Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range), Vijay Kumar.

The police claimed that the slain militant was involved in many "terror crimes and civilian atrocities" besides instrumental in recruiting local youth into militant folds. "Dozens of cases in connection with his involvement in terror crimes stand registered against him in different police stations," the police statement said.

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SHORT TAKES

32-YEAR-OLD HELD FOR CHEATING

SAURABH JOSHI | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 1

The Mumbai police arrested a 32-year-old man from Palghar district, who was on the run after allegedly cheating a Hyderabad-based jeweller to the tune of ₹39 lakh by supplying him fake gold, police said on Sunday.

A four-member gang had earlier befriended the jeweller and called him to the metropolis under the pretext of supplying him one kg gold at cheaper rates and cheated him.

The officials said that the arrests were made from Vikramgad by a team of the MIDC police station. The police said that the accused cheated the jeweller by luring him with their sweet talking.

The deal was executed and the accused gave him chunk of fake gold after giving some authentic gold to gain his confidence. The officials said that the fraudsters had meanwhile got the money transferred in their bank accounts.

"After the jeweller realised he had been cheated he approached the MIDC police station and filed a complaint," said a police officer.

The police on Friday tracked down the accused after the locals told them of suspicious movements in the nearby forest. The local Palghar police reached the spot and apprehended one of the accused. The accused is being grilled to ascertain the location of his accomplices.

The accused has been handed over to the Mumbai police in the case filed under sections 420 (cheating), 406 (criminal breach of trust) and 34 (common intention) as per the Indian Penal Code and further probe is underway.

THE POLICE The deal was executed and the accused gave him chunk of fake gold after giving some authentic gold to gain his confidence. The officials said that the fraudsters had meanwhile got the money transferred in their bank accounts. "After the jeweller realised he had been cheated he approached the MIDC police station and filed a complaint," said a police officer.

PARAMILITARY FORCES AT 89 POLL STATIONS

From Page 1

Sujatha is wife of TRS legislator S. Ramalinga Reddy whose death necessitated the bypoll, Srinivas Reddy is son of former minister and Ramalinga Reddy's rival Ch. Muthya Reddy and recently defected from the TRS.

According to the Dubbak returning officer and Siddipet collector Bharathi Hollikeri, 315 polling stations have been arranged for the 1,97,909 voters. There would be less than 1,000 voters per polling station as part of Covid-19 precautions, and gloves will be given to each voter. Polling will commence at 7 am and end at 6 pm.

Siddipet police commissioner Joel Davis said that 89 polling stations were identified as critical where paramilitary forces would be deployed.

Almost all political leaders who do not belong to Dubbak left the constituency following Election Commission orders.

While finance minister T. Harish Rao as the TRS star campaigner targeted the BJP, Medak MP K. Prabhakar Reddy and Medak MLA Padma Devender Reddy who were part of the core team, took out rallies and door-to-door campaigns on the last day.

BJP leaders led by TS unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, MP D. Arvind, MLA T. Raja Singh, party vice-president D.K. Aruna and former MP Vivek Venkata Swamy participated in the last day campaign.

The last day saw TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy speak online with Congress workers while working president A. Revanth Reddy with party candidate Cheruku Srinivas Reddy organised road

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Harish poses 18 queries to Bandi

Minister demands BJP leader answer questions before making lofty claims

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

Ridiculing BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar's claim of Centre's allocation of ₹280 crore for development of Dubbak, finance minister T. Harish Rao on Sunday demanded that he first answer his questions before making such lofty claims.

Addressing a press conference in Dubbak, he said that he had written an open letter to the BJP state president posing 18 questions. Stating that BJP had done injustice to Telangana state since its inception, Harish Rao asked.

Why did the BJP government withdraw the ITIR project sanctioned by the UPA government to Hyderabad, and why was a wagon factory in Kazipet cancelled, Harish Rao asked.

CONGRESS WRITES TO CEC ON DUBBAK POLL VIOLATION

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The Congress on Sunday wrote an open letter to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora over the alleged violation of the poll code by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao ahead of the Dubbak byelection.

In his letter, G. Niranjan, TPCC convenor, said the Chief Minister had "cleverly" organised two official public meetings in two districts — Medchal-Malkajgiri and Jangaon — adjacent to Siddipet district where Dubbak is located. The intention of conducting these two meetings was to secure live coverage and influence the voters.

The meetings were conducted in Muduchinthala village in Medchal-Malkajgiri district on October 29 to inaugurate the Dharan portal and another one at Kandla-koya in Jangaon district on October 31 to inaugurate a Rythu Veedika.

In the first meeting, the CM mentioned that people from the state were watching the programme, and announced the extension of time for the registration of sada binama deals. He said the CM also appealed to the people to watch his speech on October 31.

On the second speech, the CM misused the official platform for criticising the Opposition parties and declared that the TRS would win the election. He conducted these two official public meetings to misuse official machinery, Niranjan said.

SEIZED MONEY COLLECTED FROM VISHAKA IND OFFICE

From Page 1

"He has been running a technical manpower supply company in Patancheru for the last 10 years," the commissioner said, adding that Srinivas had collected the amount from Visakha Industries office located at Begumpet. They were on their way to Dubbak when the police team caught them.

"The amount was to be delivered at Dubbak for distribution among voters. Visakha Industries belongs to the former MP of Peddapalli and he handed it over to Srinivas to shift to Dubbak," Kumar added.

BJP leaders led by TS unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, MP D. Arvind, MLA T. Raja Singh, party vice-president D.K. Aruna and former MP Vivek Venkata Swamy participated in the last day campaign.

The last day saw TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy speak online with Congress workers while working president A. Revanth Reddy with party candidate Cheruku Srinivas Reddy organised road

questioned as to how the party was urging people to vote for their leader.

He asked the BJP to explain whether or not they had handed over seven mandals of Telangana state and the Sileru thermal power station to Andhra Pradesh. Did not the party cheat by restricting Bayyaram steel factory as per the AP Reorganisation Act, Harish Rao asked.

Why did the BJP government withdraw the ITIR project sanctioned by the UPA government to Hyderabad, and why was a wagon factory in Kazipet cancelled, Harish Rao asked.

He asked the BJP to come clear on water sharing and on why they had accorded national status to most of the projects in Andhra Pradesh but not to those in Telangana state.

Harish Rao said that 1,153 power employees of Andhra Pradesh are working in Telangana state, which is causing a ₹1,000

crore burden on the state government. He wondered why AP employees were not transferred to their state.

HE QUESTIONED why the BJP government was providing ₹200 pension only to six lakh people whereas Telangana state is giving ₹2,016 pension to 39.5 lakh

crore burden on the state government. He wondered why AP employees were not transferred to their state.

He questioned why the BJP government was providing ₹200 pension only to six lakh people whereas Telangana state is giving ₹2,016 pension to 39.5 lakh people. When around 100

airports are being constructed across the country, why was Telangana state ignored, he asked.

Harish Rao sought an explanation on why the BJP was not releasing funds for the largest textile park being constructed in Warangal but helping similar plants elsewhere.

Reminding that the BJP had promised to open a unit of the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) in Adilabad, Harish Rao questioned why it had not happened. He asked why the Centre was not considering the proposal to enhance ST reservation and sub-classification of SCs.

Uttam slams KCR on unemployment

IREDDY SRINIVAS
REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

N. UTTAM KUMAR said that Chandrashekhar Rao had handed over the administration and all resources of Telangana state to his son, daughter, son-in-law, nephew and other relatives.

tion. He claimed that Raghuandan Rao was a close relative of the Chief Minister and minister T. Harish Rao.

He pointed out that Raghuandan Rao had served as district president of TRS in the past. Therefore, he would make 'ghar wapsi' if he wins the elections. He also alleged that Raghuandan Rao was facing rape charges and his nomination had faced strong objection from several local BJP leaders.

The press conference was also addressed by CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and TPCC working president A. Revanth Reddy. Bhatti Vikramarka alleged that the Chief Minister was trying to suppress the Opposition voice. He said that the BJP was seeking to split the people on the basis of religion. He said that the people should vote for a Congress for victory to restore democracy.

Revanth Reddy said that people should vote for the Congress candidate to develop Dubbak. He challenged Harish Rao to a debate on who developed Dubbak. Muttyam Reddy had developed the constituency compared to the TRS, he said.

Gudur: Bypoll will be turning point

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

ement, he said that voters would favour Congress candidate Cheruku Srinivas Reddy. Narayana Reddy said the result of the Dubbak Assembly Constituency were facing severe hardships and were determined to defeat the TRS candidate in the by-election as the ruling party has failed to address their problems.

Narayana Reddy had camped in the constituency along with Mulugu MLA Seethakka. In a stat-



BJP leaders hit the campaign trail on the last day of campaigning for the bypoll in support of their party candidate M. Raghunandan Rao in Dubbak Assembly segment on Sunday.



Congress leader A. Revanth Reddy along with other party members campaign for their candidate Cheruku Srinivas Reddy.



TRS leaders hit the campaign trail on the last day of campaigning for the bypoll in support of their party candidate M. Raghunandan Rao in Dubbak Assembly segment on Sunday.



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Reddy said that he was unhappy with the recent developments in the BJP and accused the party of working against the interests of Telangana state and the farmers. Sridhar Reddy had contested on a BJP ticket from the Jubilee Hills Assembly constituency in the 2018 elections and lost to Finance minister T. Harish Rao. Kamalakar Reddy had sought the BJP ticket for the bypoll, and revolted

the saffron party leaders ahead of GHMC elections. Meanwhile, in a setback to the BJP just two days ahead of voting for the Dubbak byelection, party leader Thota Kamalakar Reddy joined the TRS in Dubbak on Sunday in the presence of Finance minister T. Harish Rao.

Kamalakar Reddy had sought the BJP ticket for the bypoll, and revolted

against the leadership after the party decided to field M. Raghunandan Rao. He levelled serious allegations against the BJP nominee.

Harish Rao has said several leaders and hordes of BJP workers had joined the TRS as they were impressed by the developmental work carried out by Chief Minister K. T. Rama Rao's allegation that BJP would create law and order problems before the elections.

IN A MEETING at Dubbak town Arvind slamming the Chief Minister for his 'undemocratic practices' said the BJP would win with a thumping majority. He condemned Minister K. T. Rama Rao's allegation that BJP would create law and order problems before the elections.

Aruna said that the TRS has been targeting their candidate from the day of the by-poll notification. Dubbak people would teach a fitting lesson to TRS, she said.

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Activist shifted to private hosp

From Page 1

Party leader Lankala Deepak and security guards reacted immediately and put out the fire with water and called an ambulance. Osmania General Hospital plastic surgeons said that Srinivas suffered 58 per cent burns.

Minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy, Bandi Sanjay, MP D. Arvind, OBC Morcha president Dr K. Lakman, party vice-president D.K.

Aruna and former MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy visited Osmania Hospital and enquired about his health condition.

Sanjay appealed to the party cadre not to commit suicide. He said that the party is taking care of Srinivas, who has since been shifted to a corporate hospital in Secunderabad, where doctors said his condition was critical. They would release a detailed bulletin after a 24-hour observation.

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San

IN BRIEF
2 held for ganja smuggling

Warangal: Police arrested a gang smuggling cannabis and seized 27 packets, weighing 54 kg, valued at ₹4.31 lakh from them.

According to P. Sai Chaitanya, Mulugu assistant superintendent of police (ASP), Mulugu sub-inspector and his staff while patrolling found three men holding two white bags near Pandikunta crossroad on Saturday. The police personnel approached them, but the trio tried to flee. Police chased and apprehended two persons, the third escaped. When the police opened the two bags, they found the narcotic. The two persons nabbed were identified as Galeri Somnath and his brother Galeri Jayaram.

COP POSTED AT BANK DIES BY SUICIDE

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD NOV. 1

A police constable, stationed with the Special Protection Force (SPF), allegedly died by suicide after shooting himself with his self-loading rifle (SLR) on Sunday.

According to the police, the deceased, Madhu, a native of Nalgonda district, was deployed at the Bank of Maharashtra at SD Road in Mahankali police station limits for the last few years.

Upon receiving information of the suicide, the Mahankali police staff rushed to the spot and shifted the body to Osmania General Hospital for the post-mortem examination after a preliminary inspection.

Senior police officials visited and inspected the spot. The reason for his suicide is not known yet. A case is registered by the police under section 174 (suspicious death) of CrPC.

30K APPLY FOR LRS AT THE LAST MINUTE

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) department received 30,717 applications under Land Regularisation Scheme (LRS) on Saturday till midnight. Overall, the department has received 25.59 lakh applications.

The state government has proposed the LRS on August 31. The deadline was October 15 but the government extended the date by 15 days considering the various issues in the city including the floods due to heavy rains.

As on Saturday, 10,83,394 LRS applications were received from gram panchayats, 10,06,013 from municipalities and 4,16,155 from municipal corporations.

The government had announced the scheme as a one-time opportunity for land regularisation of unauthorised layouts and plots. Only regularised plots would be eligible for registration. The regularisation charges are fixed based on the extent of land and its registration value.

OTAS GETS LUKEWARM RESPONSE

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The GHMC is receiving a lukewarm response for the ongoing One Time Amnesty Scheme (OTAS) when compared to early bird rebate scheme and annual property tax collection.

The corporation has collected ₹248.03 crore from August 1 to October 31 against ₹573.42 crore during the early bird rebate scheme. Overall, the civic body during the current financial year has received ₹1,136.74 crore till October.

The MA&UD department said that ₹1,477.86 crore arrears with interest amount of ₹1,017.6 crore have accumulated over a period of 15 to 20 years in the GHMC.

The government ordered a waiver of 90 per cent accumulated arrear on the property tax provided the taxpayer clears the principal amounts for 2019-20 with 10 per cent arrear interest.

The authorities said that One Time Scheme (OTS) will be taken up in a campaign mode for the next 15 days. This scheme would not only be applicable in GHMC but also in urban local bodies across the state. Authorities said that in GHMC the expected principal amount for 2019-20 would be ₹200 crore.

Not just flood-hit, all poor to get aid; GHMC out of money

Civic body officials fear aid process will be unending, may go on till GHMC polls

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
 HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is caught in a fix regarding distribution of ₹10,000 cash aid to flood-affected families. The state government has asked the corporation to distribute the cash to not only flood-affected families but to all lower income groups and poor in 240 colonies and over 1,800 slums in the city.

A senior GHMC official, on condition of anonymity, said that in order to curb duplication, teams had been drawn from the corporation and the revenue department, accompanied by the local corporator, MLA or any representative from residential welfare associations (RWAs). These teams would enter the Aadhaar details and mobile number in the Latlong (latitude longitude) mobile application where the location of distribution would be geotagged.

Once the data is entered, no authority is empowered to make changes. The official said that as of now the corporation will distribute cash to over one lakh flood-affected families and based on the availability of funds the numbers would increase.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar reviewed the distribution of cash on Sunday. The government was of the view that ex gratia should also be given to those whose whose income was indirectly affected due to the untimely rainfall.

As on Sunday, the beneficiary list was increased by 1.5 lakh flood-affected families. If the programme continues, the figure of beneficiaries could increase by 11 lakh families in the GHMC area. The government has only sanctioned ₹550 crore from the Chief



The busy road at Oliphant Bridge in Secunderabad which was damaged in the rains in mid-October has still not been repaired. — P. SURENDRA

Civic body gears up to fight surge in diseases

DC CORRESPONDENT
 HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar on Sunday reviewed the health and sanitation conditions in the GHMC area which had experienced flooding after heavy rains last month.

In light of the change in seasonal conditions, and the worldwide spurt in Covid-19 cases and likelihood of spread of infectious diseases post-floods, the government has decided to launch a special sanitisation drive in the GHMC area from November 4 to

November 10. Cleaning of garbage points, removal of construction waste, spraying of disinfectants, anti-larval and vector control operations are to be taken up in all localities.

Under this programme,

cleaning of garbage points, removal of construction and demolition waste, spraying of disinfectants, anti-larval and vector control operations are proposed to be taken up in all localities.

Kumar asked GHMC offi-

cials deploy teams at the ward level for the purpose. He said citizens can also lodge their grievances with the GHMC through the helpline number 040-21111111.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the functioning of the 199 Basti Dawakhana with the health secretary and the GHMC commissioner.

The Chief Secretary directed officials to launch 30 new Basti Dawakhana. It was decided that another 37 Basti Dawakhana shall be opened within a week.

Wearing mask may 'innoculate' against Covid-19

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
 HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

ing have fared better in terms of rates of severe Covid-related illnesses and death, which, in environments with limited testing, suggests a shift from symptomatic to asymptomatic infections. Any public health strategy that could reduce the severity of disease should increase population-wide immunity as well, should not be ignored.

The theory proposed that face masking could be a medium to generate immunity among the population until a vaccine is finalised. The supposition is that it is possible that despite wearing a mask, people when in proximity of others who are carrying the virus and shedding it, can inhale some of the virus particles.

Those who wear masks would be inhaling far fewer virus particles whose number would not be enough to set off a serious or visible infection with symptoms. It is possible that such persons would be asymptomatic or have very mild symptoms.

In a letter to the journal, published on October 29, authors Dr Monica Gandhi and Dr George W. Rutherford have suggested that universal masking is effective in reducing the rate of new infections by increasing the proportion of asymptomatic infected people, hence reducing the fatality rate.

If the viral inoculum matters in determining the severity of SARS-CoV-2 infection, an additional hypothesised reason for wearing facial masks would be to reduce the viral inoculum to which the wearer is exposed and the subsequent clinical impact of the disease," they said in the letter.

If this theory bears out, population-wide masking, with any type of mask that increases acceptability and adherence, might contribute to increasing the proportion of SARS-CoV-2 infections that are asymptomatic, they said.

They also said that countries that have adopted population-wide mask-

ing will benefit both components of the response, the authors, from the Centre for AIDS Research, division of HIV, infectious diseases, and global medicine, department of medicine and the division of infectious disease and global epidemiology, department of epidemiology and biostatistics (GWR), University of California, said.

Nine dists report rise in Covid-19

DC CORRESPONDENT
 HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

from 107 recorded on Friday.

The state recorded 1,416 Covid-19 cases on Saturday and five deaths from the disease, taking the total to 2,40,048 and the fatalities to 1,341.

According to the Covid-19 bulletin issued on Sunday, Saturday saw the GHMC area recording 279 Covid-19 cases, followed by 132 in Ranga Reddy, and 112 in Medchal-Malkajgiri districts.

The state had 18,241 active cases of whom 15,388 were in isolation at home or institutions. The number of people declared recovered from the disease was 1,579, taking this total to 2,20,466.

City to get 7 pollution monitoring units

T.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
 HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

In a major fillip for air pollution monitoring in the city, the TS Pollution Control Board (TSPCB), has floated tenders to install seven more Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS). The TSPCB would be spending ₹7 crore for the purpose to set up the stations.

The systems are to be installed towards the eastern portion of the city. Presently, the city has six systems in place at Bolaram, UoH, Icrisat, IDA, Pashamylaram, Sanathnagar, and Nehru Zoological Park.

"Having more CAAQMS would be beneficial for the city, as the monitoring of the air quality would be continuous and automatic. No scientist would have to

decipher the readings from the manual monitoring stations," an official from the TSPCB told Deccan Chronicle.

Officials say that the automated stations would give a reading every 15 minutes, which would help officials identify the source, time and level of pollution in the area. This would help them in drawing up new plans for pollution control and also identify areas that need more attention.

"The Centre had given funds to improve air quality monitoring capabilities in Hyderabad, Patancheru and Nalgonda as they featured in the non-attainment cities with respect to Ambient Air Quality India (2011-2015) and WHO report of 2014-18. So, we came up with an action plan," the official said.

As per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) guidelines, a city which has a population of 50 lakh or more needs to have more than six CAAQMS.

LUCK | STRIKES

Daily wage earner traces his stolen bicycle; thief had spruced it up and sold it for ₹500

Man recovers the second love of his life – his cycle

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC
 HYDERABAD NOV. 1

For 14 years, the bicycle was an integral part of the life of 51-year-old Shaik Khaja, and his family. He rode it to work every day, or when searching for work as a daily-wage earner. It was also the one he taught his children how to ride a bicycle. When it was stolen on the evening of October 21, Khaja felt utterly helpless. The bicycle was everything for him, after his family.

For the next 10 days, he followed up with the Kamatipura police with whom he lodged a complaint about the theft of his bicycle and walked around, hoping against hope, that he would see it somewhere.

"I called Jaleel sir, who was also looking for it in other places, and told him that I found it. The police team immediately came to my rescue and helped me get my beloved companion back overnight," Khaja said with a chuckle.

Jaleel, the constable assigned to the case by the Kamatipura police, said, "The cycle is all that he (Khaja) had to travel. It was disheartening to see a man that old going through the struggle. We started looking for it with

the usual buyers and also looking around repair shops when we got a call from Khaja that he found it."

Before that, soon after Khaja lodged a complaint with the police about the theft, Jaleel said they

started by accessing the CCTV camera footage that showed a man dragging away the bicycle from where Khaja had parked it and locked it.

"I got this Atlas about 14 years ago for ₹1,000. We have been through so

much together. You form a bond with anything you own this long. I have taught my two kids, who are 13 and 16 now, how to ride a cycle on this one. I was dumbstruck for over a week without my ride," Khaja said.

The loss of the bicycle was nearly catastrophic for Khaja who was unemployed for the past few months due to the lockdown. He was out searching for some work, when he stopped by a wayside hotel in Kamatipura to ask the hotel owner if there was a job he could have.

"I then had a cup of chai. As always, I locked my cycle and went in for a few minutes. When I noticed it was stolen, I lodged a police case and requested them to help me find it. I must appreciate the help and support of the police," he said.

"Cases of missing cycles and gadgets are often given the backseat over more serious offences with pressing concerns but our team took efforts to trace the cycle through CCTV and our constable had personally looked into this case," said Kamatipura inspector G. Rambabu.

The man who stole the cycle had washed, repainted and stickered it before selling it for ₹500 at a repair shop within 24 hours on October 22.

The Kamatipura police, who helped Khaja get his bicycle back, have since questioned the cycle repair shop owner and enquired about the accused, who is still at large.

"Our priority was to get Khaja his cycle back. We will be starting an investigation to nab the accused soon. It doesn't look like his (the bicycle thief's) first time since the paint job was finished within a day. We're checking up on our habitual offenders list as well," said the police regarding the case.

Khaja thanked the police repeatedly and expressed his gratitude over their timely help and support. "They were very cooperative towards my condition and told me that I will get my cycle back. I don't think I can comprehend what I felt to ride it again. That too with the new look," he exclaimed.



Shaik Khaja with members of his family and his cycle which he helped recover after it was stolen recently, in Hyderabad on Sunday.

IN BRIEF

SCR to run 2 specials to Bihar

Hyderabad: South Central Railways will run two special one-way trains on November 7 from Kacheguda to Saharsa Junction, and from Secunderabad to Darbhanga, in order to facilitate the passengers. The train from Kacheguda will consist of sleeper class and reserved second seating coaches and will stop at 13 stations, starting from Kacheguda at 4 pm. The train from Secunderabad will start at 9.40 pm on Saturday. It will consist of sleeper class coaches and make a stop at 17 stations before reaching Darbhanga.

MAN ARRESTED FOR PLAYING RUMMY ONLINE

DC CORRESPONDENT
PEDDAPALLI, NOV. 1

The Task Force police on Sunday arrested a gambler for playing the banned online game rummy. They seized seven mobiles and ₹24,000 cash from him. The incident took place in Malkapur village present under the NTPC police station limits in Peddapalli district on Sunday.

According to Task Force circle inspector Raj Kumar and sub-inspector Masthan, they received information that some persons were playing rummy online at a secret location.

The police went to the spot and arrested Kosani Satish, 41, resident of Malkapur village.

The state government has banned the playing of online rummy and related games in the state. Satish downloaded the gaming applications on seven mobiles using different IDs and would play online rummy and rummy related games. A case has been registered.

CHECK DAMS TO IMPROVE GROUNDWATER

PILLALAMARI SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, NOV. 1

The state government has taken the initiative to construct check dams on streams and rivulets to improve the level of groundwater and improve irrigation in the area for local farmers.

The district officials have sent a proposal for the construction of 47 check dams in Adilabad district.

Of these, six have been given the go-ahead in the first phase. Adilabad MLA Jugu Ramanna on Sunday laid the foundation stone of the check dam on the Chanda-T rivulet on the outskirts of Adilabad.

He said, "These check dams will address the issue of the low-lying areas getting inundated during the rainy season. Efforts are underway to give irrigation water to 1 lakh acres in Adilabad Assembly Constituency through the Mission Kakatiya."

Construction of a new barrage on river Penganga, repairs to the existing irrigation projects and their canals are underway."

De-silting of the tanks under the Mission Kakatiya scheme has been undertaken in the minor irrigation tanks to improve the groundwater level.

The Centre has sanctioned ₹15.99 crore for the Satnala irrigation project under the dam rehabilitation improvement project (DRIP) in Adilabad district.

The state government is likely to get ₹645 crore under DRIP, according to officials.

Many rivulets and streams are in spate during the heavy rains. But, the rainwater is wasted as neither is it stored nor does it penetrate into the ground.

Sunday evening out



With the winter chill setting in, people visit the cable-stayed bridge over the Durgam Cheruvu at Jubilee Hills on Sunday. Many of them, however, were not wearing masks. General traffic is barred on the bridge — R. PAVAN

KTR: TS gets back only half tax it pays Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

Industries minister K.T. Rama Rao on Sunday said that the government was getting back only 50 per cent of its tax contribution from Telangana state to the tax pool of the Centre.

In a press release, Rama Rao said, "The people of Telangana should know that since 2014, our state's contribution to the Centre in

the form of taxes is a whopping ₹2,72,926 crore whereas what the Centre has released to Telangana state is ₹1,40,329 crore. Telangana state continues to be a pillar of strength for India."

He said that the state had been consistently achieving much higher GDP growth rate than the country's average since the past six years. Rama Rao said it was possible due to the leadership of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and his progressive policies.

The growth in GSDP and per capita income were achieved with investments in key infra sectors and increased capital expenditure. "At the same time fiscal prudence was balanced. On the debt-GSDP ratio, Telangana state with 22.8 is in the Top 5 states," he said.

The minister explained that the state's growth had been inclusive and had focused on agriculture, industry and services sectors, thereby improving the per capita income.

"While the growth of per capita income of our country between 2014-2020 was at 54.9 per cent, Telangana state grew at a whopping 83.9 per cent," Rama Rao said in the release.

TTD RESUMES THREE VIRTUAL ARJITHA SEVAS

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 1

The TTD on Sunday performed virtual Arjitha Sevas like Dolotsavam, Arjitha Brahmotsavam and Sahasra Deepalankara Seva in Ekanantham at Srikrishna temple.

Following devotees' request, the TTD has also decided to perform these Arjitha Sevas on the virtual platform from the second week of November on lines of the virtual Kalyanotsava Seva.

As part of this, TTD will release online tickets for these Sevas from the second week of November. The Arjitha Sevas will be telecast live by the SVBC, official channel of the Devasthanams.

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 1

The passing of 'the Original' James Bond, Sean Connery, on Saturday was mourned by many in the city who took to social media to post tributes, using his image as their display pictures for the day while some from the industry recalled how the charismatic Connery's acting left a lasting impact on them.

Actor Adivi Sesh, who is debuting in Bollywood with Major, told Deccan Chronicle that one of the first movies he remembers seeing was You Only Live Twice.

"After watching that

movie, Connery became my movie icon. I started to dress and pose like him. Connery is my inspiration for getting into the movies and his life, how he struggled and his transformation into a suave star, is inspirational. You can see how he inspired me in my movie Gudachari," Sesh said.

Among the many who changed their display pictures on their WhatsApp accounts to that of Sean Connery was Adi Narayana. A fitness enthusiast and entrepreneur, he said, "Connery was the most stylish movie star I have seen on screen. His body language and elegance mesmerised everyone. His demise is sad news for his fans."

Appa Rao Kakarla, joint secretary of Telangana Cue Sports Association, said,

"Connery was the best of his kind. He was a great actor and a wonderful human being."

Connery died on November 30 at the age of 90 in London.

Connery's death has triggered a wave of tributes from fans around the world.

Connery's death has triggered a wave of tributes from fans around the world.

Yellur pump house to start work

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
MAHBUBNAGAR, NOV. 1

Agriculture minister S. Nirjan Reddy said that the Mahatma Gandhi Kalwakurthy lift irrigation scheme pump house at Yellur near Kollapur would start working on November 20 as draining of water was complete.

Speaking at Wanaparthy, he said that irrigation will not be affected as several small reservoirs are brimming with water and drinking water supply would

be streamlined at the earliest. However, Mission Bagheeratha has been affected due to submergence of the Yellur station, affecting hundreds of villages.

The submergence of the plant had kicked up a political furor, with the Opposition alleging poor planning.

The pump house was submerged in the rising backwaters of the Srisailam reservoir on October 16. An unprecedented 40 feet of water entered the pump house, rendering it unusable. Irrigation adviser Penta Reddy

visited the facility recently and assessed the damage.

The lift is important because it envisages carrying drinking water to 19 municipalities and 3,600 villages in 88 mandals. Mahbubnagar municipality, which gets Krishna water for drinking purposes, alerted the public that water would be made available once in two days till the Yellur was made functional.

The Palamuru-Ranga Reddy lift irrigation scheme envisaged creating irrigation potential in upland areas of Nagarkurnool, Mahbubnagar, Vikarabad, Ranga Reddy, and Nalgonda districts for an ayacut of 10 lakh acres and providing drinking water to en-route villages, the GHMC, and industrial use.

It was designed to lift 2 tmc ft per day for 60 days during the flood season (1.50 tmc ft for the Palamuru Ranga Reddy lift and 0.50 tmc ft for the Dindli lift) from the foreshore of the Srisailam reservoir. The government has accorded administrative approval for an amount of ₹35,200 crore.

Cinema theatres started screening movies in AP from Sunday after a gap of 223 days. All film shows had come to a halt on March 23 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially, two theatres opened in Vijayawada at the Inox in Gandhinagar. Each theatre screened a noon and an evening show.

The Managements took all precautionary measures for safety and security of the audience in accordance with the Coronavirus guidelines. Occupancy was limited to 50 per cent, with only alternate seats being occupied.

As a precautionary measure, tickets were issued online. Entry was through the QR code on mobile phones of those booking for the show. Thermal screening was mandatory for the audience, masks were compulsory and sanitisers were provided for cleaning hands. There was a 30-minute gap between the two shows to ensure sanitisation and disinfection of hall for the subsequent screening.

Inox security administrator N. Kishore said the movies Sarileru Neekevaru and Kanulu Kanulanu Dhochayante were screened.

Occupancy was good, though they are expecting a rise in the number of viewers during the coming days. Kishore said ticket prices have not been hiked despite the new restrictions.

Cinema halls open in AP

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 1

Cinema theatres started screening movies in AP from Sunday after a gap of 223 days. All film shows had come to a halt on March 23 because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Initially, two theatres opened in Vijayawada at the Inox in Gandhinagar. Each theatre screened a noon and an evening show.

The Managements took all precautionary measures for safety and

MANY PRIVATE SCHOOLS NOT TO REOPEN FROM TODAY IN AP

VADREVU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, NOV. 1

Though the state government has decided to reopen schools from Monday after almost six months due to Covid-19 pandemic, many private school managements have chosen not to open their institutions yet.

Managements of certain private schools have said guidelines of the state government on reopening of schools are so stringent that they would rather not reopen schools but continue classes online. Many parents are also apprehensive about sending their children to schools, thereby exposing them to the risk of virus, that too when children are in the vulnerable group.

East Godavari Private School Managements Association president Muthukumilli Srivijay said: "Many guidelines issued by the government are highly unreasonable. They have been framed by the state government without taking private school managements or even headmasters or teachers of government schools into confidence. Scores of parents are not ready to send their children to schools, too when the state government itself is warning about the second wave of Coronavirus hitting."

Srivijay said so far only one parent has given nod for sending his child to his school. "The state government has also warned private schools that even if a single case of Covid-19 is registered in the school, its registration will be cancelled. Why should school managements reopen schools amidst dire warnings," he asked.

There are nearly 2,000 schools in East Godavari with 1.3 lakh students and 901 schools with 1 lakh students in West Godavari district. West Godavari district education officer P.V. Renuka underlined that schools should allow only 16 students per class. Her East Godavari counterpart S. Abraham said schools will run only from 9 am to 1 pm with only ninth and 10th class students.

Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Kakinada, vice chancellor M. Ramalinga Raju said all affiliated engineering colleges will be reopening from Monday.

STUDENTS TO BE ALLOWED WITH PARENT CONSENT

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDIA | DC
KADAPA, NOV. 1

All students, whether of private or public educational institutions, will be allowed into schools or colleges only with the consent of their parents. This decision has been taken after government authorities decided to open educational institutions starting from Monday.

Managements of all educational institutions have been ordered that they must strictly follow all Coronavirus guidelines issued by the central and state governments, including wearing masks, maintaining sanitisation and ensuring social distancing within the institution premises.

Action will be taken against the school or college if it is found that they have violated Covid-19 regulations. Vigilance teams have been constituted to make surprise visits of schools and colleges with regard to implementation of Covid-19 guidelines.

The memory of the righteous is blessed. Pro.10:7

Mr. M.K. DEVADATHAM
DOB: 08-02-2003
Mrs. MARY SAVITHRY
DOB: 02-11-2006

Even after you are gone
In our hearts you still live on

Inserted by:
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
Ph. 9985033354

1st ANNIVERSARY

MICHAEL CHARLES HESSING
DOB: 13.06.1942 DOD: 02.11.2019

Your presence is always with us

Inserted by: Wife, Children, Grand Children and Loved Ones.

FOND REMEMBRANCE OF OUR PARENTS

The memory of the righteous is blessed. Pro.10:7

Mr. M.K. DEVADATHAM
DOB: 08-02-2003
Mrs. MARY SAVITHRY
DOB: 02-11-2006

Even after you are gone
In our hearts you still live on

Inserted by:
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
Ph. 9985033354

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and no torment will ever touch them. (Wis 3:1)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mr. M.K. DEVADATHAM
DOB: 08-02-2003
Mrs. MARY SAVITHRY
DOB: 02-11-2006

Even after you are gone
In our hearts you still live on

Inserted by:
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
Ph. 9985033354

3rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

Mr. M.K. DEVADATHAM
DOB: 08-02-2003
Mrs. MARY SAVITHRY
DOB: 02-11-2006

Even after you are gone
In our hearts you still live on

Inserted by:
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
Ph. 9985033354

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

The memory of the just is blessed. Pro.10:7

Mrs. Prabhavathy
(W/o Mr. G. Raj Kumar)
Called to Glory: 02.11.2014

We miss you every moment of our lives.

You live in the hearts and minds of the loving family you left behind

Inserted by: Husband
Children & Grand Children

5th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

The memory of the just is blessed. Pro.10:7

Mrs. Prabhavathy
(W/o Mr. G. Raj Kumar)
Called to Glory: 02.11.2014

We miss you every moment of our lives.

You live in the hearts and minds of the loving family you left behind

MAGNETIC MAHARASHTRA 2.0

MOBILIZING INVESTMENTS FOR 2020 AND BEYOND

29 MoUs
SIGNED BY GOVERNMENT OF
MAHARASHTRA DURING LOCKDOWN

INR 51,897CR.
WORTH OF INVESTMENT
INTENTIONS HAVE BEEN FORMALIZED



“Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 embodies the business spirit of the state. We welcome domestic and global businesses to Maharashtra to realize the promise of #MadeForBusiness”

- **Shri Uddhav Thackeray**
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Maharashtra

TURBOCHARGING INVESTMENT

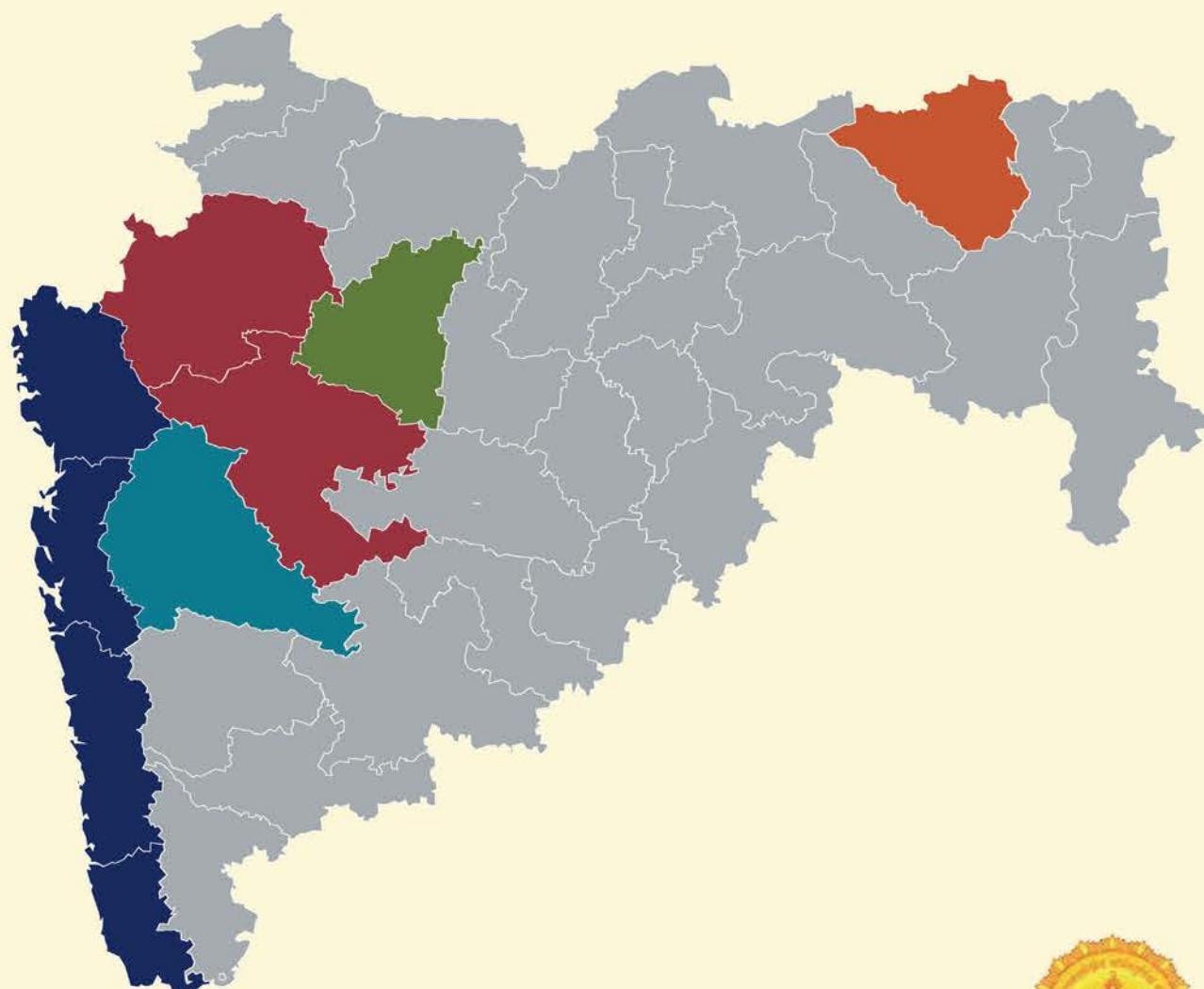


29 MoU's signed during the lockdown and a robust pipeline of investors in advanced stages from US, UK, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Spain, Russia, Indonesia and India, across diverse sectors, highlight the executional prowess of Maharashtra and the impact of the state's revitalized investment strategy – Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0

PLUG AND PLAY INFRASTRUCTURE



40,000 acres of fully developed ready-to-use factory space at affordable price with focus on Sector-Tailoring to help create clusters. Land for Labour-Housing is offered to Units employing more than 1000 employees / labour. Ready-to-Use industrial-space on rental basis as well.



MAHA PARWANA



'Mega Single Permission' system or 'Maha Parwana' to offer single-window clearance system within 48 hours. FDI proposals of any value & Domestic Investment proposals worth more than INR 50 Crores can commence construction/production immediately waiving certain permits.

MAHA JOBS PORTAL



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Mumbai-Thane-Raigad - 15,000 Acres

Engineering | Food Processing | Auto & Components | Chemicals | Pharmaceutical | Bulk Drug Park

Pune-Chakan-Talegaon-Satara - 8,000 Acres

Data Centre | Gems & Jewelry | Engineering | Food Processing | Auto & Components | ESDM | Logistics | Electronic Manufacturing Cluster

Nashik - Malegaon - Ahmednagar - 5,000 Acres

Food Processing | Medical Equipment | ESDM | Engineering

Aurangabad (AURIC, DMIC) - Jalna - 8,000 Acres

Food Processing | Auto & Components | ESDM | Textile | Medical Device Park

Nagpur-Amravati - 4,000 Acres

Aerospace & Defence | Engineering | Textiles | Food Processing



Government of
Maharashtra



**MAGNETIC
MAHARASHTRA 2.0**
#MadeForBusiness



DECCAN Chronicle

2 NOVEMBER 2020

A change in Washington to be a test for New Delhi

The result of the November 3 elections in the United States is likely to bring about changes in focus, emphasis, or orientation in the conduct of America's foreign and military policies, as well as trade, technology and economic outlook toward the major countries of the world in the event that President Donald Trump falls short, of which many analysts do see a possibility, and his Democratic challenger and former vice-president Joe Biden makes it to the White House.

But in the event of America's leader receiving a fresh endorsement, in India we would do well to look for points of emphasis rather than change in direction. Trade relations between the two countries need to look better if the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the two countries is not to remain confined to India picking up American military hardware off the shelf. If India's exports of goods and services are not permitted to find a stable footing in the US market, we may just begin to look like a client state.

For all the hoopla we saw on the supposedly ascendant Narendra Modi-Trump personal chemistry — the main basis on which a section of traditionally Democratic voting Indian origin voters in the US have reportedly switched to Mr Trump's corner, especially the chauvinistic "Hindu Indian" outfits — on the trade and economy side India has failed to make much headway in the US market while giving US goods, services and investments a much easier ride here.

Perhaps the Modi government's efforts do not appear to have been forceful enough, or single-minded and purposeful, in leveraging the Indian diaspora in a strategic way in this direction. Nor has New Delhi played up this country's natural geo-strategic advantages, although Mr Trump has persisted with his predecessor Barack Obama's "pivot to Asia" approach, which has seen the shift of America's strategic and military focus to the Far East.

In the event of a Trump victory, these have to be worked on while working to strengthen India's position in relation to a possibly uncertain or dangerous situation materialising in Afghanistan. Of course, the current Republican administration has been more understanding of India in this dynamic and in relation to the Pakistan theatre more broadly than a Democratic administration might have been, looking at the historical record.

Should Mr Biden prevail, and this seems the likelier possibility at this juncture, Indian diplomacy may have to tidy up. The ideological strain that he represents is quite different from that of the Indian leader and his party who appear to be near soul mates of Mr Trump on the ideological side.

A Democratic win in America will please the Western world greatly but for India it is likely to be more bittersweet. At the civil society level, constituencies that are critical of the majoritarian steamrolling on view today will have something to be glad about. On the important matter of Iran, with which we ought to be good friends, a Biden victory can be more facilitating although the Trump administration has not been as obstructive as may have been expected.

In the end, if we are sensible, we can do business with a Republican or a Democrat in the White House provided we know how to remain united internally and where to pitch ourselves in the world.

The first and best Bond

A man's man, that's how his co-stars remember him. As 007, no doubt, he had had many a close shave, but the death of the legendary Sean Connery at the ripe old age of 90 finally brings the curtain down on the first and best James Bond ever to have lit up the big screen. A tall and muscular bodybuilder, footballer and streetfighter, the then-working-class Connery's rugged charisma contributed to the barely controlled menace he brought to the character of the MI6 spy which, along with a bit of method acting and some well-coached mannerisms, managed to make over the British secret agent's movie persona into something far more vital and immediate than what his creator Ian Fleming had written. It ended up securing a global appeal for Fleming's originally lanky and blue-eyed English hero.

The charismatic Scottish actor starred in seven Bond films, beginning with *Dr No* (1962) and returning twice for encores with *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971) and *Never Say, Never Again* (1983), the title of the last being contributed by his wife, Micheline Roquebrune, who has survived him. He wore his Scottish nationalism as a tattoo just under his sleeve and rarely changed his accent. Connery was also a character artiste and won award — one Oscar, two Bafta and three Golden Globes — and acclaim for many more memorable films, *The Untouchables*, *The Name of the Rose*, *The Hunt for Red October* and *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade* among them. *Murder on the Orient Express* and *The Man Who Would Be King* were but two of his best-loved films, and he was finally knighted for his services to film and drama in 2000.

Globalisation, technology and a change in sensibilities have all conspired today to strike the last nail in the coffin of the larger-than-life action hero. There is no more space for male fantasy, no new civilisations left to explore. The last bastion has been conquered. Cinema, too, has, meanwhile, evolved, from the exuberant adventures of yore, turning realist and/or experimental.

To that effect, Connery's death spells the end of an era. The world is shaken, not stirred by its demise.

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Why Covid stress affects the young; UK gets ready for a digital Diwali

Since there has been very little to cheer about during the pandemic — here is something a little uplifting. Hopefully enough to make our hearts beat faster: we are going to have new statues in Leicester Square, of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol from *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* on the 25th anniversary of its release. Of course, the movie itself was a globe trotting romance, and Leicester Square was part of it. So Kajol and SRK will join Paddington Bear, Harry Potter and Mary Poppins in 'Scenes in the Square'. These statues will be lit up every evening — and will no doubt push the Indian community to troop down to the square and pose for selfies with the stars.

The Director of Destination Marketing at Heart of London Business Alliance, Mark Williams, said in a statement: "It's fantastic to be adding such titans of international cinema to our trail as Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol. This statue is a fitting tribute to the global popularity of Bollywood and the cultural bridges that cinema can help

build, and we're in no doubt it will attract fans from all around the world."

The weather is definitely turning wintry. Even on the Covid front, things are getting worse rather than better. The second attack of the infection is now here to stay. There is a deep division across the country on how to handle it. There is no nationwide circuit breaker (a short total lockdown) that many want imposed. A more complicated system like a traffic light signal has been worked out — and only some parts of the country are in lockdown, as in the North. London has no lockdown, but just a few rules such as restrictions on pubs, which have to close early and no more than six people meeting at once. Or it may be only two. It is very difficult to know what the rules are as they keep changing! Better to just stay at home and go through the albums remembering what it was like to meet people!

At this rate, we are gearing up for a digital Diwali. The restrictions on

people getting together from different households means some relatives will be left out, and this will definitely impact our relationships.

Who do you invite and who do you leave out? Things may not improve by winter and it promises to be a blue Christmas... Fortunately the Scottish government has ruled that Santa Claus does an 'essential' job so he is allowed to go down chimneys and deliver Christmas presents to children. The "six or less" rule does not apply to him. The reindeers must be Covid-free of course!

School-meals have now raised a political storm. There are many children here from poor families who depend on these free meals. (Yes, even in the UK!) Marcus Rashford a young talented football player who plays for Manchester United had persuaded the government that the scheme for free lunches be continued during the holidays. He was reflecting on his hard childhood. This was done (or so we thought). He even got an honour from the Queen for his brili-

ant suggestion. Alas, the government is refusing to continue the free meals during half term. But the community has risen to the challenge. Local councils are paying up and restaurants and hotels are chipping in. McDonalds have donated a million Macs to feed these marginalised children. Britain has a big heart!

With online viewing an essential part of our survival kit, BBC has revived their very popular show, *Strictly Come Dancing*. This is where serious dancers pair up and get judged for executing some really complicated routines. The audience also votes by e-mail or phone to select the winners. The show has offered a great revival to the sagging careers of retired politicians and journalists and made their popularity soar: Ed Balls who was a Cabinet minister under the Labour government and an economist had a successful stint going through many rounds. Now Jacque Smith (Home Secretary in the Tony Blair government) is trying her luck. At

least we know that there is life after politics and it is called dance!

Mental health has become a big problem during the pandemic as people find staying at home very tough. It has specially impacted the youth who have found that their school, college and job participation has fallen apart. The British Asian Trust has launched an emergency appeal to help the sufferers of mental health problems. Rakesh Chauhan has composed a music video Neelam's Song — shown on YouTube, where through some very Indian-style dance and song the problems of mental health have been flagged. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has praised Rakesh for his 'tremendous efforts'. But we need to do more for all age groups. Covid stress will stay on for a long time — and there is no vaccine against it.

Kishwar Desai is an award-winning author. Her latest book, *The Longest Kiss: The Life and Times of Devika Rani*, will be out by November.

Subhani



TMC realpolitik, BJP & future of 'Gorkhaland'



Shikha Mukerjee

Playing the politics of divisiveness by raising expectations that indeed a "permanent political solution" will be found on the demand for a separate "Gorkhaland", carved out of West Bengal, to fulfil aspirations for a "Bas Bhoomi", or homeland, or a heartland all Nepali-speaking Indian citizens can call their own, is a signal that the West Bengal Assembly polls, due before May 2021, will be fiercely competitive. Realpolitik is back in the chronically volatile politics of Darjeeling.

Unlike in the past, when the demand for a separate state was always initiated by Darjeeling's leaders to muster the masses and warn off ambitious challengers, this time the spark was lit by the October 7 invitation to talk to "discuss issues related to Gorkhaland" by the Union home ministry. The ambiguity was deliberate; the use of "Gorkhaland" to describe the political space of the Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong subdivisions and the Gorkha-dominated areas in Siliguri, Jalpaiguri, Naxalbari was a signal that the BJP and its government in New Delhi were preparing to use fiscus-politics to outflank Mamata Banerjee.

In retaliation, Ms Banerjee rescued absconning Gorkha Janamukti Morcha leader Bimal Gurung and his aide Roshan Giri, from oblivion and struck a deal later in October, just before Durga Puja. This ended the Gurung-led Gorkha Janamukti Morcha's 2016 alliance with the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and signalled the champion's return to the centrestage of Darjeeling politics and a revival of its entente with the Trinamul Congress. It also ended the feit the

GJM's support gave to the BJP and helped it win the Darjeeling Assembly seat in the 2019 bypolls, and more significantly delivered the parliamentary seat to an outsider, though a Gorkha, Raju Bista from Manipur.

Mr Gurung's return is effectively his reinstatement, thanks to Ms Banerjee, as leader of the GJM in Darjeeling. It obviously destabilises, if not unseats, the leadership of Binay Tamang, who stepped in when Mr Gurung fled. It may trigger a period of ugly infighting in the GJM. It may also prove a dual card, if Mr Gurung's popularity dips as a result of his deal with Ms Banerjee's TMC as the price for his return to the heartland of Gorkha politics.

His return does other things, too. It puts a spoke in Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma's National Peoples Party's expansionist plans and his ambitions as a champion of a "Bas Bhoomi" or homeland for all Nepali-speaking Indian citizens, otherwise identified as "Gorkhas," an omnibus description that includes the multiplicity of communities who are demanding Schedule Tribe status as part of a permanent political solution. As the first Northeast party to be recognised as a national party by the Election Commission, the NPP's aspirations to lead in places other than Meghalaya could suffer a setback with Mr Gurung's resurfacing.

The NPP's alliance with the BJP as part of the NDA also positions it as a proxy for the BJP. Without a base in Darjeeling, the NPP's expansionist plans would automatically serve as an alternative space for local leaders disaffected with the parties to which they currently belong.

There are indications

that Mr Gurung's return will be perceived by many as an opportunistic sell-out to the West Bengal government and a move that, even if temporarily, irretrievably pushes the demand for separate statehood deeper into a pit. Whether that is the verdict of the masses, who till his re-emergence hailed him as a leader, is open to speculation.

The anticipation that there will be widespread disaffection because he has teamed up with the TMC could be, however, offset if New Delhi decides to hound him as a wanted person in a UAPA case. It could also be that a maturing electorate, having experienced the vicissitudes that unsatisfactory bargaining with the government in West Bengal and in New Delhi have produced on the Gorkhaland issue, will make choices that could be surprising. There could be a surge of support for the BJP, so that there is, theoretically, a better chance of striking a deal on a "Bas Bhoomi", or territorial space that would be a "heartland" for all Gorkhas. Or a mature electorate may be as enamoured of Mr Gurung, as the Bihar electorate seems to be of Lalu Prasad Yadav's heir Tejashwi, despite his legacy of corruption, prosecution and a long jail term.

The irreconcilable minimum in the search for a permanent political solution is a separate state, however many intermediate entities are created that stop short of conceding the ultimate goal of a movement that has gone through several stages of evolution over the past four decades. It is a

The othering of the Bengali in West Bengal for the Gorkha cause would probably destroy all parties that facilitated it. Knowing this, the Trinamul Congress has stepped forward regardless of what its critics make of it.

Shikha Mukerjee is a senior journalist in Kolkata

LETTERS

CRACKERS, COVID

Many people recovered from Covid-19 but the lung infection remains, especially among senior citizens. They find it difficult to breathe normally. Diwali crackers will add to their problems due to hazardous air quality. I request everyone to avoid crackers this Diwali.

G.D. Bajaj
Hyderabad

10K RELIEF SCAM

Addagutta A.B.C. dwellers in RCC houses on the hilltop, where there were no floods, have been paid ₹10,000 (*Flood victims up in arms as civic body stops ₹10K relief*, DC, Nov. 1). It is a fraud on the taxpayer and should be investigated by the agencies for misuse of public money ahead of the civic poll.

Carmen F.
Secunderabad

Stopping the ₹10,000 relief for flood victims was unjust. Many colonies were badly damaged in the rain and it's time to rescue them. When there is a personal bias in disbursement, it will cause uproar. Hence, the authorities must respond and address the issue.

M. Pradeep Kumar
Hyderabad

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Why do IAS officers divulge official secrets after retirements? (*Nirmala wanted me out of finance ministry*, says Garg, DC, Nov. 1). They did not want their pension to be affected. It is against ethics.

A.S. Murthy
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Polish minister run over at Karachi airport

KARACHI, November 1 A Pakistani shouting "death to Communists" drove a baggage truck into an airport reception line today for Polish President Marian Spychalski, knocking him down and killing his Deputy Foreign Minister Zygfryd Wolniak and three others.

Police identified the three others killed as the Deputy Director of Pakistani Intelligence, a Government press photographer and the photo editor of Associated Press of Pakistan. Eight others were injured, none seriously, police sources said.

The incident came as President Spychalski, who had just arrived from Poland for a five-day visit was moving down the reception.



SHORT TAKES
HOME MINISTRY
KEEPS TABS ON
CITIES FOR COVID

DC CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI, NOV. 1

The Union home ministry is closely monitoring the Covid situation in cities like Delhi where cases are rising again since the last four days. In view of winter and festive season, Covid cases are expected to rise sharply all over the country and both the home and health ministries are working along with the states to contain the spread.

Senior home ministry officials said that a team headed by home secretary Ajay Bhalla was reviewing the situation regularly and is likely to come out with some additional guidelines to ensure common people strictly follow the Covid health protocols.

Home secretary has been holding a series of meetings to review the situation, particularly in Delhi, Bihar and some other northern states where situation has deteriorated due to several factors like increasing air pollution, festive season and Assembly polls.

COVID RECOVERIES
AT 91%, 470 NEW
DEATHS REPORTED

DC CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI, NOV. 1

With 46,963 fresh cases, India till Sunday logged in a total of 81,86 lakh cases of Covid while the overall fatalities crossed 1.22 lakh with 470 fresh deaths in the last 24 hours. Among those who died was Tamil Nadu's agriculture minister R. Doraikannu, who had tested positive for Covid on October 13. However, a steady decline in active cases continues and for the third consecutive day after the active cases fell down below the 6 lakh mark after nearly three months. At present, India's total active cases are 5.70 lakh and the number of those recovered is 74.92 lakh. In the last 24 hours, 58,684 people were discharged from medical supervision. Higher recoveries has aided the national Recovery Rate to further improve to 91.54 per cent. "The active cases have dropped substantially and are only 6.97 per cent of the total positive cases demonstrating a steady falling percentage of the total cases... With the consistent decline in the active cases, the cases per million in India are among lowest in the world," union health ministry officials said.

196 ARRESTED IN
MUMBAI FOR PUB,
BAR VIOLATIONS

Mumbai, Nov. 1: Mumbai police arrested 196 people from a bar and a pub in suburban Andheri in the wee hours of Sunday for allegedly violating the lockdown guidelines, a police official said. Acting on an information, the city police's social service branch raided the bar and the pub located in Sakinaka area of Andheri, he said. The police subsequently arrested 196 people, including 171 male and female customers, 19 workers, two owners of the facilities, three managers and a cashier, the official said. An FIR was registered under Indian Penal Code sections 188 (disobeying order duly promulgated by public servant), 285 (negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible matter) and other relevant provisions, he said. The Maharashtra government was easing restrictions in a phased manner.

TM AGRICULTURE
MINISTER DIES OF
COVID, BURIED

Chennai, Nov. 1: Tamil Nadu agriculture minister R. Doraikannu, who died on Saturday at a private hospital in the city where he was treated for Covid-19, was laid to rest at his native village in Thanjavur on Sunday with full state honours. With the demise of Doraikannu, who had represented Papanasam in Thanjavur for three straight terms in the state Assembly since 2006, the ruling AIADMK's strength in the 234-member house has reduced by one to 123. Assembly elections in the state are due in April-May 2021 and there are already three vacancies in the House now, all created due to the death of DMK MLAs.

The 72-year-old Doraikannu, who was on life support for several days after being admitted on October 13, breathed his last at 11.15 pm on Saturday, Kauvery Hospital.

54 seats head for election

Hectic canvassing for Tuesday byelections in the shadow of pandemic

Bhopal/Lucknow/Ahmedabad, Nov. 1 Campaigning ended on Sunday for byelections to 54 Assembly constituencies in 10 states including 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh where the high-stake contest that will decide the fate of the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government saw the parties launching vitriolic attacks against each other.

There was hectic canvassing for the Tuesday byelections in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the Election Commission restricting the number of star campaigners and issuing strict guidelines for gatherings.

The main contenders, the BJP and the Congress, traded barbs especially in Madhya Pradesh where the EC had to reprimand leaders of both the parties and even revoked the star campaigner status of former chief minister Kamal Nath, who challenged it in the Supreme Court.

In over 30 seats in MP, Gujarat and Karnataka, the BJP has fielded former Congress MLAs who quit to join the saffron party.

The BJP, which has a comfortable majority in the UP Assembly, is locked in a battle of prestige on seven seats, with the opposition taking on the Yogi Adityanath government on the law and order issue.

The issue of 'love jihad' has also been raked up during the campaigning with the UP and Haryana governments announcing plans to bring a law against it.

In Gujarat, the bypolls are being held in eight seats after the Congress MLAs resigned. Five of them later joined the ruling BJP and are contesting again. Assembly bypolls will also be held in Chhattisgarh (1 seat), Haryana (1), Jharkhand (2), Karnataka (2), Nagaland (2), Odisha (2) and Telangana (1).

In Uttar Pradesh, of the seven seats going to the polls on Tuesday, six were held by the BJP and one by the Samajwadi Party.

The state government faced criticism over the law and order situation, particularly after the Hathras and Balrampur rape and murder cases.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar during an election rally for the second phase of Bihar Assembly polls, in Samastipur district, on Sunday. — PTI

Byelections to decide fate of Shivraj in MP

DC CORRESPONDENT
 BHOPAL, NOV. 1

The high voltage campaigning for the November 3 by-elections to 28 Assembly constituencies in MP, which may decide fate of the Shivraj government, ended on Sunday.

Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, state BJP president Vishnu Dutt Sharma and senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia held road shows in the election-bound constituencies in the state to drum up support for their party in the by-elections on the last day of electioneering on Sunday.

The Congress' strength in the House has reduced to 88 following the resignation of 25 party MLAs from the House in the last eight months. While 22 Congress MLAs resigned from the Assembly in March leading to fall of

ing for Congress in the by-polls. Violation of the model code of conduct has robbed Nath of his star campaigner status.

The Assembly by-elections may decide the fate of the Shivraj government since the ruling BJP needed nine more seats to gain a simple majority in the 116 to return to power in the state. However, 4 Independents, two BSP MLAs and one SP legislator may play the role of king makers if neither the BJP or the Congress gains simple majority in the by-elections. The seven MLAs had earlier extended support to the Kamal Nath government. But, they extended their support to the Shivraj government when the BJP formed a government following the collapse of the Kamal Nath government in March this year.

All of them have quit the Congress and joined the BJP. The Congress needed to win all the 28 assembly seats in the by-elections to reach the magic figure of 116 to return to power in the state. However, 4 Independents, two BSP MLAs and one SP legislator may play the role of king makers if neither the BJP or the Congress gains simple majority in the by-elections. The seven MLAs had earlier extended support to the Kamal Nath government. But, they extended their support to the Shivraj government when the BJP formed a government following the collapse of the Kamal Nath government in March this year.

"After the BJP formed

BJP keeps its doors open for TMC heavyweights

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
 KOLKATA, NOV. 1

Trinamul MP of Tamluk in East Midnapore earlier and was seen as the CM's trusted lieutenant in the western belt of the state once.

The BJP's plan about Adhikari comes in wake of his growing distance with the Trinamul supremo and senior party leaders and programmes in the past few months over his rebellion which came to light in more than one occasion. The state minister was seen attending events held by a local forum, floated by his followers, neither under the Trinamul banner nor with Banerjee's symbolic photo.

The relations between Adhikari and the Trinamul has soured so much that Trinamul minister Firhad Hakim, during a visit to Adhikari's home turf, sarcastically asked him to stay put because he is the son of Trinamul MP Kanthi Sisir Adhikari and elder brother of Trinamul MP Dibyendu Adhikari, is also one of the accused in Narada sting operation.

ter at state BJP headquarters in Kolkata.

On Hakim's jibe, state BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday said, "That means they will send him (Adhikari) to the BJP! We have also kept our doors open and wide to induct all to our party. If they send him and if any politician wants to continue in field of politics, the BJP will give him the opportunity."

Asked of talks, if any, with Adhikari for his induction to the BJP, the Midnapore MP added, "I did not have any discussion." Sources however indicated of constant communication between Adhikari and the BJP.

Adhikari, who is the son of Trinamul MP Kanthi Sisir Adhikari and elder brother of Trinamul MP Dibyendu Adhikari, is also one of the accused in Narada sting operation.

Big win for J&K forces



Security personnel leave after an encounter with militants at Rangreth on the outskirts of Srinagar on Sunday. Hizbul Mujahideen chief Dr Saifullah was killed and a suspect has been taken into custody and is being questioned. — PTI

REALTY BITES Delinked land to be used for affordable housing Sick PSUs' land to be delinked

ANIMESH SINGH
 NEW DELHI, NOV. 1

nomic sectors and for affordable housing, sources said.

The sources said the heavy industry ministry has prepared a proposal to seek the Union Cabinet's approval to delink the land from these units and transfer them to the parent ministries, to expedite the process of disposal of the land held by these state-owned units.

While the government identified 19 sick PSUs for delink the land component from the companies and transfer them to their parent ministries to expedite the process of doing away with such entities.

The delinked or transferred land would be used in priority sectors of the government, including investments in key eco-

al of land belonging to these PSUs, as the Centre has so far managed to dispose of only 41 per cent of the total land owned by the identified 19 sick units.

Despite the fact that the list of sick PSUs that had to be disposed of was notified first in 2016 and later in 2018, the Centre failed to complete the process owing to delay in disposal of land.

Of the 13,000 acres of land which belonged to the 19 PSUs, around 5,400 acres or 41 per cent could not be disposed of. Any sick unit cannot be completely disposed of till its assets and liabilities become zero. Once this is done, only then a PSU can

file an application for closure before the Registrar of Companies (RoC).

Since doing away with the land was proving to be a major impediment, a committee of secretaries suggested that land assets should be alienated and transferred to the ministries under which a particular PSU falls. This will help complete other formalities of closing down sick PSUs in a time-bound manner.

At the same time, the delinked land can be disposed of in a phased way in future for the government's priority projects. This will also eliminate the possibility of a distress sale of the PSUs' land, the sources added.

"One can understand when a woman is raped

Kerala Cong chief in soup on rape row

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 1: Kerala Congress chief Mullappally Ramachandran on Sunday found himself in the midst of a controversy for his alleged remarks about rape victims.

However, he tendered an unconditional apology after coming under fire from women leaders, including those from his party.

Addressing a protest meet against the LDF government over various issues, he said, "... it's a desperate attempt by the (Left) to dress up a prostitute and make her stand behind the curtain and narrate her tales. This will not work."

"One can understand when a woman is raped

In slip of tongue, Scindia seeks vote for Congress

RABINDRA NATH CHOWDHURY | DC
 BHOPAL, NOV. 1

symbol of BJP.

His faux pas had evoked laughter in the gathering which included BJP candidate for Dabri constituency Imarti Devi.

The Congress on Sunday took a jibe at Scindia for his slip of tongue.

"We assure Mr Scindia that people will vote for Congress in MP assembly by-elections," Congress spokesman here Narendra Saluja said.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission has barred Devi from campaigning for a day on Sunday for her recent offensive remarks against the kin of an unnamed rival.

Maintaining flow of his speech, Mr Scindia suddenly called upon people to press the button for 'Hand', the symbol of Congress while addressing an election meeting in Dabri, has gone viral.

Devi while reacting to former chief minister Kamal Nath's item jibe at her said a leader from Bengal had come to Madhya Pradesh late to become chief minister and after losing his post of chief minister he had gone crazy.

The leader's wife and sister may be items, she had said.

SP: Yogi makes laws as law and order fails

Ballia (UP), Nov. 1: Taking a jibe at UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is only making laws. The reality is that the Adityanath government is unable to control crime in the state, and the law and order situation is deteriorating," Chaudhary, also the Leader of Opposition in UP Legislative Assembly, said.

"Have incidents of murder and rape stopped?" he told reporters here. The Samajwadi Party leader also accused the CM of moving on the path of German dictator Adolf Hitler. He also claimed that despite the "misuse" of government machinery in the bypolls, the SP candidates will emerge stronger. On being asked if his party will register a complaint, he said nothing will come of it. — PTI

AT 11.4°C, DELHI SEES LOWEST MIN TEMPERATURE

New Delhi, Nov. 1: The national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 11.4°C on Sunday morning, the lowest this season so far, according to the India Meteorological Department.

Normally, the Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city records a minimum of 15 to 16°C in the first week of November. The mercury dips to 11-12°C by the last week of November, it said.

Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of IMD, said the absence of cloud cover was the major reason for the low minimum temperature.

Clouds trap some of the outgoing infrared radiation and radiate it back downward, warming the ground. Another reason is calm winds, which allow formation of mist and fog, Srivastava said.

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

The month of October was the coolest in 58 years in the national capital, according to IMD. The mean minimum temperature in October this year was 17.2°C, the lowest since 1962, when it was 16.9°C, it said.

Normally, Delhi records a mean minimum temperature of 19.1°C in October. The city recorded a mean minimum temperature of 17.5°C in October 2007, according to IMD. On Thursday, Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 12.5°C — the lowest in 26 years. The last time Delhi recorded such a low temperature in October was in 1994. — PTI

SHORT TAKES
MISSION TO FIX DIVERSITY GAP FOR WOMEN

London, Nov. 1: A British-Indian financial expert, recently honoured on the Queen's Birthday Honours List for her work in the field of inclusion and diversity, says she is on a mission to fix the diversity gap within the financial services sector, especially for women.

Dr Bina Kotak Dasani, an Executive Director at global investment bank Morgan Stanley, was awarded an MBE by Queen Elizabeth II for "Services to Diversity and Inclusion in Financial Services" last month.

She now wants to make use of that platform to support women in India as she advocates the upskilling of women in the financial services workforce.

"This fix in the diversity gap needs to be a firm partnership between both men and women and the shared responsibility discussion needs to extend beyond the boardroom and into the home environment," said Dasani.

"My primary focus is on promoting women into senior roles and I will be extending mentoring capabilities to India with a focus on helping as many young women as possible thrive and progress in their career trajectories," she said.

TURKISH FM IN AZERBAIJAN AS TENSIONS MOUNT

Baku, Nov. 1: Turkey's foreign minister arrived in Azerbaijan on Sunday for talks over the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh after Baku's arch-enemy Armenia requested security assistance from Russia. "We are once again in Baku with our brothers to renew our strong support for dear Azerbaijan and exchange on the latest developments in Nagorno-Karabakh," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Twitter.

On Saturday, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan formally asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to begin consultations on security assistance, invoking the two countries' defence pact.

Pashinyan said hostilities were approaching Armenia's borders and reiterated that Turkey was backing Baku.

Moscow's defence pact with Armenia does not extend to Nagorno-Karabakh and Russia said Saturday that "necessary" help would be provided if the fighting reaches Armenian territory. At the same time, Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said "concrete formats" of assistance to Armenia would be discussed.

Armenia's request for assistance from Moscow further raised fears of Russia and Turkey getting sucked into the decades-old conflict over Karabakh.

HK LAWMAKERS ARRESTED FOR LEGISLATURE RALLY

Hong Kong, Nov. 1: Seven pro-democracy Hong Kong politicians were arrested on Sunday over protests and scuffles that broke out in the legislature earlier this year, the latest prosecutions targeting Beijing's opponents in the deeply divided city.

The seven politicians — four of them sitting lawmakers — were arrested on charges of "contempt" and "interfering" with members of the city's Legislative Council in early May police said.

The chamber passes semi-autonomous Hong Kong's laws, but only half of its seats are directly elected and a complex appointment system ensures the city's pro-Beijing establishment is all but guaranteed a handsome majority.

Scuffles and protests routinely break out, with the pro-democracy minority often resorting to filibustering, chanting and obstruction to try and halt bills they oppose. On May 8, confrontations broke out in a committee that decides which bills come up for debate.

The opposition had used months of filibustering to stop the appointment of the committee's leader. The pro-Beijing camp responded by forcibly installing one of their politicians to the committee chair.

That prompted angry scenes and protests in the chamber with lawmakers from both sides displaying placards amid boisterous heckling and physical obstruction.

Security guards and pro-Beijing lawmakers eventually dragged most of the pro-democracy politicians from the chamber and the installation of the committee chair went ahead.

US polls: Focus turns to key states

Trump, Biden, running mates, converge on Pennsylvania; Covid failure major election issue

US ELECTION IN NUMBERS

THE RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE CONTINUES TO BREAK NEW GROUND AND SET RECORDS IN 2020 — ON EARLY VOTING, AD SPENDING AND MORE. THESE FIGURES BREAK DOWN THE CAMPAIGN IN NUMBERS.

3 NOVEMBER

35+435

- Besides voting for president, millions of American voters will also be choosing members of the country's 117th Congress. There are 35 Senate seats up for grabs, as all are 435 in the House of Representatives.

- If Biden is elected president and Democrats take control of the Senate, the party will have its hands on all of the biggest levers of federal power in Washington for the first time since the early days of Barack Obama's presidency.

10 KEY STATES:

The presidential election is expected to come down to results in 10 states where residents tend to vacillate in their support between one party and the other. Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, Iowa and Ohio were essential for Donald Trump's victory in 2016. Polls show that Joe Biden could disrupt Republican electoral power in Georgia, Arizona, North Carolina and Texas this year.

2,30,000,000

- There are 230 million Americans who are eligible to vote in the presidential election, although a large portion often sit it out. But the 2020 election could see record-high turnout.

- Early voting has already exceeded previous years' numbers, with many voters preferring to fill out their ballots in advance to avoid long lines on an Election Day taking place in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic. As of Friday mid-day nearly 84 million people had cast their ballots early.

- Some 138 million Americans voted in 2016.

6,600,000,000

- Campaigns have smashed spending records in 2020, with \$6.6 billion spent by the respective presidential candidates -- \$2 billion more than was spent during the Trump-Clinton race four years ago, according to a study by the Center for Responsive Politics.

- The Biden campaign has pulled ahead on that front, flooding airwaves in key states with political ads. In total, more than \$14 billion has been spent in the run-up to November 3, with more than \$7 billion of that going toward congressional races.

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IN THREE DAYS, we can put an end to a presidency that has divided this nation. In three days, we can put an end to a presidency that has failed to protect this nation. In three days, we can put an end to a presidency that has fanned the flames of hate all across this nation. — JOE BIDEN

IT'S THE STATE where the American Constitution was signed. Three days from now, this is the state that will save the American Dream. On November 3, we're going to win Pennsylvania. We're going to win four more years in that very beautiful White House. — DONALD TRUMP

exhausting Sunday schedule with successive rallies in Michigan, Iowa, North Carolina and Georgia before an unusual 11:00 pm rally in Florida.

On Monday, both Trump and Biden, as well as their

running mates, will converge on Pennsylvania, which Trump won in 2016 by less than one percentage point.

Amid the surge of mail-in ballots to be counted, and with legal challenges

likely, Pennsylvania is expected to be a focus of prolonged uncertainty — for days after the election.

Democrats have dominated in early voting, but

Republicans plan to vote in-person on Tuesday.

Republican national chairwoman Ronna McDaniel insisted Sunday that the economy — and

Trump's insistence on

keeping it open even amid

the pandemic — was the central issue.

Joe Biden is saying we

can lock it down, like we're

seeing in Europe, and it

will destroy our economy,

she said on CBS. "I think the American people are

saying, I can't afford for

the economy to close down."

Underscoring the

high stakes, a record 92

million early votes have

already been cast, accord-

ing to the nonpartisan US

Elections Project. — AFP

UNPRECEDENTED ELECTION

This is the first time a woman of colour has been nominated by a major party. It's the first time both presidential nominees are in their 70s.

It is the first time a presidential election has been held in the throes of a pandemic.

The 1918 midterm election, in the midst of the Spanish flu pandemic and World War I, saw voter participation drop 20%.

The pandemic has sparked an unmatched shift to early voting, by mail or otherwise. President Donald Trump has seized on concern about mail voting to repeatedly suggest that the election is beset by fraud.

There are rising fears that days or weeks might pass before the outcome is known.

Until 1937, Presidents were inaugurated in March, partly because it took so long to report and count the votes.

The 2000 election was not resolved until Dec. 12, when the US Supreme Court made George W. Bush the winner by ruling that Florida must stop counting votes.

One more pandemic-inspired departure from the norm: While Trump has campaigned furiously, jetting from town to town, until recently Biden stayed in or near his home in Delaware.

ROAD TO 270: BIDEN HAS OPTIONS, TRUMP WALKS NARROW PATH

1. President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden each has a path to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House. Biden's is appreciably wider.

2. Biden is competitive in all the battleground states Trump won in 2016, and has put a handful of traditional Republican states, including Georgia and Arizona, in play.

3. Trump is putting his hopes for reelection on two of the most populous swing states (states that could vote either way) — Florida and Pennsylvania.

4. Biden can win an electoral majority by carrying the three states where Trump stunned Hillary Clinton in 2016: Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, and either Arizona and North Carolina.

5. They would give Biden 279 electoral votes, as long as he wins all the other states where Hillary won. Under this scenario, Biden would not need to win any other states Trump won in 2016.

6. The fiercest struggle among the three is in Pennsylvania. Biden has had a slight advantage in most polls, while some suggest Trump remains within striking distance.

7. If Biden loses Pennsylvania, it would require him to find 11 electoral votes elsewhere.

8. Once reliably Republican Arizona, offering exactly 11, and North Carolina, with 15, are states Trump won four years ago that are well within Biden's reach.

9. The Arizona alternative supposes that he also wins Nevada, last won by a Republican in 2004.

10. The race for North Carolina appears tighter. Barack Obama won from there in 2008 but Republicans have taken the state in 2012 and 2016.

11. Florida, the perennial battleground, offers 29 electoral votes and is, per usual, exceedingly close. Some have suggested a slight Biden advantage and Trump is campaigning hard there.

12. There's one more big prize on the table: Texas, where Democrats have struggled.

13. Trump almost certainly cannot reach 270 electoral votes without carrying Florida, where polls show a tight race.

14. Even if Trump nets Florida and holds battlegrounds he won in the South and Southwest, he would still be short of 270.

15. The President is wagering much on Pennsylvania as the best chance of moving within striking distance of that threshold. He has held seven rallies there in two weeks.

16. Trump could nose ahead in Ohio, long one of his strongest states, but would still need to cobble together a series of states he won in 2016, such as Iowa, and some he lost narrowly and continues to trail.

17. That more complicated path would include flipping Minnesota, Nevada and New Hampshire.

Suspect arrested after 2 killed in Quebec stabbing

Spokesman Etienne Doyon said police were first notified of the stabbings near the National Assembly shortly before 10:30 pm on Saturday.

The five injured victims were taken to a hospital, and a spokeswoman said their lives do not appear to be in danger.

Police have asked any potential witnesses to contact them. Doyon declined to offer any information about the two people who were killed, saying only that "Our thoughts are with the family of the people who died today." Carlos Godoy, who lives in the area, said police K-9 units had searched his backyard as they hunted for the suspect.

Police had earlier warned residents to remain indoors as they hunted for a man dressed in medieval clothing and armed with a bladed weapon who had left "multiple" victims.

They say a man in his mid-20s has been arrested in connection with the Halloween night attacks and taken to a hospital.

Quebec police said in a tweet their initial information indicates the motive is personal.

Police had earlier warned residents to remain indoors as they hunted for a man dressed in medieval clothing and armed with a bladed weapon who had left "multiple" victims.

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SHORT TAKES

TURKEY EXTENDS E. MED VESSEL MISSION AGAIN

Istanbul, Nov. 1: Turkey on Sunday extended once again a research ship mission in contested waters of the east Mediterranean, ignoring Greek warnings such moves undercut efforts to resolve their dispute.

The Turkish navy said in a message on the international maritime alert system NAVTEX that the Oruc Reis vessel would stay in the area until November 14.

It had previously said the ship would remain until November 4, Wednesday.

The latest deployment comes as the two NATO allies have toned down some of their bellicose rhetoric in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake that hit both countries.

The Oruc Reis, escorted by military ships, has become the symbol of Ankara's quest for natural gas in the eastern Mediterranean, where recent discoveries have triggered huge interest and competition.

Athens says Ankara is breaking international law by prospecting in Greek waters.

Turkey in August sent the ship into the disputed zone, alarming both Cyprus and Greece, which carried out military drills in response.

Tensions subsided after Turkey withdrew the ship in mid-September for what it said was maintenance work and agreed to exploratory talks with Greece.

But Ankara sent the ship back into the area on October 12, angering Greece which said there could be no talks until it is withdrawn.

BIOFUEL POLICY WILL HIT NEXT U.S. PREZ

New York, Nov. 1: Both U.S. President Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger Joe Biden have tried to clinch rural votes ahead of the election by voicing support for corn-based ethanol.

But big questions remain over how either would administer the nation's biofuel law, the U.S. Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), and the stakes are high for both the nation's farming and oil refining industries.

Under the RFS, refiners are required to blend billions of gallons of ethanol and other biofuels into their fuel each year or buy credits from those who do.

Farmers support the regulation because it has created a huge market for corn, but the oil industry opposes it because it represents increased regulatory compliance costs for refiners, and competition for fossil fuels.

After the coronavirus outbreak, US fuel demand tanked and since has struggled to recover, leading the refining industry and its political backers to ask that the RFS requirements for 2020 be relaxed.

If granted, that would mean that refiners could be allowed to hand in credits that account for less than the total 2020 biofuel volume mandate when they come due next spring.

NORWAY: HARD TO FIND RIGHT GREEN ENERGY PROJECTS

Oslo, Nov. 1: Norway's \$1.1 trillion sovereign wealth fund, the world's largest, is having trouble finding suitable unlisted renewable energy projects to invest in due to the paucity of projects and strong competition for stakes in them, its new CEO said.

Such investments are new for the fund which, until this year, was only allowed to invest in stocks, bonds and real estate.

"In our experience so far, there are many investors looking for these investments and pricing is thus not always as attractive for us," the fund's new CEO, Nicolai Tangen, told a parliamentary hearing on Friday.

"These investments are subject to the same risk and return requirements as the (fund's) other investments. In the near term, finding projects that meet these requirements may be demanding."

In March, the fund said it was looking to invest some 100 billion crowns (\$10.83 billion) between 2020 and 2022 in unlisted renewable projects such as wind parks and solar farms, looking first at North America and Europe.

That remains the strategy, Tangen said on Friday, though there were relatively few projects available.

"They are few and they are big. It is difficult to know when they are coming... There is a lot of competition for these projects," he told the hearing.

70-yr-old pulled out alive in Turkey as quake toll hits 60

Quake triggered a small tsunami that hit Samos and the Seferihisar district



Rescue teams look for victims in the rubble of a collapsed building on Sunday, in Izmir, after a powerful earthquake struck Turkey's western coast and parts of Greece. — AFP

Izmir, Turkey, Nov. 1: Rescue workers extricated a 70-year-old man from a collapsed building in western Turkey on Sunday, some 34 hours after a strong earthquake in the Aegean Sea struck Turkey and Greece, killing at least 60 people and injuring more than 900.

It was the latest series of remarkable rescues after the Friday afternoon earthquake, which was centered in the Aegean northeast of the Greek island of Samos. Search-and-rescue teams were working in nine toppled or damaged buildings in Izmir, Turkey's third-largest city, but appeared to be finding more bodies Sunday than survivors.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan raised the death toll Sunday in Izmir to 58. Two teenagers were killed Friday on Samos and at least 19 others were injured.

There was some debate over the magnitude of the earthquake. The U.S. Geological Survey rated it 7.0, while the Istanbul's

Kandilli Institute put it at 6.9 and Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) said it measured 6.6.

Ahmet Citim, 70, was pulled out of the rubble in the middle of the night and was hospitalized. Health Minister Fahrettin Koca tweeted that Citim said: "I never lost hope."

The minister visited the survivor and said he was doing well.

The quake triggered a small tsunami that hit Samos and the Seferihisar district of Izmir, drowning one elderly woman.

Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay said 26 badly damaged buildings would be demolished in Izmir. "It's not the earthquake that kills but buildings," he added, repeating a common slogan.

Turkey has a mix of

older buildings and cheap or illegal construction, which can lead to serious damage and deaths when earthquakes hit. Regulations have been tightened in light of earthquakes to strengthen or demolish buildings and urban renewal is underway in Turkish cities but it is not happening fast enough.

Two destroyed apartment buildings in Izmir where much of the rescues are taking place had received reports of "decay" in 2012 and 2018, according to the municipal agency in charge of such certificates.

Turkish media including the Hurriyet newspaper said one of the buildings, which was built in 1993, was at risk of earthquake damage because of its low quality concrete and the lack of reinforcements. However, the building continued to be occupied.

Turkey's justice minister said prosecutors have begun investigating several collapsed buildings and promised legal repercussions if experts identified neglect.

— AP

CLIMATE ACTIVISTS DISRUPT OPENING OF NEW AIRPORT IN BERLIN

Berlin, Nov. 1: Climate activists sought to disrupt the long-delayed opening of Berlin's new airport on Saturday, one gluing himself to the door of a plane, others scaling the terminal to hang placards and many crowding the building dressed as penguins.

The opening of the Berlin-Brandenburg Willy Brandt airport - to be known by its BER code - comes as the global aviation industry struggles with a dearth of travellers due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Construction on the new airport began in 2006 and it was originally due to open in 2011. But construction problems and technical issues saw the date pushed back repeatedly, a major embarrassment that dented Germany's reputation for efficiency.

The delays left Berlin relying on two outdated and crowded Cold War-era airports: Tegel, which served the west of the city, and Schoenefeld, which was once Communist East Berlin's airport and which has been integrated into the new facility.

"The time for jokes about the BER must be over now," said Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer, adding that the country needed to start a new "economic miracle" like the one seen in Germany after World War Two to recover from the pandemic. — Reuters

AS ADRIATIC METALS DIGS IN BOSNIA RANGES OFFER HOPE

Vares, Bosnia, Nov. 1: In a remote mountain town with a history of mining that dates from Roman times, hopes are high that British mineral company Adriatic Metals will bring jobs and spur some of the economic revival Bosnia craves.

Foreign direct investment in the country had already fallen as bureaucracy deterred investors.

In the first half of this year, it was down nearly 50% compared with a year ago as the pandemic paralysed economic activity.

Adriatic Metals is providing a significant boost, with backing from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which this week said it had bought a 2.6% stake in the company for 6.6 million euros (\$7.8 million). — Reuters



A rescue worker escorts a child to a waiting vehicle during an evacuation of informal settlers living along coastal areas in Manila on Sunday, as Super Typhoon Goni moved towards the Philippine capital. — AFP

Super typhoon weakens after slamming Philippines, 7 dead

Manila, Nov. 1: A powerful super typhoon slammed into the eastern Philippines with ferocious winds on Sunday, killing at least seven people and causing volcanic mudflows to bury houses before weakening as it blew toward Manila, where the capital's main airport was shut down, officials said.

Villagers fled to safety as the typhoon approached, but the two apparently stayed put, he said. "The child was found 15 kilometers (9 miles) away, Bichara told DZMM radio, adding that the child was swept away by mudflows and floodwaters. Three other villagers, including one pinned down by a tree, were killed in Albay, the Office of Civil Defense

said. Ricardo Jalad, who heads the government's disaster-response agency, said the typhoon's destructive force was capable of causing major damage.

"There are so many people who are really in vulnerable areas," he said. The Philippine weather agency reinforced those concerns, saying that within 12 hours after the typhoon blasted into shore, people would experience "catastrophic, violent winds and intense to torrential rainfall."

Residents were warned of likely landslides, massive flooding, storm surges of up to 5 meters (16 feet) and powerful winds that can blow away shanties. But as in past storms, some refused to heed the warnings. In Quezon province, villager Diane Joco scrambled with her husband, parents, siblings and cousin out of their flimsy houses on stilts on the shore of Calauag town, but stayed close by in a neighbor's sturdier house near the shore to guard their own homes.

"We should be nearby to be able to repair any damage to our house quickly, otherwise it will fall apart and be blown away. We have no other house," Joco said by phone. She suddenly yelled as she spoke,

saying that a part of the tin roof of her neighbor's house was nearly ripped off by a frightening gust.

— AP

Her growing collection includes ones from New York and the old Soviet Union

Glasgow artist launches plastic bag museum



Glasgow, Nov. 1: Katrina Cobain unwraps a parcel and removes its precious contents, slowly and delicately as if she were handling an ancient scroll of paper. But the items she places on the table of a makeshift studio in an old tobacco pipe factory in the east end of Glasgow are rather more mundane — plastic carrier bags.

Yet, to many, they are considered historical items, representing the consumer excesses of the 20th and 21st centuries.

For Cobain, 24, every plastic bag tells a story of the modern age and so, two years ago, she became a collector and plans to start a museum.

"The original idea started because I felt that landfill sites could be archaeological dig sites of the future and for our civilisation they would be filled with plastic," she said.

"They reveal so much about our lifestyle in the last 60 years in terms of consumerism and social history."

"They can document or reveal key shifts in our lifestyles, key historic events and also changes in graphic design styles."

When Cobain put the word out that she intended to start a museum she was inundated with bags from around the world.

Her growing collection includes ones from New York and the old Soviet Union.

Others commemorate the supersonic passenger jet Concorde, and even the marriage of Queen Elizabeth II's eldest son and heir Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer in 1981.

"Why they were making bags commemorating the royal wedding, I don't know," said Cobain.

"It shows you the level of production of plastic bags

Tropical storm Eta expected to become hurricane

Miami (US), Nov. 1: Forecasters expect the newly-formed Tropical Storm Eta to become a hurricane by Monday, shortly after the system formed in the Caribbean and tied the record for more named storms in a single Atlantic hurricane season.

The system had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) early Sunday, the US National Hurricane Centre said in an advisory. It was centred 205 miles (330 kilometres) south-southeast of Kingston, Jamaica, and 500 miles (805 kilometres) east of Cabo Gracias a Dios on the Nicaragua/Honduras border.

However, this is the first time the Greek letter Eta is being used as a storm name because in 2005, after the season ended meteorologists went back and determined there was a storm that should have gotten a name, but didn't. Hurricane season still has a month to go, ending November 30. And in 2005, Zeta formed in the end of December.

France in court for 2nd time over air pollution

Brussels, Nov. 1: The European Commission will take France to the EU Court of Justice for flouting limits on air pollution for more than a decade, the EU executive said on Friday.

The Commission said data from France confirmed a "systematic failure" to comply with the rules. The French government was also warned by the country's highest administrative court in July, that it would be fined 10 million euros (\$11.8 million) every six months if it does not reduce air pollution in line with the law.

Prolonged exposure to pollutants can cause diabetes, lung disease and cancer, and early evidence suggests air pollution may be linked to higher death rates among Covid-19 patients.

Pollution levels across Europe plummeted earlier this year during lockdowns to control the COVID-19 pandemic. But any dip this year is expected to be temporary, unless countries put in place lasting measures to limit pollution from traffic and factories.

The EU's top court already ruled in 2019 that France had breached limits on nitrogen dioxide pollution in 12 regions. Other countries, including Germany, Italy, Hungary and Romania have also previously faced legal action from the EU Commission over their failure to respect air quality rules.

Particulate matter is

DUTCH SET TO MISS 2030 CLIMATE GOALS, SAYS GOVERNMENT ADVISER

Amsterdam, Nov. 1: The Netherlands, one of the European Union's biggest polluters, looks set to miss its own target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions this decade despite new climate initiatives, its main environmental advisory body said on Friday.

Emissions, which were 17% below their 1990 level last year, would also fall short of European targets. The EU currently strives for a 40% reduction of emissions by 2030, and the European Commission has proposed to increase that goal to 55%. — Reuters

in the decade.

"The rate at which emissions are reduced needs to double in the next 10 years in order to reach the goal," the researchers said.

Emissions, which were 17% below their 1990 level last year, would also fall short of European targets.

Emissions are set to drop 34% relative to their 1990 level by 2030, the advisory body PBL said, well short of the government's target of a 49% reduction by the end of the decade.

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Photographs show how many bags there are in the oceans and how disruptive they are for other natural habitats for animals and so on.

"And they are just incredibly unsustainable to produce and use."

"So by making a plastic bag museum, it kind of helps people along to the idea that these are objects that do belong in the past," — AFP

Despite her affection for plastic bags, which are increasingly attracting charges for use, Cobain is looking forward to a time when they are consigned to history.

"They are obviously very damaging for the environment," she said.

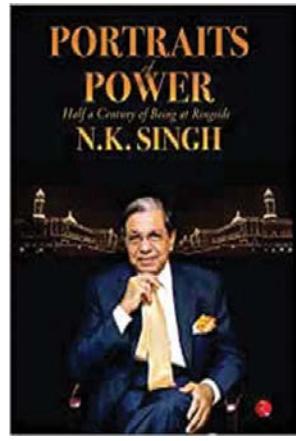
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"And they are just incredibly unsustainable to produce and use."

"So by making a plastic bag museum, it kind of helps people along to the idea that these are objects that do belong in the past," — AFP

INDIAN TOP 10
BESTSELLERS

NON-FICTION

1 PORTRAITS OF POWER
N.K. Singh,
Rupa, ₹5952 THE INDIA WAY
S. Jaishankar,
HarperCollins, ₹6993 JINNAH HIS SUCCESSES,
FAILURES AND ROLE IN
HISTORY
Ishraq Ahmed,
Penguin, ₹9994 REMNANTS OF A
SEPARATION
Aanchal Malhotra,
HarperCollins, ₹5995 HONOUR AMONG SPIES
Asad Durrani,
HarperCollins, ₹4996 VOICES OF DISSENT
Romila Thapar,
Seagull Books,
₹4997 THE ULTIMATE GOAL
Vikram Sood,
HarperCollins,
₹6998 TEN LESSONS FOR A
POST-PANDEMIC
WORLD
Fareed Zakaria,
Allen Lane, ₹5999 THE HOUSE OF JAIPUR
John Zubrzycki,
Juggernaut, ₹59910 DEEPAWALI
POOJA-VIDHI
Pawan Kumar Mishra,
Tara India Research
Press, ₹299

FICTION

1 THE DISCOMFORT OF
EVENING
Marieke Lucas
Rijneveld,
Faber & Faber, ₹4992 A TIME FOR MERCY
John Grisham,
Hodder & Stoughton,
₹6993 HAMNET
Maggie O'Farrell,
Tinder Press, ₹6994 GIRL IN WHITE COTTON
Avni Doshi,
Harper, ₹5995 THE LYING LIFE OF
ADULTS
Elena Ferrante,
Europa Editions, ₹6996 THE SHADOW KING
Maaza Mengiste,
Canongate, ₹7997 PRIVATE MOSCOW
James Patterson
& Adam Hamdy,
Century, ₹6998 THE HEART ASKS
PLEASURE FIRST
Karuna Ezara Parikh,
Picador India, ₹6999 REAL LIFE
Brandon Taylor,
Daunt Books, ₹65010 THE NEW
WILDERNESS
Diane Cook,
One World, ₹399A whitewashed portrait,
shorn of nuance, insight

Ranjona Banerji

review

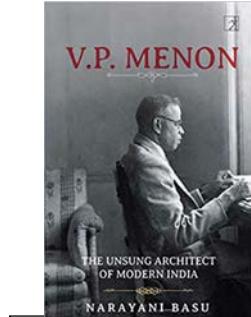
I picked this book with great enthusiasm. Because I do believe that in many ways VP. Menon is the architect of modern India and that he is largely unsung. I have read both *The Transfer of Power in India* and *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States* by Menon several times over. In Menon's books, incredibly detailed, informative and insightful, you get a remarkable portrait of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the enormous task he was entrusted with: to bring together a disparate and motley group of princely states within the borders of India.

But hovering below the surface of Patel's astounding achievement was the writer himself, Menon. It is clear within the story that Patel could not have done this without Menon and yet Menon himself was ephemeral, elusive. This biography, by his great granddaughter, seemed like the perfect answer. To the

riddle that was Menon and to acknowledgement at last of his formidable accomplishment.

When all the controversy erupted over Jawaharlal versus Patel, at the launch of this book, I was still at the beginning of the story, where in a sleepy Kerala village and with an indulgent mother, Menon, was a brilliant if rebellious young student. Here, we focus on the development of a young man. The dynamics of family life. And how childhood moulds us for the future. There are dramatic moments here. That a young boy should be so angry that he burned down his school and ran away from home. The sheer grit that made him work as a labourer in the Kolar mines and claw his way up. The losses and tribulations that the young Menon faced and his dogged determination to rise above every setback. That a man without formal education could rise so far and so brilliantly.

This was the story I wanted. Alas, it was not to last long.

VP MENON. THE UNSUNG
ARCHITECT OF
MODERN INDIABy NARAYANI BASU
Simon and Schuster
₹799

that Basu, and perhaps Menon, is no fan of Jawaharlal Nehru's. For one, he is called "Jawaharlal" through most of the book, although everyone else is referred to by their surname. Nehru is also dismissed as a petty vindictive tyrant with no thoughts of his own. You may consider this harsh or fair but either way, this view is not sufficiently substantiated.

Now whether Basu picked this up from her family or these are her views as a historian, or whether Menon was clear about his feelings is not fully explained to the reader. And so also with Menon's own personal life. It is interesting enough, his rocky relationship with his sons, the collapse of his first marriage, his relationship and subsequent marriage to his mentor's wife, all you get is the bare bones. There are no insights, no conflicts, no impression of how his life affected his work. Or vice versa.

Indeed, until you reach the transfer of power, Menon himself gets lost in the tumultuous events around India's Independence. And if you want to read about the transfer of power, Menon's own books are freely available. There are missed opportunities here. The friendship between Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Menon would have made fascinating reading. There are nuggets on how Menon felt

about Partition which are too disparate and disconnected to make a lasting impression on the reader. The struggle for power, such as it was, between Patel and Nehru finds a few pages at the end and not enough before or between. Patel himself, who played such an important role in Menon's life, does not shine through.

It is possible that the linear structure of the biography is the problem. That by juxtaposing Menon's lifeline along that of India's, the man himself has got lost in the turmoil of the times. If instead, we were told Menon's story without India's story taking centre-stage, we may have learnt more about him. Basu tells us that Menon was unpredictable and remote and you feel that sometimes in his interactions with his sons. But clearly, he loved his second wife. That dichotomy is not explored.

For this reviewer, the fact that a book has been written about V.P. Menon is insufficient. His character and achievements are such that he deserved a more intimate portrait without the massive presence of Indian history as a distraction and detraction.

The writer is a senior journalist who writes on media affairs, politics and social trends. She tweets at @ranjona.

In turbulent Assam, a lonely granddad spars with grandchild



Rupa Gulab

review

Undertow is a tightly packed novel that unravels strained relationships. When Loya gets a grant to study elephants in Kaziranga National Park for her PhD, she jumps at it. Elephants aren't the only attraction — this gives her the opportunity she's longed for: to visit Assam and the home her mother was banished from for marrying a man "who was not of her religion, let alone her caste, nor of her race, not from any region remotely near hers, and a man whose skin was dark, to make matters worse".

It is Loya who takes the initiative to walk into her grandfather Torun's house in Guwahati — a bold move to claim her birthright. Once she meets him, however, she's not willing to give him a chance, and thinks of little ways to punish him — understandable, because she's reacting to the treatment meted out to her mother.

Torun is a complex character. He was weak only when it came to his wife — a strong woman he loved dearly, and he intends to stay loyal to her memory. He does not give Loya an inch, even though it almost catches at his throat when he sees glimpses of his wife in his granddaughter. They are not a sweet storybook grandfather and granddaughter pair, but sparing partners, both determined to hold out against each other.

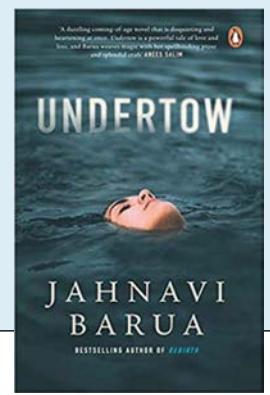
As Loya traces the path her mother walked before her, the history of Assam unfolds with every step: while it's beautiful, it's also sullen, resentful and often turbulent. Activities of the All Assam Students' Union are threaded into daily life. People around Loya's grandfather, from old friends to the house help, have family members in the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), some who are still in hiding, and some who have surrendered. Romen, a family retainer, speaks scathingly about his brother: "First he runs away from home, joins the ULFA, drives our mother crazy and then after a couple of years he surrenders, comes back, becomes Surrendered ULFA and swaggers about the village terrorising good folks and now he is tired of that and wants to become a businessman. Ha!"

Political chitter is a constant, and most of the characters are dead against illegal migrants. Loya tries to understand this sentiment, but when she points out to Torun that the Ahoms were migrants too (from old Burma), he narrows his eyes. Loya does not feel uncomfortable: "As she lay in bed looking out at the starry sky, Loya was restless with a vague disapproval. She did not feel strongly about politics in any way, but she took for granted certain things — the idea of loving one's country and wishing it no harm."

The politics doesn't get heavy or overpower the story, fortunately. Loya and Torun are firmly at the centre of it all. She has the advantage over him, because while she's aware of the baggage he carries, he's unaware of the weight she carries on her shoulders.

While there's hope that their relationship may thaw, other forces are at work as well. Unpredictable undercurrents run through this novel, and make it all the more powerful.

Rupa Gulab is a freelance writer and the author of Girl Alone, Chip of the Old Blockhead and The Great Depression of the 40s



UNDERTOW

By JAHNAVI BARUA
Penguin Viking
₹499

THE HUMBLE BISCUIT HAS A NOBLE HISTORY

Prue Leith

review

Sin-eating is an old European practice. After a person's death, during the period of lying-in, a biscuit would be placed on the corpse in its coffin. Before the burial, one of the mourners would eat it in order to take on the sins of the departed and allow them to move on into the next life free of the burdens of their transgressions.

Such fascinating info is the stuff of Lizzie Collingham's book *The Biscuit*. This review, sadly, won't touch on a tenth of it.

Collingham has bagged a senior place among writers telling history through a single item of food. The book ranks up there with *Salt and Cod* by Mark Kurlansky. Her previous such book was *Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors*, which I thought would be hard to match, but Collingham has pulled it off again.

A former research fellow at Jesus College, Cambridge and history professor at Warwick, she resists the temptation to speculate, exaggerate or invent. What you get is well-researched, detailed information, but written as a

clear and interesting story. The biscuit has been around at least since the third millennium BC, when cooks in Mesopotamia found that drying their bread in the sun meant it didn't go stale or mouldy. This quickly led to drying by the fire or in the oven, hence bi-cuit (twice-cooked).

The Biscuit isn't chronological, but jumps around following stories loosely linked by concept. The survival theme takes in hard tack, the sailors' biscuit, of which the mutineers gave Captain Bligh 150lbs when they set him and 18 men adrift in a longboat in the South Seas. By the time they reached Timor, 4,000 miles to the west, they were down to an ounce of biscuit a day.

Army and navy rations relied heavily on biscuit, and Collingham tells of its role in the Napoleonic wars, and of the dastardly bakers who delivered damp, adulterated sacks of biscuit, which quickly contained more weevils than flour. This

eventually led to the industrialisation of the baking process, both by the navy itself and by civilian (mostly Quaker) manufacturers, who boasted of their refined, untouched-by-human-hand products, meant only for the middle classes and aristocracy. Huntley & Palmers, Peek Frean, McVitie's, Jacob's, Carr's and Lang all had their heyday in the 19th century.

Once sugar arrived in plentiful supply from the colonies, sweet biscuits and fancy iced biscuits overtook cream crackers and water biscuits. Sugar was promoted as a health-giving food. The baker barons fought ferociously for the custom of the rich, copying each other's successes and stealing each other's top staff. It wasn't until after World War I that American competition brought the price of biscuits down to a level everyone could afford. Today we eat more biscuits than any other nation, presumably helping to make us the fattest in Europe.

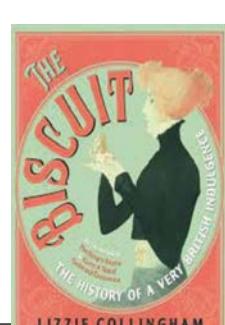
'Dunking' seems to stem from the business of soaking hard biscuit to make it

palatable. One of the earliest sweet biscuits was the lady's finger: it is the perfect shape for dunking into small glasses of the time. So are the Italian biscotti and the French langue de chat. Dunking may be considered a working-class delight today, but dipping your 'sippet' into your cordial or tea was once an elegant way to behave.

Soaking biscuits also led to the famous English trifle. In 1604 Lady Elinor Fettiplace's cookbook recommends steeping bits of custard in wine and covering them with custard. By the 18th century Elizabeth Raffald was using macaroons soaked in sweet white wine topped with custard and a frothy syllabub of cream, the whole decorated with flowers and comfits. Today we've replaced the biscuits with stale cake and added (a mistake to my mind) a layer of jelly.

My only complaint about the book is that there is no mention of Aberfraw biscuits, allegedly the first British biscuit, revived in Wales five years ago; nor the oldest biscuit in the world sold at auction, with the effects of a sailor who fought at the battle of Trafalgar. But there, you see, Collingham has got me so hooked on the subject I am probably Googling fake news which she has wisely rejected.

By arrangement with the Spectator

THE BISCUIT: THE HISTORY
OF A VERY BRITISH
INDULGENCE
By LIZZIE
COLLINGHAM
The Bodley Head
£18.99

FAST FACT
Youngest International Booker Prize winner Marieke Lucas Rijneveld does not refer to themselves as 'trans'; but as 'in-between'. The 29-year-old comes from a farming household in the Netherlands and her visceral *The Discomfort of Evening* — which deals with trauma and guilt following a death in the family — is autofictional.

Saeeda Bano, 1st female Indian radio jockey, meets Akhtari Bai

Shahana Raza

excerpt

In December of 1942 Masud came back on vacation and we began making arrangements for his marriage with Sughrat. Most of the responsibilities were once again handed over to me. Aqila and I got busy with the shopping. The main incident I can recall from this time is that's well worth a mention is that Begum Akhtar was called to do a *mujra* at the bride's house from our that is the groom's, side. She was still a courtesan at this time and went by her former name, Akhtari Bai. Akhtari had a unique character. Despite performing *mujra* her body language did not reflect the vulgarity or cheapness one associates with women from this profession.

Around 1938 a radio station was set up in Lucknow. Everyone was extremely interested. Shows for women and children were also being broadcast which used to be hosted by women. Listening to a radio discussion or radio play, we would often hear the names of these women being

announced on air. Some of us began to wish we could also hear our voices booming across the air waves. At the same time we realised this would not be possible since women from good families kept purdah from courtseans.

Slowly executives at the radio station also got to know that most women from traditional families of Lucknow, maintained purdah from courtseans and because of this, would never visit the station. I also received a letter from the Director in which he politely suggested, I should come to the station with my relative Huma Baji to take part in a discussion, on so and so date. I showed the invite to my husband. His response was, 'of course... you must accept it.'

Now every second week request to give a talk on some topic or the other or to narrate a story for the children's show or compere a ladies programme on radio. I already had Abbas Raza's permission. After a while, one of the officers by the name of Haseeb sahab suggested I start compering a woman's programme regularly. When I asked for details, he said, 'Just come once a week to the radio station for a couple of hours. Whatever has to be broadcast will be scripted and handed over to you.' Saeeda was around two years old and by the grace of God I had a fabulous maid. I accepted Haseeb sahab's offer. Once a week I drove down to Lucknow, read out details of a woman's programme for radio and returned to Barabanki by evening. I used to drive myself.

During our stay in Barabanki we became quite friendly with a District Magistrate by the

name of Mr Abbasi Wahajuddin. Eight miles to the north of Barabanki there is a small town called Dewa Sharif. It is famous for the mazar of the shrine of an early 19th century Sufi, Haji Waris Ali Shah.

Every year to commemorate his death anniversary, a grand celebration is held for an entire week at Dewa.

One such night, the *tawaifs* were invited to sing. Special arrangements

were made for us to sit behind a *chilman*, a thin cloth curtain, and see them perform since women from good families kept purdah from *tawaifs*. How strange and very hypocritical! When it came to hearing the *qawwals* perform, we sat with the men.

Anyway, we were simply delighted to be attending the event. From behind the *chilman* what do we see? A white spotless sheet spread out across the length and breadth of the large hall stretching in front of us; several plush carpets rolled open near the walls on top of which *gautakiyas* or bolsters had been placed strategically. Reclining comfortably on these, were the privileged listeners, the audience of men. Lounging regally on a *gautakiya* with an extremely beautiful *razai* (quilt) thrown over her feet sat the famous courtesan Benazir Bai. On either side of her, at the opposite end, inside the same *razai*, sat two of her ardent admirers.

Another *tawaifa* was seated in the same *andaaz* (style). She also had a gorgeous quilt covering her feet. To one side of her sat Akhtari Bai.

She was wearing a simple sari, pale grey with beautiful silver zari embroidery. Her face looked radiant, without a trace of arrogance. She did not

have a *razai*, nor was she lounging on a bolster.

After a short while, Munni Bai finished her song and Akhtari Bai picked up the tanpura. She hummed a few stray notes to tune the instrument to her voice, smiled, looked at the audience and started singing. What a magical voice! Within seconds, the entire gathering was mesmerised.

The *mehfil* ended around 4am,

SHORT TAKES
Harris, Pucovski in 486-run stand

Sydney: Will Pucovski and Marcus Harris smashed double centuries to fire a message to Australia coach Justin Langer in setting a new record Sunday for the biggest partnership in Sheffield Shield history.

The pair shared in a massive 486-run opening stand for Victoria against South Australia, surpassing the previous mark of 464 set by Steve and Mark Waugh for New South Wales in 1990.

Harris, who has not played a Test since being dropped following the 2019 Ashes against England, finally fell for 239, caught behind off the bowling of Wes Agar. It left Pucovski in the middle and he remained unbeaten on 255 when captain Peter Handscomb declared at 564 for 3.

Their exploits will cause incumbent Test openers Joe Burns and David Warner to sit up and take notice, with Langer's squad for an upcoming four-Test home series against India yet to be announced.

Pucovski, one of Australia's brightest prospects, has been on the cusp of Test selection for the past two summers, but has battled mental health problems. He was in the national set-up for Tests last summer against Sri Lanka, but was overlooked. — AFP

Jagan Mohan handball prez

Hyderabad: Telangana's Jagan Mohan Rao Arshapally has been unanimously elected president of the Handball Federation of India. He is the first Telangana man to become the president of a national sports federation.

Other members of the HFI who were elected are Dr Anandswar

Pandey, Dr Pradipkumar Balamchuri (senior vice-presidents), Padmasri Saptal, Amal Narayan Patowani, Reena Jagan Saneen (vice-presidents), Preet Singh Saluria (general secretary), Tejraj Singh, Birkumara Sharma, N. K. Sharma, Veena Shekhar (joint secretaries), and Vinay Kumar Singh (treasurer).

"I am truly grateful to all the 29 State associations for electing me as HFI president unanimously. I swear to work hard for the development of handball in the country," Jagan said in a statement.

Badminton official Sudhakar honoured

Hyderabad: Sudhakar Vemuri, international badminton umpire and referee, is among the five who have been conferred awards by the Dr Ramineni Foundation in the USA.

Sudhakar is the only Asian to have officiated at three consecutive Olympics — Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996 and Sydney 2000.

He is also the first Asian to be awarded the BWF

Distinguished Service Award (the highest award for badminton technical officials in the world) in 2015. The award is presented in recognition of long/ or distinguished and exemplary service to badminton at the international level for at least 15 years.

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) chairman Govinda Raju Chintala and actor Sonu Sood are among the five Dr Ramineni Foundation awardees. Sonu has been recognised for his humanitarian service during the Covid pandemic with a special award.

The foundation, established in Cincinnati (Ohio, USA) by Dr Ramineni Ayyanna Chowdary, has been honouring achievers since 1999.

Live on TV

CRICKET: Delhi Capitals vs Royal Challengers Bangalore from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

TENNIS: ATP Paris Masters: Day 1 action from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL: English Premier League: Fulham vs West Brom Albion from 11 pm; Leeds United vs Leicester City from 1.30 am (Tuesday) on Star Sports Select 2

Italian League: Verona vs Benevento from 1.15 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 2

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

Dhoni & Co end on high

CSK finish season with 9-wicket win, KXIP too knocked out

SCORECARD

Kings XI Punjab: K.L. Rahul b Lungi Ngidi 29, M. Agarwal b Lungi Ngidi 26, C Gayle lbw Tahir 12, N. Pooran c Dhoni b Thakur 2, M. Singh b Jadeja 14, D. Hooda (not out) 62, J. Neesham c Ruturaj Gaikwad b Lungi Ngidi 23, C Jordan batting 4. Extras (b-1, w-1) 2. Total (for 6 wkt, in 20 overs) 153.

FoW: 1-48, 2-62, 3-68, 4-72, 5-108, 6-113
Bowling: Chahar 3-0-30-0, Curran 2-0-15-0, Thakur 4-0-27-1, Ngidi 4-0-39-3, Tahir 4-0-24-1, Jadeja 3-0-17-1.

Chennai Super Kings: Ruturaj Gaikwad (not out) 62, Faf du Plessis c Rahul b Jordan 48, Ambati Rayudu (not out) 30. Extras (lb-7, w-7) 14. Total (for 1 wkt, in 18.5 overs) 154.

FoW: 1-82
Bowling: Jimmy Neesham 3-0-26-0, Mohammed Shami 4-0-29-0, Chris Jordan 3-0-31-1, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-39-0, Murugan Ashwin 4-0-17-0, Chris Gayle 0.5-0-5-0.

out on 62 off 49 balls after striking six boundaries and a six, while Rayudu made a run-a-ball 30.

Earlier, Hooda smashed four sixes and three fours during his entertaining stay in the middle.

Thanks to Hooda, CSK managed 40 runs in the last three overs after CSK, opting to field, choked their middle-order for runs.

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