# THE ASIAN AGE.



WORLD 6

Prez Trump, stricken by Covid-19, flown to military hospital



MOVIES | 7

Serious Men: A charming story ring-fenced by an anti-dalit worldview

TABLOID 11

**Actor Ayushmann** Khurrana advocates children's rights



Vol. 27 No. 229 16 pages ₹5.00

#### www.asianage.com

Royal Challengers Bangalore batsman Virat Kohli in action during IPL match against Rajasthan Royals in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

#### **Foreign secy, Army Chief to** visit Myanmar

New Delhi: Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Army Chief Gen. M.M. Naravane will jointly undertake an important two-day visit to Myanmar starting Sunday during which will call on Myanmar's State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar **Armed Forces Senior** General Min Aung Hlaing. The visit comes at a time of Sino-Indian military tensions in the Ladakh sector. Myanmar has enjoyed close ties with China in the past. Full report on Page 4

#### **Rafales to take** part in IAF parade

New Delhi: The newly inducted Rafale fighter aircraft would feature in the Air Force Day parade on October 8, an Indian Air Force (IAF) official said on Saturday. The Indian Air Force will celebrate its 88th anniversary this year with the annual parade at the Hindon base in Ghaziabad.

#### **Delhi air to turn**

**'poor' from Monday** 

New Delhi: The national capital's air quality was recorded in the "moderate" category on Saturday, and is likely to turn "poor" in two days due to lowering temperatures and slow wind speed. Delhi's 24-hour average air quality index was recorded at 189 on Saturday.
Full report on Page 2

#### COUNTERPOINT





**Max:** 36°C Min: 20°C **RH:** 43% Rain: Nil

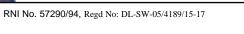
Forecast: Clear sky

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana Tithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula Vidiya till 7.27 am Star: Ashwini till 11.51 am Varjyam: 7.21 am to 9.09 am; 10.41 pm to 12.29 am (Monday)

**Durmuhurtam:** 4.24 pm to 5.12 pm Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.15 AM

**SUNSET TODAY 6.05 PM** MOONRISE TOMORROW 7.09 PM **MOONSET TODAY 8.08 AM** 



# **Gandhis reach Hathras, meet** family; Yogi orders CBI probe named Opp's

SREEPARNA CHAKRABARTY NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW/ HATHRAS, OCT. 3

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday recommended a CBI probe into the alleged gangrape and death of the 19-year-old Dalit woman that has triggered nationwide outrage.

decision announced by the chief minister's office minutes after Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra wound up their visit to the home of the victim's family at a village in Hathras district.

In what could well be their "Belchi" moment, Mr Gandhi and Ms Vadra capped a two-day-long struggle by making it to Hathras and meeting the dalit girl's family who passed away at Delhi's Safdurjang hospital.

The victim was later cremated by UP cops without her family's presence or permission in the dead of the night.

An all-out political drama broke out Saturday morning when the UP police turned the Noida Delhi border at the DND flyover into a virtual fortress with heavy police bandobast anticipating trouble over the Gandhi siblings' attempt to reach Hathras.

Hundreds of Congress workers from the party's frontal organisations like Mahila Congress, around 35 MPs and other top Congress leaders assem-



Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi meet the family members of a 19-vear-old dalit woman who died after being allegedly raped two weeks ago at Bulgadi village in Hathras on Saturday.

bled at the Noida-Delhi border.

At around noon Ms Vadra drove her brother Rahul Gandhi to the Noida border and soon an argument ensued with the police personnel present. There were also many

skirmishes

minor

between Congress workers and police retaliated with a mild lathi-charge. Ms Vadra was seeking jumping in to save a Congress worker. The visual shared widely on social media by the party will haunt the Yogi Adityanath government

in Uttar Pradesh and possible the BJP for a long

There were comparisons of the duo's Saturday visit to Hathras with the 1977 visit of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on foot to Bihar's Belchi the site of a dalit massacre. The incident is credited with having brought Mrs Gandhi, who was out of power then, to the political forefront again. At the DND flyover Saturday, negotiations began with the Gandhis

smaller group. Ms Vadra was at the wheel when the two leaders, along with senior leaders K.C. Venugopal,

and they were informed

that they could proceed to

Hathras, but only in a

Mukul Wasnik and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhary, drove towards Hathras. However, a cavalcade followed.

During the nearly 45minute long meeting of the Gandhis with the family, Ms Vadra sat with the victim's mother and aunts and consoled them while Mr Gandhi spoke with the brothers and the father. He is understood to have

asked whether the family thought they would get justice to which the brother replies he was hopeful

Mr Gandhi also asked the family whether they wanted a CBI probe, to which the kin said they

The permission to the Gandhis to visit Hathras ended a two-day standoff. The administration removed barricades outside the victim's village to allow the media to meet her family. Mr Gandhi and Ms Vadra were detained on Thursday when they tried to go to Hathras. The 19-year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped on September 14 in an assault by four upper caste men that left

As the Congress delega-tion from Delhi prepared to make its way to Hathras, its Uttar Pradesh unit president Ajay Kumar Lallu alleged he had been put under house arrest.

Meanwhile, in Varanasi, were later arrested.

ference, the women and child development minister accused the opposition of playing politics on the Hathras issue.

The victim will get justice. I have spoken to the chief minister. Once the SIT submits its report, the chief minister will take against accused, Irani said.

and government vehicles. More reports: Page 4

investigation.

injuries.

a group of Congress workers blocked Union minister Smriti Irani's cavalcade. Congress spokesperson Lalan Kumar said the protesting party workers

Addressing a press con-

In Agra, protesters from the Valmiki community pelted stones at policemen

# **BIHAR POLLS**

# Tejashwi Yadav CM face in Bihar

RJD to contest 144 seats, Cong 70

AGE CORRESPONDENT PATNA, OCT. 3

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav will be the chief ministerial candidate of the Opposition coalition in Bihar to challenge incumbent Nitish Kumar, the Opposition Mahagathbandhan announced on Saturday along with the seat-sharing formula for the upcoming Assembly elec-

Mr Yadav and his party have been allotted 144 seats out of 243. The Congress will contest from 70 seats and Left parties from 29.

"Two smaller partners, JMM and Vikasheel Insan Party (VIP), will be getting seats from the RJD quota," Mr Yadav said while making the formal announcement in Patna on Saturday.

Upset over being ignored by the grand alliance leaders, VIP chief Mukesh Sahani walked out of the event and hinted that he may quit the Opposition coali-

Mr Sahani had joined the RJD-led grand alliance just before Lok Sabha polls in 2019 and was expecting a "sizeable seat share" to contest in the Assembly elections. Reports suggest that he also wanted the grand alliance to declare him as



Like a true Bihari, I will fulfil all my promises. As I announced earlier, if voted to power we will approve around 10 lakh government jobs in the first Cabinet. Apart from this, we will also ensure that our youth get jobs in other sectors in

> — Tejashwi **Yadav**

Bihar

the deputy CM candidate. "I will announce my next move after meeting party leaders. I feel cheated," VIP chief Sahani

said.
The grand alliance in Bihar comprises RJD, Congress, VIP and three Left parties (CPI-ML, CPI and CPM). Two of RJD's prominent allies, Jitan Ram Manjhi and Upendra Kushwaha, had earlier left the grand alliance due to differences over leadership and seat-shar-

ing pact.
Political analysts claim
Turn to Page 4

# **■** 'Defence interests were compromised for years'

# PM inaugurates **Atal Tunnel, takes** a dig at Congress

**PAWAN BALI** NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

At a time of heightened tensions with China, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the strategically important all-weather Atal Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh which connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley and will reduce travel time to Leh by four-five hours.
Atal Tunnel, which is

the world's longest highway tunnel, is part of the government effort to improve connectivity to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) so that forces and ammunition reaches forward areas faster. The 9.02 km long tunnel built by Border Roads Organisation connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year. Earlier the valley was cut off for about six months each year owing to heavy snowfall. The tunnel reduces the road distance by 46 kms

between Manali and Leh. At the inauguration, Prime Minister launched an attack on the Congress and said that the country has also seen a time when defence interests were compromised and cited delay in buying Rafale for Air Force, plan to put indigenous aircraft Tejas in cold storage, lack of modern rifles for armed forces, and not strength-

ening ordnance factories. The Prime Minister said that the construction of the Atal Tunnel was



Atal Ji laid the foundation stone of approach road of this tunnel in 2002. Once his government went out of power, this job was most likely forgot-

> — Narendra 🛑 Modi

mer PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government went out of power. "Atalji laid the founda-

tion stone of the approach road of this tunnel in 2002. Once his government went out of power, this job was most likely forgotten. Till 2013-2014, progress was made only on 1.5 kms of this tunnel. Experts say that if the pace of progress had continued at the same rate, then the tunnel would have been completed by 2040. After 2014, the project progressed with unprecedented pace," Mr Modi said. "Nothing is more important for us than the defence of the country," the Prime Minister added.

■ More on Page 3



#### **SUSHANT** DEATH CASE 'No injuries on body other than hanging'

# AIIMS report rules out murder

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

In a significant development, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences' (AIIMS) Forensic Medical Board - which was formed to examine forensic evidence pertaining to Sushant Singh Rajput's death — ruled out mur-der, saying it's a case of

A team of doctors from Delhi's AIIMS dismissed theories of poisoning and strangling floated by the actor's family, their lawyer and some actors, the panel in its "conclusive medico-legal" opinion to the CBI said, "There were no injuries over the body of the victim other than hanging". According to news



Sushant Singh Rajput

agency reports, the panel has further said, "There were no marks of struggle/scuffle on the body and clothes of the deceased". The 34-yearold actor was found dead on June 14 in his Mumbai apartment. Sources said the AIIMS panel has completed the examination and the CBI is now corroborating the report with their investigation. The CBI will now continue its probe into "abetment to suicide",

•1T IS A CASE of hanging and death by suicide.

We have submitted our conclusive report to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI),' Dr Sudhir Gupta, who is also the chairman of the forensic medical board, said.

the charge that was originally listed by the Bihar Police, they added.

"All aspects are still open in the probe. If any evidence comes to light proving otherwise, Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code (murder) will be added," sources said. The CBI investigation began after family members of Sushant Singh filed a case accusing the actor's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty of mentally

harassing him, medicating him, exploiting him for money and playing a role in his death. Last week, the family's lawyer Vikas Singh had claimed to have been told by a doctor on the AIIMS panel that Sushant Singh ĥad been strangled.

"Getting frustrated by the delay in CBI taking a decision to convert abetment to suicide to murder of SSR. The doctor who is part of AIIMS team had told me long back that the photos sent by me indicated 200 per cent that it's death by strangulation and not suicide," he had tweeted.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra Congress on Saturday accused the Centre of conspiring to defame the state in Sushant Singh Rajput's

# **■ Top Muslim scholar slams France Prez remarks on Islam** Macron vows to fight 'Islamist separatism'

Emmanuel Macron, trying to rid France of what authorities say is a parallel society of radical Muslims thriving outside the values of the nation, is laying the groundwork Friday for a proposed law aimed at helping remedy the phenomenon.

Mr Macron has coined the term separatism to describe the underworld that thrives in some neighbourhoods around France where Muslims with a radical vision of their religion take control of the local population to inculcate their beliefs. Friday's speech comes while a trial is underway

in Paris over the deadly

**Emmanuel Macron** 

satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket by French-born Islamic extremists. Last week, a from Pakistan man stabbed two people near *Charlie Hebdo*'s former offices in anger over its publication of caricatures the Prophet Muhammad. Among the goals of the proposed law

is strengthening public services, better controlling local associations and bringing clarity to the financing of religious organisations, officials It is meant to be aimed at

all kinds of separatism but is expected to focus on Islamism, raising concerns among some in France's largely moderate Muslim community and some on the left that it will further stigmatise the country's No. 2 religion. Macron's speech is being delivered in Les

Mureaux, a suburb west of Paris where the mayor has worked to help Muslims not to fall under the hold of those practicing and preaching a radi-

French authorities consider a threat to the nation.

However, a top Muslim scholar Friday slammed by Frence Emmanuel remarks President Macron on Islam that sparked stern criticism among Muslims worldwide. Ali al-Qaradaghi, the secretary-general of the International Union for Muslim Scholars (IUMS), said in a statement on Facebook conveyed to Macron: "Do not worry about our religion, as it never relied on the support of authority or raised a sword in the face of those who opposed it to impose its banner/self."

— Agencies

# **Kartarpur:** Pak yet to complete key bridge

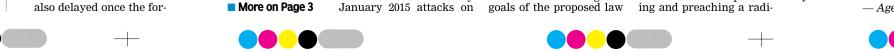
SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

India expressed its displeasure on Saturday on the utter lack of progress by Pakistan for construction of a bridge at the Budhi Ravi Channel on the Pakistani side of the border "for safe and hasslefree movement of pil-grims" bound for the Kartarpur Gurudwara near the border in Pakistani Punjab despite the lapse of a year in time-period.

India has already con-structed the bridge on its side of the border, New Delhi said. In response to a reported proposal by Pakistan for re-opening of the Kartarpur Sahib corri-dor, India raised the above issue, adding that "a decision on re-opening of the corridor would be taken in accordance with the Covid Protocol and easing of restric-

It may be recalled that movement of pilgrims on the corridor was suspended in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak earli-

er this year. The MEA said, "At the time of opening of the Kartarpur corridor last year and in the bilateral agreement signed in October 2019, it was decided that both sides shall establish requisite infrastructure including construction of a bridge at Budhi Ravi Channel at the earliest for safe and hassle-free movement of pilgrims. One year hence, Pakistan is yet to construct the bridge while it is ready at our end."





IN BRIEF

# **Dengue prevention** mission gains

momentum in city

New Delhi: With the '10 Hafte 10 Baje 10 Minute' campaign of the Delhi government gaining momentum amongst various sections of the society, the fifth week of the campaign seeks to engage schoolchildren in creating awareness regard-ing measures to prevent dengue. Last week, Delhi **Chief Minister Arvind** Kejriwal had asked all the Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) to come forward and make the residents in their localities aware of the measures to be taken to prevent the most prevalent viral infection transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. In the fifth week of the dengue campaign, the school children will be encouraged to do their homework by inspecting their houses at 10 a m for 10 minutes for signs of stagnant clean water, said a Delhi government statement on Saturday. After inspecting their houses and draining the accumulated water, the children will also be encouraged to call their friends and motivate them to inspect their houses for clean stagnant water and participate in the campaign as per the government's plan. Taking to social media last week, Kejriwal had tweeted, "Taking forward the campaign against dengue today on the fourth Sunday by replacing the water collected at home. In this way, we have to stop the breeding of dengue mosquitoes and pro-

# **Extend emergency**

helpline - 01123300012 and

tect our family and the entire Delhi from Dengue." The Delhi government has

launched a telephonic

WhatsApp helpline - 8595920530.

parole of convicts'

New Delhi: The Delhi Prisons department has requested the city government to extend the emergency parole granted to convicts by one month in view of the existing COVID-19 situation, officials said on Saturday. In a letter to the home department, it said the emergency parole can be given considering the current pandemic situation. According to the officials there are currently 4,250 such inmates, comprising 3,100 undertrials on interim bail and 1,150 convicts on emergency parole, who are out of jails as part of the prisons department's recent decongestion drive. "We have written to the government to extend emergency parole of convicts by one month," a senior jail official said. The Delhi Prisons are overcrowded. Before the process of decongesting jails began in March, the population in jails was 180 per cent of the capacity - the three jails were housing 18,000 inmates against the capacity of 10,000. After the decongestion drive, the number of inmates has reduced to over 13,000. The official said Delhi's home department can take a decision on extension of parole given by it. Due to overcrowding of the city jails, it is very difficult to maintain social dis-

# tancing inside the prisons. Air quality may

dip to 'poor' today New Delhi: The national capital's air quality was recorded in the 'moderate' category on Saturday morning, and is likely to turn "poor" on Sunday due to lowering temperatures and slow wind speed, a government forecasting agency said. Delhi recorded an air quality index (AQI) of 182 at 10:30 am, which falls in the moderate category. The 24-hour average AQI was 180 on Friday. An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'. "The air quality is likely to deteriorate to the lower end of poor quality on Sunday," the System of Air **Quality and Weather** Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) said. It said an increase in farm fires was observed on Friday around Punjab, Haryana and neighbouring border regions and it is likely to impact Delhi in the coming days. Also, there is a marked dip in minimum temperatures recorded in Delhi. On Friday, it settled at 20.6 degrees Celsius, which was two notches below normal and is likely to drop to

19 degrees Celsius by

Wednesday. Low tempera-tures and stagnant winds

lutants near the ground,

affecting air quality. — PTI

help in accumulation of pol-

# ■ City records 2,258 cases, 34 deaths in last 24 hours

# **Covid-19 situation better, cases** showing downward trend: Jain

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

Delhi health minister Satyendra Jain on Saturday said that the Covid 19 positivity rate in the national capital has decreased to 5.19 per cent. The national capital, meanwhile, reported 2,258 new cases and 34 deaths in the last 24 hours. Of total, 2,87,930 Covid 19 patients, 25,234 are active and 2,87,930 patients have recovered from infection. Total death toll stands at

5,472. This is the second day in a row that the city reported less than 3,000 new cases. Authorities reported 2,920 new cases on Friday. The city reported 34 deaths on Saturday, the lowest since September 25. Forty-eight deaths were reported on September 29, the highest in a day since July 16, when the city reported 58 deaths. The fresh cases came out of the 39,306 tests conducted the previous day, according to a bulletin issued by the Delhi health depart-

Mr Jain said "Out of come down to 5.19 per

**CNG price cut** 

by ₹1.53/kg

New Delhi, Oct. 3:

CNG and piped cook-

ing gas price in the

national capital and

adjoining cities was on Saturday cut in

sync with a reduction

Indraprastha Gas

in natural gas prices.

Ltd in a statement said the CNG price in

Delhi will be reduced

by ₹1.53 per kg in

Delhi and by ₹1.70 per

kg in Noida, Greater

Noida and Ghaziabad.

The new consumer price of ₹42.70 per kg in Delhi and ₹48.38

per kg in Noida,

Greater Noida & Ghaziabad would be

effective from 6.00 am on October 4, 2020, it

The revised CNG

price in Muzaffarnagar would be ₹56.55 per kg, in Karnal & Kaithal

would be Rs 50.68 per

kg, in Rewari &

Gurugram would be

₹53.40 per kg and in

district Kanpur would

Along with automo-

bile segment, the ben-

efit of reduction in

gas prices has been

extended to the house-

IGL will cut piped cooking gas (PNG) prices effective

October 4 across all

cities. The consumer price

of PNG to the house

holds in Delhi has

₹1.05 per scm from

₹28.55 per scm to ₹27.50 per scm, while

the applicable price of

households in Noida,

Greater Noida and Ghaziabad would be

₹27.45 per scm, which

has gone down by Re 1

per scm from ₹28.45

decreased by

hold segment also.

be ₹59.80 per kg.

in Delhi

MRI scan at ₹50: 'Cheapest' diagnostic facility to start functioning from Dec

New Delhi, Oct. 3: The country's "cheapest" diagnostic facility will start functioning at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in December 2012. in December and an MRI here will cost just ₹50, according to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee

(DSGMC). A dialysis centre is also being set up at Guru Harkrishan Hospital on the gurdwara premises. It will start functioning next week. A dialysis procedure will cost only Rs 600, DSGMC president Manjinder Singh Sirsa

Diagnostic machines worth Rs 6 crore were donated to the hospital. These include four machines for dialysis, and a machine each for

needy for just ₹50. For others, an MRI scan will cost ₹800. A committee of

doctors has been set up to decide who needs concession, Sirsa said. In private laboratories, an MRI costs at least ₹2,500. People from lower income groups will be able to get an X-Ray and ultrasound done for just

The machines are being installed and the diagnostic centre will be operational in the first week of December. These will be the most affordable diagnostic services in the country, Sirsa said.

56,258 samples tested yesterday, 2,920 samples tested positive for Covid-19. The positivity rate has

cent. There were 37 deaths yesterday, the death rate is 1.9 per cent.

two-three weeks, the cases

"We had also said that in

will be reduced. These have started to decrease. The infection rate, which had reached 8-10 per cent, is now below 5 and half percent," he added.

The Delhi government has significantly ramped

up testing in the past few days. The number of tests conducted and corresponding fresh cases reported ranged from 24,198 (2,312) on September 1 to 59,807 (3,390) on September 30. The number of Rapid Antigen Tests conducted on Friday stood at 45,153 while the RT-PCR, CBNAAT and True NAAT tests figures totalled 11,105. The number of tests done per million, as on Friday, was 1,67, 981 while the total number of tests stood at 31,91,646.

"But now cases have begun to come down and it"s sort of stabilised. Also, the positivity rate has fallen to less than 5.5 per cent from 8.5-9 per cent recorded earlier. So the situation is far better now," he said.

The number of containment zones in Delhi jumped to 2,648 on Friday

# Cops: 4 Kashmiri youth planning terror strikes in Delhi held

New Delhi, Oct. 3: The for the terrorist outfit, Special Cell of Delhi police stated. "On Friday, Police on Saturday said it police received informahas arrested a group of four radicalised Kashmiri youth who were allegedly planning terror strikes in the national capital.

In a statement, the police said the accused were nabbed from central Delhi's ITO area and were carrying four sophisticated pistols and over 120 rounds of ammunition.
The accused have been

identified as Altaf Ahmad Dar (25), a resident of Pulwama, and Mushtaq Ahmad Gani (27), Ishfaq Majeed Koka (28) and Aqib Safi (22), all residents of Shopian, the

statement said.

"Ishfaq is the elder brother of slain terrorist Burhan Koka, ex-chief of Ansar Ghajwat Ul Hind, an off-shoot of Al Qaeda in Jammu and Kashmir,' police said. They said Burhan Koka was killed in an encounter in Shopian's Melhora area on April 29 this year along with two other associates.

After his death, his elder brother Ishfaq Majeed Koka was approached by the cadres of Ansar Ghajwat Ul Hind to work

tion that a group of radicalised Kashmiri youth had collected a huge cache of arms and ammunition and will come to ITO and Daryaganj.

"Thereafter, a trap was laid near ITO and the accused were apprehend-

Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said. Preliminary interroga-tion revealed that Ishfaq was allegedly indoctrinated by present chief of Ansar Ghajwat Ul Hind to work for the cause of

Ishfaq further indoctrinated Altaf Ahmad Dar, his cousin Aaqib and Gani, police claimed. As per instructions of their handler, they came to Delhi on September 27 and were camping at Paharganj, the DCP said. During their stay in Delhi, they collected arms and ammunition, he said.

They had plans for a sensational terrorist activity and thereafter, they would be formally inducted in Ansar Ghajwat Ul Hind,

# **Case registered** against protesters at Jantar Mantar

**New Delhi, Oct. 3:** The Delhi Police on Friday registered a case against the persons who staged a protest demanding harsh punishment for the accused in the alleged Hathras gangrape case and some were demanding fair investigation in the Sushant Singh Rajput death case, violating NGT order, Supreme Court order, Section 144 of CrPC and other laws in view of Covid-19.

"Members of many political parties and different NGOs in different groups reached Jantar Mantar to stage a protest demanding harsh punishment for accused persons in Hathras Gangrape Case and some were demanding fair investigation in Sushant Singh Rajput death case," the police said in a statement.

As the protestors have violated order under section 144 CrPC in force and other laws regarding Covid-19, a case under section 188 of IPC, 3 Epidemic Act and 51(b) Disaster Management Act has been registered at Parliament Street police station against the protestors, police

Big traffic jam at Delhi-Noida border due to Congress leaders' protest as they move towards Hathras to meet family members of the rape victim on Saturday.

# HC pulls up UPSC, says its stand on vacancies for disabled absurd

Delhi High Court has termed as "absurd" the UPSC's argument that while the number of vacancies in the All India Civil Services may vary before the final selection of candidates, the number of seats for the disabled would remain fixed.

"You cannot say the number of reservations is fixed, but the number of vacancies might vary. What is this absurd argument? Either both are frozen or neither are frozen," a bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan said to the counsel for Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

The bench was hearing a PIL challenging this year's notice announcing the details of the civil services preliminary examination, which is to be held on October 4.

The plea claims that the notice neglects the minimum reservation to be provided to disabled per-

The plea by NGO Sambhavana has alleged that in the exam notice only expected approximate vacancies for the disabled are mentioned and not the four per cent mandatory reservation mandated under the

The observation by the court came after the UPSC said while the advertised vacancies in the All India Civil Services were 796, the

number may go up by the

**NCB arrests 4** 

time the candidates are selected.

However, it also said that the seats for disabled persons would remain the same announced in the public notice.

It further said that it was not the persons who were unsuitable, "it is the environment which

"You (UPSC) should step into the shoes of the candidates who are preparing for two-three years for the civil services exam and give up other avenues of employment to focus on the All India Civil Services. Who asked you to keep the vacancies fluctuating? Keep it fixed," the bench

further November 16 by when the will whether the number of seats for disabled would also increase if there is an increase in vacancies.

The petition, filed through advocates Krishan Mahajan and Ajay Chopra, has contended that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act of 2016 mandates that every government establishment shall reserve 4 per cent of its total vacancies for those with benchmark disabili-

However, the UPSC exam notice only mentions "expected approximate vacancies" -- a category that does not exist

It listed the matter for

# Mander: Raids on children's homes an act of vendetta

**AGE CORRESPONDENT** NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

Human rights activist Harsh Mander said that two children's homes, with whom he had been associated in the past, were raided in Delhi. He said on that the raids were the government's attempt to defame him and target those who had peacefully protested against the Citizenship

Amendment Act. The Delhi Police have accused Mander of delivering a hate speech during protests against the law. He was named in the Delhi police's affidavit to the High Court along with several others on July 13.

Mander said that the

raid was carried out by the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights at two homes named Ummeed Aman Ghar and Khushi Rainbow Home. The activist said that one of the reasons the homes were raided was to determine if the children had participated in anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests.

"NCPCR team in its 'raids' on the two homes had four central focuses. The most important was whether the children participated in the anti-CAA protests. The second focus was about my association with the homes. The children spoke about the occasional visits to meet them. The third focus was on foreign funding. As it happens, Ummeed is entirely funded from Indian donors. Khushi also is largely supported by Indian donors, but has some foreign donors as well. The fourth question was whether we had given shelter to any Rohingya children. My colleagues said that for us, we don't focus on the identity of any child; the only thing important for us is that she or he is homeless and in need of care and pro-

tection," said Harsh

Muslim clerics protest against Pakistan goverment for its alleged support to Yazeed, the murderer of prophet Mohammad's family, near Pakistan Embassay in New Delhi on Saturday.

# **Auto Taxi Cong Union protests** 'arbitrary' challan of vehicles challan amounts have been doubled. As the

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

Delhi Congress workers, along with members of party-affiliated Auto Taxi Congress Union, on Saturday staged a protest here against the Delhi government over "arbitrary" challan of vehi-

Some of the protesters including Delhi Congress vice president Jaikishan and Veer Singh Dhingan were detained by police near Chandgi Ram Chandgi Akhara, party leader Parvez Alam said. "The government agencies including traffic police are arbitrarily issuing vehicle challans in the garb of the Amended Motor Vehicle Act. The

THE DEMONSTRA-TORS demanded the withdrawal of the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill 2019 as according to this Bill, the challan amounts

have been doubled. Some of the protesters were detained by police.

protesters demanded Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to provide relief Nagar police station.

to auto and taxi drivers from theses challans," Alam said. The detained protesters were taken by police to the Maurice demonstrators demanded the withdrawal

of the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill 2019 as according to this Bill, the

demonstrators assembled at the Trauma Centre for the gherao, the Delhi Police, as usual, acted in a high-handed manner to detain the Congress and Auto-Taxi Union members, and the auto rickshaw drivers who were standing as mere bystanders, were also rounded up. Congress leaders said

that due to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, auto-taxi drivers were in severe financial conditions, and even stationary vehicles are being issued challans by the traffic police after taking their photos, as these heavy challans are adding to their financial

# **Atgnans with** 380 gm heroin New Delhi, Oct. 3: The

Narcotics Co Bureau (NCB) Saturday claimed to have busted an international module of drugs trafficking with the arrest of four Afghanistan nationals and seizure of about 380 gm of heroin. The contraband was seized from a parcel that arrived at a courier company in Delhi from Afghanistan September 30 and contained a metal piston.

"Further investigation resulted in the arrest of four Afghan nationals who were staying as refugees in Delhi," NCB zonal director K.P.S. Malhotra was quoted as

# Chahal surprises detractors, retains post as city BJP general secretary

SHASHI BHUSHAN NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

In the recent restructuring of Delhi BJP state organisation, Kuljeet organisation, Kuljeet Chahal has emerged as one of the most powerful leaders of the party, successfully retaining the important post of general

Mr Chahal is the only general secretary of the three who has been retained on the post. Rajesh Bhatia Ravinder Gupta, who were general secretaries, have been replaced by Dinesh Malhotra.

Mr Chahal's detractors in Delhi BJP were sure that he would be the first to go in the restructuring process claiming that top state leaders, including state president Adesh



Gupta, were not in favour of keeping him in the new team.

Mr Chahal, however, not only managed to be in the new team of Delhi BJP president Mr Gupta, but also successfully retained the coveted general secretary post.

A senior party leader told this newspaper that when everyone, including Mr Gupta's camp, was almost sure that he (Mr Chahal) and state vice president Rajiv Babbar will not make it into the new team, both not only

made an entry but also retained their positions. 'It shows the emergence of Mr Chahal and Mr Babbar in Delhi BJP and establishes a two-time general secretary as one of

the most powerful leaders in the city unit or at par with Mr Gupta," he said. For the last six years, Mr Chahal has been the permanent face of Delhi BJP state team despite being surrounded by countless enemies. He was vice president of the city unit during Satish Upadhyay's term and was appointed general secretary in Manoj Tiwari's team. Now, he has been reappointed as general secre-

Mr Gupta's team. "All the key organisational works for the last three-and-half which include a member-

tary for another term in

recent campaign to reach national capital to dispel misconceptions about the new farm laws, are overlooked by Mr Chahal," he

His followers in the party say that Mr Chahal is a master manager and his interpersonal skills, specially with top leaders in Central leadership, are unmatched by any other Delhi BJP leader.

"Mr Chahal is a fighter and never runs away in adverse situations. Despite Mr Gupta's camp repeatedly saying he will not be part of the new team, Mr Chahal never lost confidence and got himself reappointed to the same position claiming his work in previous terms," said one of Mr Chahal's followers.

# SHORT TAKES

# **Class 8th student**

in Odisha kills self

Bhubaneswar: A Class 8th student on Saturday ended his life by hanging himself in Joda town of Odisha's Keonihar district after his parents admonished him for spending long hours on online games paying huge sums of money. According to sources, the parents of the student had given him a mobile phone for online study purposes during the Covid lockdown period. However he spent most of game called 'Free Fire'. Few days ago, he lost a total of

his time playing an online ₹96,000 including ₹61,000 from his father's account and ₹35,000 from his mother's account while playing the game. When father Binod Apat made inquiry in the bank, the bank authorities told him that the amount was deducted from his account due to online games played on his mobile phone.

# **India exports 50L HCQ**

#### tablets to Ecuador

New Delhi: India has recently supplied five lakh dosages of Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) to Ecuador, drawing praise from the South American nation. HCQ, essentially seen as an anti-malarial drug, was in huge global demand especially in the initial months of the Covid Pandemic as it was being administered to Coronavirus patients. Ecuadorian diplomats pointed out that 'even though, the use and the effectiveness of HCQ for the treatment of patients diagnosed with Covid is still a matter of debate, nevertheless, this drug is widely used as an effective treatment for certain autoimmune pathologies", adding that "the

donated medicine will be distributed to patients suffering from lupus and other autoimmune diseases". The drug was supplied by New Delhi a few weeks ago.

# **Odisha issues SOP**

#### on use of Favipiravir

Bhubaneswar: Odisha issues SOP on use of Favipiravir tablets, symptomatic patients in home isolation to avail the pills. The Odisha government on Saturday issued a Standard Operating
Procedure (SOP) on the use of Favipiravir tablet for the treatment of Covid patients in the state. In a letter, additional chief secretary Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra directed district collectors, CDMOs. superintendents of Medical College and Hospitals and municipal commissioners to ensure that Favipiravir tablet is administered in consultation with trained doctors after assessing the health condition of the concerned patient along with his/her written consent. As a lot of patients are now being allowed to remain in home isolation. there is a need to ensure Favipiravir tablet availability to eligible symptomatic

# C'garh: Naxals kill villager with axe

Raipur: A villager was axed to death by Naxals in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district, police said on Saturday. The incident took place in Gumalwada village under Nagarnar police station area on Friday night, an official said, "As per preliminary information, a dozen unidentified men dragged Budra Nag out of his house and killed him with an axe. Prima facie it seems the incident was executed by Naxals active along the

Chhattisgarh-Odisha border. A police team rushed to the site in the morning and efforts were on to nab the culprits," inspector general of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P. said. - PTI

# **Lion cub found**

#### dead in Gir forest

Junagadh: A female lion cub was found dead in Dedakdi range of Gir forest in Gujarat's Junagadh district on Saturday, a forest official said. The carcass of a six to sevenmonth-old female lion cub was found in Dedakdi range of Gir West division forest, said D.T. Vasavada, chief conservator of forests (wildlife). Junagadh. No external injury were found on the carcass which has been sent for postmortem. Gujarat is the only abode of Asiatic lions, and a full-moon light observation carried out by the forest department in June estimated its population to rise 29 per cent to 674. — *PTI* 

# Past govts lacked courage to effect farm reforms: PM

'Those protesting want farmers to live in previous century'

Solang Valley, Oct. 3: Taking a swipe at the opposition's protest against farm reform laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday those parties also had the same idea but lacked the courage to implement these measures because they focussed on elections while his government looked at the country's and farmers' welfare.

Addressing his second public meeting after inaugurating Atal Tunnel in Rohtang in Himachal Pradesh, Modi said those protesting against the laws wanted farmers to live in the previous century, and are now jolted by his government"s attack on middlemen. The ruling BJP has cited

the Congress manifesto for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls to assert that the opposition party had also promised the same laws which the Modi govern-ment has enacted to allow farmers to sell their produce outside state-con-trolled 'mandi' but is now criticising them for political reasons.

Modi also spoke of the benefits of new labour sector laws and said reforms will continue as his government works to realise its goal of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India), asserting that regulations of the previous century will not work in a new century.

Our reforms have troubled those who have always worked for political benefits, he said, adding that new labour reforms have given women same salary and opportunities as men had so far.

3 die, 4 hurt

in lightning

**Jharkhand** 

New Delhi, Oct. 3: Three people were killed and four injured in lightening

strikes in Jharkhand on

Saturday as rain and

thundershowers were

witnessed in eastern

Meanwhile,Delhi's air

quality was recorded in

the "moderate" category,

and it is likely to turn

"poor" in two days due to

lowering temperatures

and slow wind speed.

Delhi's 24-hour average

air quality index was

recorded at 189 on Saturday It was 180 on

Friday. An AQI between 0 and

50 is considered 'good', 51

and 100 'satisfactory', 101

and 200 'moderate', 201

and 300 'poor', 301 and 400

'very poor', and 401 and

PM2.5 contribution (in

pollution) is increasing,

which is a characteristic

of winters. The air quali-

ty is likely to deteriorate

to the lower end of poor

quality on Monday," the

SAFAR said. PM2.5 is

tiny particulate matter

less than 2.5 microns in diameter. It can enter

deep into the lungs and

even into the blood-

It said an increase in

Friday around

farm fires was observed

Punjab, Haryana and

regions and it is likely to

impact Delhi in the com-

neighbouring

ing days.

"As predicted,

500 'severe'

parts of the country.

strikes in



tracks during a protest against the farm reform bills in

Their mindset remained the same while the century changed, he said, attacking the opposition. 'You cant enter the next century with the mindset of the past century," he

Modi said his government"s reforms, including digitisation of services and direct transfer of money have saved time and money while rooting out corruption. The government is con-

stantly trying to reduce problems of the masses, ne said. Modi stopped his address twice when he saw a person having some medical issues and directed officials to attend to

him. The prime minister also addressed a public meeting at Sissu village in Lahaul-Spiti region earli-

er in the day, where he asserted that a major transformation has been effected in the government's way of functioning and new schemes are no more based on the quantum of votes from an area as the only focus now is "development for all"

# Members of various farmer organizations block railway Patiala district on Saturday. **PM refers to**

**Thakur as 'HP** ka chhokra' Sissu, Oct. 3: Minister Narendra Modi

on Saturday referred to Union minister Anurag Thakur as "Himachal Pradesh ka Chhokra", an apparent show of his support to the young Himachal Pradesh leader after Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury had attacked

chowdnury had attacked him using the similar phrase in Lok Sabha. While Mr Chowdhury had used "Himachal ka Chhokra", a colloquial reference meaning the lad from Himachal Pradesh, as a jibe to attack Mr Thakur, the prime minister seemed to be using the similar words endearingly.

At Rohtang where he inaugurated Tunnel, PM smilingly called Mr Thakur him "Himachal ka Chhokra (Himachal's boy)".

# **RJD MP moves SC** against farm laws New Delhi, Oct. 3: RJD MP

Manoj Jha has moved the the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional validity of the newly enacted three agriculture laws, saying they are "discriminatory and manifestly arbitrary" and will expose marginal farmers to exploitation by big cor-

Parliament has recently assea tne tnree Bills — tne Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion Facilitation) Act, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020.

These have came into

effect from September 27



Manoj Jha

court through Munnetra

Tamil Nadu Tiruchi Siva had moved the top court against the farm laws.





An army convoy passes through the Atal Tunnel after its inauguration on the Manali-

# ■ Tshidawa had suggested tunnel at Rohtang to former PM Dream of Vajpayee's friend comes true

decades-long dream of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's friend, Arjun Gopal, came true on Saturday with the inauguration of Atal Tunnel at in Himachal Rohtang Pradesh.

Amar Singh and Ram Dev, sons of Arjun Gopal alias Tshidawa, said their father had suggested the construction of the tunnel to the former Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inauguthe strategically important all-weather Atal Tunnel, which reduces the

and Leh by 46 km and the travel time by four to five hours.

Atal Tunnel is the longest highway tunnel in the world, and the 9.02 km long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti throughout the year. The valley was earlier cut off for about six months every year due to heavy snowfall. The tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifica-tions in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas at an altitude of 3,000 metres

(10,000 feet) from the Mean

Himachal Pradesh chief

Sea Level (MSL).

Amar Singh and Ram Dev minister Jai Ram Thakur had earlier said, Vajpayee got the idea for constructing the tunnel on a suggestion from his friend Arjun

Late Tshidawa's sons

Gopal of Tashi Dobhe village in Lahaul.
Talking to PTI in their native village Tholang in

Singh (75) said his father met Vajpayee in 1998 in Delhi, seeking the construction of the strategicalsignificant tunnel beneath Rohtang Pass for the benefit of the residents of Lahaul-Spiti district.

My father passed away in 2008. Today, his decadeslong dream came true and my joy knows no bound, he said. Singh, who retired as state deputy director (education), said the former Prime Minister and his father came close during an officers' training camp (OTC) of the RSS in 1942 in Gujarat's Vadodara. — PTI

# ■ Ansari was admitted to hospital after testing positive

# **Covid -ve J'khand mantri dies**

**Distressed woman Covid-19** 

**Kanchi, Oct. 3:** Jharkhand's minority welfare minister Haji Hussain Ansari died on Saturday at a hospital in Ranchi, official sources said. He was 73. Ansari, a senior JMM leader, was admitted to the Medanta hospital around two weeks back after being diagnosed with Covid.

A spokesperson of the Medanta Hospital said that Ansari tested negative for Covid on Friday, which meant that he had recovered Therefore, he did not die

of Covid. He died this evening due to a cardiac arrest," the spokesperson the spokesperson said. Ansari's family said that he recently underwent heart surgery.
Health Minister Banna

Gupta also said that Ansari's death did not happen due to Covid. Chief minister Hemant Soren said that he played a

ment for Jharkhand. with a simple sense and

**BSP** announces

second list of

10 candidates

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY

BHOPAL, OCT. 3

Pradesh.

bly seat.

president

Pippal said.

for MP bypolls

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on Saturday announced its second list

of 10 candidates for the

November 3 by-elections

in 28 assembly con-

stituencies in Madhya

Former minister Mahendra Singh Boudh who has recently joined

BSP after resigning from

Congress has figured in

the second list of candidates of the party and has been given ticket for the Bhander (SC) assem-

BSP has earlier announced the first list

of eight candidates for the assembly by-polls. "BSP has decided to

field candidates in all the

28 assembly seats that

are going to by-elections

in MP on November 3.

The party will go alone

in the ensuing assembly

by-elections", state party

BSP which had earlier

announced not to enter

into fray in the upcoming

assembly by-elections in

the state has later made a

U-turn by declaring that

the party would field can-

didates in all the 28 poll-

Congress returned to

power in MP in the 2018

assembly elections despite securing 0.13 per-

bound assembly seats.

Ramakant

'He was a mass leader

leading role in the movement in Deoghar.

patient dies, video goes viral Chandrapur, Oct. 3: The video of a coronavirusinfected woman gasping for breath and then dying

at a fa Chandrapur to survive. Maharashtra Saturday went viral on social media, prompting the district administration to call for a report on the incident while some protesters flayed the administration for lack of health infrastructure in the district.

In the video, the woman, who had been

facility

conviction. May God gives peace to the soul of Haji saheb and gives the family the strength to endure the hour of sorrow," he tweeted in Hindi. Ansari was a four-time MLA from the Madhupur assembly seg-

Union minister Arjun

admitted to the facility but was waiting for allotment of bed, can be seen pleading that she needed oxygen facilities quickly

District collector Ajay Gulhane said he had forwarded the video to the dean of the Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) and the civil surgeon at the civil hospital here and asked them to submit a report. The coronavirus facility is housed in GMCH.

Munda has condoled the demise of Ansari and said that he was of a very simple nature.

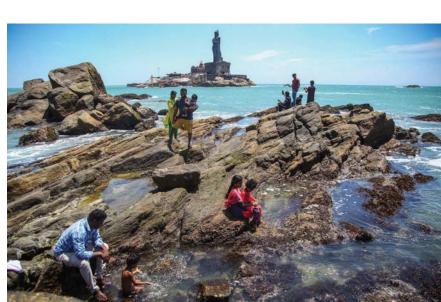
Former chief minister Das Raghuvar deep condoexpressed lences over Ansari"s death and prayed for the peace of his soul.

# **Eateries in Maha** to open Monday

**BHAGWAN PARAB** MUMBAI, OCT. 3

In Maharashtra, people having Coronavirus symptoms will not be allowed to avail dine-in services in restaurants. According to safety guidelines issued by the State government, only asymptomatic customers will be allowed inside.

Chief minister Uddhav Thackeray-led arashtra Government has allowed hotels, food courts, restaurants and bars to operate from October 5 onwards, but only with 50 per cent of their capacities. For this, Valsa Nair-Singh, principal secretary of the tourism department, on Saturday issued Covid-19 safety guidelines, which have banned coronavirus symptomatic people to go to restaurants.



People sit near a sea after the water level sank suddenly in Kanyakumari on

# No 1st use: India reaffirms nuclear weapons policy

AGE CORRESPONDENT

India on Saturday reiterated its nuclear doctrine of "No First Use" against nuclear weapon states and non-use against nonnuclear weapon states. India also reiterated its 'long-standing and unwavering commitment to universal, verifiable and nondiscriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons".

New Delhi's position was reiterated by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla at the "High-level Meeting to Commemorate and Promote the International Day for the Total Elimination Nuclear Weapons".

India's reiteration of its nuclear doctrine is significant, as it comes at a time when the armed forces are on alert at the borders. both at the LoC with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, and also in readiness for any contingency to face a "two-front war", a euphemism for a hypothetical Sino-Pakistani joint attack on India. Both these neighbours also possess nuclear weapons.

Foreign

Secretary

Shringla said, "India espouses the policy of "No First Use" against nuclear weapon states and non-use non-nuclear weapon states. ... India reiterates its long-standing and unwavering commitment to universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, in line with the Final Document of the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament (SSOD-1)." He added, "India is pleased to participate in this High-Level Plenary promote

meeting to commemorate International Day for the Total Elimination Nuclear Weapons. ... We believe that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral

# Bihar BSP president quits party, joins RJD

Patna, Oct. 3: The BSP of Mayawati which is part of a three-party alliance headed by Upendra Kushwaha of RLSP for Bihar polls, suffered a setback on Saturday when its state unit pres dent Bharat Bind quit and joined RJD.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav gave membership of the party to the BSP leader. Mr Yadav released a picture admitting Bind into the party on his twitter and also the party's social media platform. Mr Yadav, the younger

son of RJD supremo Lalu Prasad, wrote on his twitter handle that the Bahujan Samaj

Party Bihar president joined them to lend support in making a new Bihar and remove antiyouth NDA. After being spurned by the NDA and discarded by the RJDhelmed mahagathbandhan, Kushwaha has forged an alliance with the BSP and a nondescript Janatantrik Party (Socialist) for the Bihar elections. -PTI

# **India test-fires new version** of N-capable Shaurya missile

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO** BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 3

India, on Saturday, successfully test-fired the indigenously developed hypernuclear-capable Shaurya missile, an advanced version of the Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) K-15 (B-05).

The test was carried out by the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) from defence facility off Odisha coast, said reports. 10-metre-long

nuclear-capable Shaurya missile has a strike range of around 800 kilometres. Capable of carrying a payload of up to one tonne, the missile is a land variant of K-15 SLBM and can be stored in a composite canister, said sources.

The missile is less vul-

missile defence systems due to its high manoeuvrability, added sources. test-flight Shaurya missile comes

nerable to anti-ballistic

just a couple of days after the country successfully test-fired an extended range version of surfaceto-surface supersonic cruise missile BrahMos off Odisha coast. The missile was tested on September 30 Chandipur

Integrated Test (ITR) at 10.30 am in Balasore district, nearly 250 km from here.

The extended version of BrahMos is capable of hitting targets at more than 400-km range. The airframe and booster of this missile has been developed indigenously. The missile can be launched from submarines, ships, aircrafts, as well as from land plat-

## SHORT TAKES

# **Cheque bounce: BJP**

ex-MP gets 2-yr jail

Ahmedabad: A court in Gujarat's Gandhinagar on Saturday sentenced a former BJP Lok Sabha MP to two years in jail and fined him ₹2.97 crore in a cheque bouncing case. Principal Senior Civil Judge D.S. Thakur at Kalol also ordered that former Surendranagar MP Devji Fatepara will have to undergo an additional jail term of three months if he failed to pay ₹2.97 crore from the fine amount of ₹2,97,10,000 to complainant Prabhatsinh Thakor, the latter's lawyer Bhanu Patel informed. Mr Thakor approached court after Fatepara's cheque of ₹1,48,50,00 bounced and the latter failed to reply to a notice sent in this regard, Patel said. Fatepara had written the cheque to return money he had taken from Mr Thakor in connection with a 2018 land deal that failed go materialise, he added. — *PTI* 

# **PC's tell-all memoir**

to be out in January

New Delhi: Actor-producer Priyanka Chopra Jonas long-awaited book debut, Unfinished, will be launched on January 19, 2021, publisher Penguin Random House India announced on Friday. The "thoughtful and revealing" memoir will take readers through Priyanka's childhood in India, her teenage years in the US Living with extended family in the Midwest, Queens, and suburban Boston, where she endured bouts of racism; to her return to India, where she unexpectedly won the national and global beauty pageants (Miss India and Miss World) that launched her acting career. "I am a product of traditional India and its ancient wisdom, and modern India and its urban bustle. My upbringing was always an amalgamation of the two Indians, and, just as much, of East and

# **Rafale to feature in**

West," Priyanka said. - PTI

**Air Force Day parade** 

New Delhi: The newly inducted Rafale fighter aircraft would feature in the Air Force Day parade on October 8, an Indian Air Force (IAF) official said on Saturday. The Air Force Day is celebrated to mark the day the IAF was established in 1932. The force will celebrate its 88th anniversary this year with the annual parade at the Hindon airbase in Ghaziabad. "Along with other aircraft, the Rafale aircraft will also take part in the Air Force Day parade on October 8," the IAF official said. In a tweet, the IAF said. "#AFDay2020: Rafale -The Rafale is a 4.5 generation. twin-engine omnirole, air supremacy, interdiction, aerial reconnaissance, ground support, in-depth strike, anti-ship and nuclear deterrence fighter aircraft, equipped with a wide range of weapons." - PTI

# **Tejashwi Yadav...**

■ Continued from Page 1

that Jitan Ram Manjhi's exit was a jolt for Tejashwi Yadav who has been trying to strengthen his party's structure and voter's base in Bihar in the absence of his father Lalu Yadav, who is serving a jail term in the fodder scam

While announcing seat-sharing pact, Mr Yadav said that coalition with like-minded parties has been formed to provide a better and strong alternative in Bihar. He also reiterated his earlier promise to provide 10 lakh government jobs if the grand alliance is voted to power in Assembly

'Like a true Bihari, I will fulfil all my promises. As I announced earlier, if voted to power we will approve around 10 lakh government jobs in the first Cabinet. Apart from this, we will also ensure that our youth get jobs in other sectors in Bihar," RJD leader Tejashwi

Yaday said. He also used the occasion to criticise chief minister Nitish Kumar for quitting the grand alliance and returning to NDA

During the 2015 Assembly elections, the JD(U) along with the RJD and the Congress had formed a grand alliance and defeated the BJP with a huge margin. However, in July 2017. the RJD despite winning the maximum number of seats had to sit in Opposition after chief minister Nitish Kumar resigned and formed a government with the BJP's support.

Assembly elections in Bihar for 243 seats are to be held in phases beginning October 28 and results will be declared on November 10.

# Hathras victim's family finally speaks to media

We want to know whose body was burnt that night: Victim's bro

Bulgaddhi/Hathras, Oct. 3: Seeking justice for the 19year-old girl, the family members of the Hathras victim spoke to reporters after two days when the media was allowed to enter

'We want to know whose body was burnt on that day. And if it was our sister's body then why did they burn her (the body) in this manner? All of us requested the police and the administration to allow us to see her one last time, said the victim's brother after the media was allowed in the village and to speak with the victim's family.

"Moreover, when we requested for the post mortem report, they said you will not understand it as you cannot read English," the brother told

Athawale: There

shouldn't be

dalit atrocities

Lucknow, Oct. 3: Union

minister of state for social justice and empow-

Athawale on Saturday

said there should not be any politics in the name

of atrocities on Dalits

which he claimed to have been going on during successive governments in

'What has happened in

Hathras is most terrible.

The incident of rape on a

Dalit girl is a very serious

Mr Athawale, who said

he will be meeting chief

Adityanath, stated, On

the Hathras case, I have to say that there should not

be politics in the name of

atrocities on Dalits. It is

not right to propagate

about atrocities on dalits

"It is right that atroci-

ties are taking place but it

had been so during the

Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mayawati and Akhilesh (Yadav) governments also," he added.

Backing CM Adityanath

on the steps taken by him

in the case, the Union

minister said the manner

in which the woman's

body was cremated was

wrong and he would be

taking up the issue of

action on other officials.

He said the reason behind

such atrocities on dalits is

casteism and it will con-

tinue till people have

Mr Athawale said he

wanted to go to Hathras on Friday but could not

do so as the district

barred the entry of out-

siders while adding that

he would try to go next

casteist mindset.

administration

week, if allowed.

Yogi govern-

Uttar Pradesh.

issue, he said.

minister

during

Ramdas

politics on

erment

As per a source from the family, though the SIT investigation was going on the team did not visit their house or talk to them on Friday. They had talked to them earlier.

The SIT team spoke with other people of the village

The family complained that they have not been allowed to go out of the house for the last two days and there is a constant presence of police personnel in the house all the time. "We were not allowed to go outside our house for the last two days. We are still scared," the brother informed.

"We requested the policemen to let us have some privacy. They were in the house all the time. The

days and there is a constant presence of police personnel in the house all

administrative officers used to come in and ask us to show our phone. This was the only communication we had with the outer world in the last two days,' victim's brother added.

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday constituted a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the Hathras incident.

The SIT team has been speaking with other villagers after they completed their investigation with the

THE FAMILY complained that they have not been allowed to go out of the house for the last two days and there is a constant of the case by the 'village adhikari'. However, all we want is justice."

'The restriction on the media inside the village has been lifted. Only the media is allowed right now. However, more than five media people are not allowed to gather as sec 144 of CrPC is in place" informed the Sadar Sub Divisional Magistrate Prem Prakash Meena.

Media was barred from entering the village since the last two days leading to confusion. Yesterday, Hathras Additional SP Prakash Kumar said, "restriction on the entry of media into the village will stay till the SIT completes its probe there.



Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi at Delhi-Noida border as she attempts to move towards Hathras to meet family members of the 19-year-old woman, who died after she was allegedly gang-raped, in New Delhi, on Saturday.

# BJP is biggest pandemic, torturing dalits most: Didi

Saturday took out a protest rally in the city against the Hathras alleged gangrape case and attack against the BJP, which is in power in Uttar Pradesh, calling it the "biggest pandemic" torturing dalits the most and running a "dictatorship" in the country.

Ms Banerjee said she would stand by the dalit community till the end as caste is "numanity and she does not believe in differentiation on the grounds of caste and reli-

The rally, the first by the fiesty TMC supremo since March when the nationlockdown declared to break the coronavirus infection chain. covered the 2 km distance between



TMC Supremo and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee participates in a rally to protest over the death of Hathras victim in Kolkata on Saturday.

Planetarium to Gandhi statue on Mayo Road here. Sharpening her attack, Banerjee, who has been a strident critics of BJP. said, "Covid-19 is not a big pandemic. BJP is the biggest pandemic. It is the biggest pandemic of atrocities against Dalit and backward communi-

"We should stand up against these atrocities The kind of atrocities that are taking place is completely unacceptable. The kisan samaj, youth, students, minorities, Dalits are being pushed towards darkness, but we will lead them towards the light." she said, addressing the

# 'Gangrape victim' kills self as cops refuse to file FIR in MP

CM Shivraj Chouhan takes note of case, a cop is arrested

**RABINDRA NATH** CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, OCT. 3

An alleged gang rape victim in a Madhya Pradesh village committed suicide over non-registration of FIR in the case by police.

Later, the erring policeman was arrested for allegedly not registering the victim's complaint, a top officer said on Saturday.

The arrest was made after chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan took serious cognisance of the alleged lapse and ordered that a case be registered against the local police official. Two senior officials were also shunted out as per the orders.

The 33-year-old woman, who was allegedly gang raped in her village of Gotgoria under Narasinghapur district on

THE DECEASED'S husband told the police that his wife was gangraped by three local villagers, Parsu, Arvind and Anil, when she was cutting standing crops in a farm land on September 28

September 28, was found hanging in her house on Friday, police said on Saturday.

Her husband said she took the extreme step when police refused to file FIR in the case, besides harassing her kin for asking to register FIR in the incident.

Two police officers were arrested for not registering a case in the incident. "In-charge of Gotgoria police outpost Misrilal Koddape and in-charge of Chacheli police station Anil Singh were arrested for lapses in registering the case. They were booked under section 166-A (non recording of information) of Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Besides, 3 other people were arrested on charges of rape and two others arrested for instigating suicide (of the victim)" Narasinghpur district superintendent of police Ajey Singh said.

The deceased's husband told the police that his wife was gangraped by three local villagers, Parsu, Arvind and Anil, when she was cutting standing crops in a farm land on September 28.

She narrated the incident before her family members when she returned home.

Later, the family members took her to the Gotgoria police outpost to lodge a complaint on the night of the fateful day.

# **UP Cong chief put** under house arrest

Step to stop Lallu from visiting Hathras

**Lucknow, Oct. 3:** Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu on Saturday said he had been put under house arrest in order to "stop" him from going to Hathras and fight for justice for the dalit woman who died after she was assaulted and allegedly gang-raped.

Congress spokesperson Anshu Awasthi alleged that the step had been taken to prevent Lallu from joining party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who are again headed towards Hathras in another effort to meet the family of the victim. "I'm under house arrest. I am being treated as a criminal," Lallu told PTI. "This is only to stop me from going to Hathras and fight for justice for the gang-rape vic-

tim."
"This shows how scared this government is. Is it wrong to fight for the victim or meet the family members?" he asked.

The state Congress said Lallu, district heads and more than 500 workers had been placed under house arrest, "Yogi ii, don't stop those who fight for justice. Stop the crimes," it tweeted. According to Lallu, police came to his house in Lucknow around 1.30 am and started banging on the door. He was handed over a



# Teen kidnapped, raped in Ballia

Ballia (UP): A 15-yearold girl was allegedly kidnapped and raped in Sikandarpur Police Station area here, police said on Saturday. The girl was rescued on Friday morning from Rasra bus stand and the accused identified as 23-vear-old Asif has been arrested, SHO, Sikandarpur Amarjeet Yadav said. The girl was allegedly kidnapped on Wednesday by Asif and raped, the SHO said.

notice that a case has been filed against him at the Hazratgani police station and he has to appear next Friday. "This morning, I saw policemen at my door and they stopped me from going for morning walk, telling me that I'm under house arrest," Mr Lallu

# Sena slams Yogi govt, calls it 'Jungle Raj' SONU SHRIVASTAVA

Shiv Sena on Saturday slammed the BJP led Uttar Pradesh (UP) government over Hathras gang rape stating that there is no 'Ram raj' but 'Jungle raj' in Uttar Pradesh. atrocities against atrocities against women, murder and rape of girls have increased during chief minister

Adityanath's regime, the Uddhav Thackeray-led party said. An editorial in the

party mouthpiece Saamana said that the victim was saying that she was raped, but the Yogi government said that there is no substance in it. Post this incident, a gang rape was reported in Balrampur. But neither the Central Government nor UP government expressed any griei. 19-year-old woman in Hathras was which triggered an outrage across the country. In her dying declaration. the victim said that she had been raped. But the UP government now says that she was not raped. Soon after, an incident of gang-rape also took place in UP's Balrampur.

# Robber applies poop on body to evade cops New Delhi, Oct. 3: A 23- signalled to stop, but the

year-old man, involved in four criminal cases, applied faeces on his body to avoid being arrested, but was held by police in Delhi's Kashmere Gate area, said officials on

Saturday. The accused has been identified as Arjun, a resident of Madangir, they said.

On Thursday, a police team patrolling Nitya Marg Kashmere Gate metro station noticed two bikeborne men behaving suspiciously. They were suspects approached aggressively towards the policemen in order to intimidate them, a senior police officer said. "Their bike slipped

and they tried to escape from the spot. However, one suspect managed to flee by running in the opposite direction of traffic coming on Yudhister Setu, whereas Arjun was caught after around one-kilometer Commissioner of Police (North) Anto Alphonse

undertake an important two-day visit to Myanmar starting Sunday during which will call on Myanmar's State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Commanderin-Chief of the Myanmar Forces General Min Aung Hlaing. The visit comes at a time of

Sino-Indian military ten-

sions in the Ladakh sector.

Myanmar has enjoyed

extremely close ties with

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Foreign secretary Harsh

Vardhan Shringla and Army chief Gen. M.M.

Naravane will jointly

NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

China in the past and still retains strong ties with Beijing although it has strengthened ties with India too significantly in the past 15 years. Defence cooperation and civilian infrastructure projects in Myanmar being implemented with Indian

assistance are expected to

be discussed extensively

Army Chief, foreign secy to visit

**Mynanmar amid China tension** 

during the visit.

Just on Thursday, India ad Myanmar had held their 19th round of Foreign Office Consultations virtual mode which was cochaired Foreign Secretary Mr. Shringla and the Myanmar's Permanent Secretary U Soe Han. During those consultations, both sides had "reviewed the entire gamut of relations, including border cooperation and upgradation of border infrastructure, status of India's ongoing development projects in Myanmar, trade and investment ties, power and energy cooperation, consular matters and cultural cooperation, including the ongoing restoration work on earthquake damaged pagodas in

on India-Myanmar Border Area Development way

An MoU that was signed

# Covid period: Govt waives interest on interests of loans

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

Yielding to repeated exhortation by Supreme Court not to charge compound interest on the deferred installments of term loans during the six month moratorium period (March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020) in the wake of Covid pandemic, the government has decided to waive the compound interest on loans up to ₹2 crore to eight categories of borrowers, excluding the big borrowers of the higher amount of loans.

The government has also agreed to bear the burden resulting from this waiver as the "only" solution instead of making the banks bear it, rendering most of them become unviable with "a very serious question mark over their very survival.'

Giving relief to the borrowers in eight different categories, the government in its 13-page additional affidavit said that it decision was in continuation of the tradition of "handholding the small borrowers" belonging to the most vulnerable category of the borrowers, 'irrespective of whether they had availed moratori-

The categories and loans to be covered for the waiver are: MSMEs (Micro,

small & medium enterprises), education, housing, credit card dues, consumer durables, autos, consumption and personal loans to professionals. The benefit of the waiver will be also extended to the borrowers who did not avail moratorium but paid

installments, More than 50% of the borrowers in the eight categories who will be benefitted by the waiver of compound interest did not avail of moratorium on the payment of installments. The affidavit says, "The

relief to all the borrowers in respect of compounding of interest during the period of moratorium would be admissible to all the categories specified hereinafter irrespective of whether the borrowers had availed of moratorium or not.'

The affidavit does not state how much this waiver will cost the public exchequer as it is the government and not the banks which is going to bear the brunt of the waiver of compound interest for eight categories with a loan ceiling of ₹2 crores.

# JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS Assam girl was left paralysed after deadly fever in June Physically disabled girl starts walking again Guwahati, Oct. 3: When 12- ters of a poor farmer who

year-old Bhanita Boro from Assam's Udalguri district was diagnosed with the deadly Japanese Encephalitis in June, her poor parents had left the hope of getting their daughter back. However, due to the coordinated efforts of doctors, officials and people empathetic to her situation, the Class 7 student from Simliguri vil-

lage is standing on her feet

One of the three daugh-

mortgaged his tiny plot of land for ₹70,000 to treat her, Boro is now looking forward to rejoining her school once the Covid-19 pandemic ends.

"For any JE patient, the real struggle starts after being diagnosed. If proper care is not taken during the treatment and after discharge, then the person might become paralysed for his/her entire life or even lose his/her life," Health and Family Welfare

**DUE TO THE** coordinated efforts of doctors, officials and people empathetic to her situation, the Class 7 student from Simliguri village is standing on her feet again

(commissioner and secretary) Monalisa Goswami said.

After her release in July, a team of doctors and officials from the state headquarters met Boro and her parents to check her condition and tried to communicate with the patient to analyse whether she is able to respond to commands, Goswami added. Health Services (Malaria)

joint director Harpal Singh Suri said, "The girl was earlier physically disabled and unable to move her limbs or body parts. She had tried to move her hands and tongue when asked to but was unable to do it. Then, we provided her with a wheel-chair and her physiotherapy began."

Senior Medical and Health Officer Parashee Choudhury expressed happiness that Boro was now not only able to understand and react to the commands given to her, but also stand, walk and speak.

"Though she has not been completely cured of the disease, her rate of recovery is satisfactory and commendable," Choudhury said, sharing some photographs of Boro in the post-JE stage and her gradual betterment.



# THE ASIAN AGE

4 OCTOBER 2020



# A Kolkata 'Kumroween' & other Covid sacrifices

could murder a malpoa right now. And that potoler dolma I've been drooling over in my dreams, the shorshe illish that dance in my peripheral vision, disappearing like chimera (or Nemo) when I look them in the Leye. Some nights I wake in a chom chom sweat, and dig around my kitchen cupboards to find my dalmut hoard sadly depleted. Nor can Tesco's mango chutney fill the yawning achaar-shaped chasm in my gut. And when I think of mishti doi — oh boi. I melt into a puddle of yearning. My dwindling pile of panchphoron too, in its steel tiffin box, is not to be sneezed at (what will

It's been more than a year since we last travelled to Kolkata, the city of my birth, of my parents and oldest friends, of the spices, sweets, books and great memories I bring back yearly, and our stocks are all but gone. Cold turkey they call this sudden, enforced withdrawal, but it's kosha mangsho for me. As merry as our Sherwood curry may be, there are jhaals, jhols and ombols that can't be concocted outside Bengal. Not without an infusion of its tangy winter smog, monsoon winds that roll from the Bay, and Rabindrasangeet saturating the air no matter what the weather. Sniff as hard I might, I can smell

Sure sign of Covid you say, but these notun gurer cravings and maacher muthia longings are symptoms of homesickness instead. Evading the former has unfortunately required the renunciation of the akash, batash, and barir ranna of Kolkata this year. Abetted by inept, often unfeeling governments, the Coronavirus has harvested death and deprivation everywhere. In Bengal alone so far there are a staggering 216,000 cases, and nearly 5,000 deaths, with Kolkata accounting for 70 per cent of it.

But just for a moment, shall we dwell on the lesser tragedies? Like the suspension of flights to Kolkata from much of Britain and the hijacking of my annual trip home. Since moving to Britain two decades ago, I have returned home for the harvest every year. Of a very different crop usually; the diurnal glide of crisp blue skies and mellow sun, long addas over favourite foods, slow, smoky evenings with family and friends, and pilgrimages to fondly remembered haunts. Including the biggest and brightest of festivals.

This pandemic has put paid to even that. It has hijacked not just my homecoming but mighty Durga's too. Kolkata's Durga Puja is an extravaganza so massive, so magnificent, so, er, mingly, it can only be a shadow of itself this socially-distanced year. The ocean of humanity that swamps the resplendent pandals and eye-popping illuminations won't be welcoming the Mother Goddess with their customary rapture this year, because they will, hopefully, stay home to prevent further dissemination of the killer virus. Which is as it



The writer's children celebrate Halloween in Kolkata. - STEPHEN HANDLEY

should be. But because it is indeed the high point of the year for many and in these dismal times, a tonic for the soul, some puja organisers have been exploring alternatives, from virtual pujas to portable ones. Bearing the Devi round in a bedecked palanquin in Jodhpur Park, for people to see from the safety of their homes, is one such I gather. As if Corona Devi, flexing her spiky muscles to demonstrate her might, instructed the good folks of Kolkata — "Koro na!" But Kolkata peeps replied (ccing Durga), "OK tata, but y' know? Ashche bochor abar hobe!"

The high point of our trip back however is quite another tradition. Timing it so the bulk of our visit is post-puja; quiet and contemplative after the fervour and din, we finish every trip with the tiny, homegrown celebration we've come to know as 'Kumroween'. It all started with October being the best time for us to visit India, but the kids didn't want to miss the trick or So we devised our own little fusion festiv: a best-of-both-worlds hybrid that was all treats and no trick, incorporating an array of Bengali delicacies and bonhomie, with fancy dress, eerie party balloons and trim (on which we had fun scrawling a scary range of faces), and the piece de résistance - a glowing Jack o' Lantern carved from an almost invariably misshapen kumro. Thus 'Kumroween', an invariably misshapen but always entertaining tradition was born. Over the years, patched together Gupis and Baghas have rubbed shoulders with Professor Lupin and Harry Potter, a cobbled Captain Hook has sung along with affable, unthreatening crocs, whilst pleasantly plump skeletons tucked into kochuri, aloor dom, and goja. Most of all, it has given us the opportunity to gather our family and friends round, to say hello, thank you, and au revoir, so quickly do our fort-nights in Kolkata fly. Two splendid weeks of breaking bread, or indeed luchi, with family, catchup addas with friends lasting half the day, and storytime and play for our children with their beloved but rarely-seen Dida and Dadu, coalescing one last time on spooky, sparkling, slightly sad Kumroween night.

There can be no Kumroween this year. No festivities of any sort for us in Kolkata. In fact, no trip at all. Just sadness and long distance anxiety as every day brings the names and images of people we once knew, or knew of, who have succumbed to the marauding bug. With more to come. But malpoa, madugga, Mababa, and my mother city; you are on my mind. And if it is OK tata for this year, horn please, because ashche bochor abar hobe.

Shreya Sen-Handley is the author of the recently published Strange: Stories, the award-winning Memoirs of My Body, and a forthcoming book of travel misadventures. Her Twitter and Insta handle is @shreyasenhan.

#### Subhani



# Napping media awakes, puts Yogi on the spot



Pavan K. Varma

#### **Chanakya's View**

horrific Hathras rape outrage raises deeply disturbing questions. First and foremost, is the role of the UP government and police. Why was the victim's body taken away forcibly from her home and cremated against her family's will in the dead of night? The family wanted to perform the last rites in the morning and then cremate her. But her parents and brothers were locked in their house.

Quite apart from the legal propriety of cre-mating the body when another autopsy was clearly warranted, there is a shocking insensitivity to this episode. The family of the young Dalit girl was in trauma. They had just lost a daughter to one of the most brutal rape incidents seen in recent times. To take away the dead body against the family's will, lock up family members, and forcibly carry out the cremation at 2:30 am, snows an unpardonable callousness to basic

human emotions. Why was the UP sarkar in such a tearing hurry? Quite clearly, there must be a reason. If it thought that with her cremation the matter may quickly die a natural death, the outcome was just the opposite. Thanks to the media, most of them brave young women, the entire nation was sickened by the pitiless, cruel and high-handed behaviour of the police. The visuals of the mother wailing at not being able to even see the face of her dead daughter

were appalling.
The UP government seemed to have only one priority, which was to

claim that the girl was not gangraped. The state police cited the report of the Forensic Science Lab in Agra, which apparently said that no trace of semen was found. Surely, the police would know that the absence of semen is no proof that rape did not take place. Moreover, as against the forensic report, there is the dying

declaration of the girl herself where she says that she was raped. Is this not proof enough? In the light of the victim's confirmation of rape, why was the body not subjected to a fresh examination by a panel that would include a senior gynaecologist? Was this the reason why

The rivalry between the BJP and the Congress in such unseemly haste? There is also the visual of the district magistrate of Hathras obviously trying to intimidate the victim's family. The media will go away in a day or two, he can be heard telling the family; only the police will remain, so it would be your statement. This raises the question of why the UP police want to whitewash this gruesome incident. Who is UP chief minister, Yogi Adityanath, trying to protect? Is there a caste angle to this dastardly crime, which has something to do with the fact

Why was the UP sarkar in such a tearing hurry? Quite clearly, there must be a reason. If it thought that with her cremation the matter may quickly die a natural death, the outcome was just the opposite.

the body was cremated

petter

Who is the Yogi trying to protect? Is there a caste angle to this dastardly crime, which has something to do with the fact that the four accused are allegedly of the dominant Thakur caste, the same caste as the UP CM?

that the four accused who have been arrested are allegedly of the dom-Thakur caste, which is the same caste as the UP CM?

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), nearly 10 Dalit women are raped every day, with UP recording the largest number, 14.7 per cent of India's total. No doubt, UP is the most populous state in the country, but the fact remains that even nationwide — again as per NCRB data - crimes against Dalits have increased by 47 per cent in the period between 2014 and 2018.

has triggered a "competitive rape politics' where a rape in Rajasthan — a Congress ruled state — is being compared to the Hathras incident. This is deeply shameful. Both incidents were heinous and gruesome. But Yogi Adityanath, who dresses in saffron and calls himself a Yogi, must answer for the condemnable manner in which his administration and police acted in Hathras. Even now the victim's family is being barricaded by the police, their phones are being illegally tapped, and journalists or politicians of Opposition parties are not being allowed to meet them freely. Why?

The brutal Nirbhaya rape led to national outrage because it hap-pened in the capital of the Republic. But the Nirbhaya of Hathras was not that fortunate. She was fatally assaulted on September 14, and — as per her own state-

ment — raped, her neck broken and her tongue cut. But national media hardly took any real notice of this shocking incident, until her death on September 29. On electronic media we were presented frenzied accounts of actresses allegedly smoked hash, Rhea Chakraborty's application, and Kangana Ranaut's ver-

bal tantrums. If the media had paused from its breathless chase of Bollywood actresses and focused on this case, perhaps the victim would have got better medical attention, and her life could have been saved.

The minimum that should be done now is to immediately suspend the Hathras DM. The Superintendent of Police (SP) has been suspended. The accused should be tried through a fasttrack court in a time bound manner, and if found guilty, hanged like the Nirbhaya perpe-trators. There is a demand that an investigation into the rape and murder should be entrusted to the CBI. But, a "caged parrot" may not be the solution. What this case needs is a time bound inquiry by a Supreme Court designated judge, which must also fix responsibility for the highly suspect role played by the UP government and the police. It would be good if the UP CM is asked a few questions, not only by his political opponents, but in a judicial

> The writer, an author, is a former diplomat and in politics

What this case needs is a time bound inquiry by a **Supreme Court** designated judge, which must also fix responsibility for the highly suspect role played by the UP government and the police

# **LETTERS**

# **YOGI MUST RESIGN**

A couple of days of curfew-like situation, the DM pressuring the victim's family and a complete law and order failure — shouldn't this be enough for the CM Yogi Adityanath who has been so vocal in "establishing" Ram Rajya to take moral responsibility and resign? With numerous theories being floated from no rape to family participation in the last rites of the girl why doesn't the CBI take over and for a fair trial shift the family out of the state to a safer place? By the way, if no gang-rape had happened why the compensation, and a hurried and inhuman cremation? Did the administration fear truth would be revealed?

**Syed Abdul Monim** Navi Mumbai

#### **'SECULAR' POLITICS**

THE AAP HAS decided to join protests being held in New Delhi against a tragic incident that took place in BJP-ruled UP. This is a subtle hint for the "secular" alliance called Mahagathbandhan that the youngest political party in the country is not averse to joining the 20-member anti-Saffron front dur-ing the 2024 general elections. A five-pronged contest is likely to erupt for the leadership of the Aghadi; the major claimants for the PM spot being RaGa (or P G-V?), Sharad Pawar, Mayawati, Mamata and Deve Gowda. A hunt for a 'compromise" candidate may be launched if the "secular" brigade comes close to the magic mark.

Arun Malankar

#### **NEED NEW FARM LAW**

THE MODI GOVERNMENT'S socalled 'farmer-friendly' laws are fac-ing protests since the farmers think the new laws will eventually end MSP support, notwithstanding denial. They want a legal guarantee that no procurement will happen below MSP. What the country needs is a new law overriding the recent

Sankar Paul Chakdaha, West Bengal

#### **DHONI MUST GO**

THE RECENT performances of M.S. Dhoni are pathetic. His age is not co-operating with him. He can no longer pull a rabbit out of the hat as he used to in the past. CSK, considered as is headed for a fall. Dhoni's IPL days too are numbered.

C.K. Subramaniam

#### **COLLECTIVE FAILURE**

ON OCTOBER 1, 2020, India reached the grim figure of one lakh Covid deaths. Governments may say that the case fatality rate is lower than the world average but it is no reason for solace. Some may say that heart disease, strokes and respiratory diseases have killed more then three lakhs in 2017 but this in no way diminish the grim reality that the authorities were ill-prepared despite the lockdowns. This is a collective failure in tackling the epidemic.

D.B. Madan New Delhi

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

# Hope alive for those shown the door in BJP reshuffle

#### **Great expectations**

The BJP organisational reshuffle has not disappointed anyone. It seems all those shown the door are hoping for "better" options. The party's former vice-president, Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, is said to be angling for a Union Cabinet berth. Mr Sahasrabuddhe is currently head of ICCR, enjoying a Cabinet rank. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi would accommodate him as the country's education minister. Another axed vice-president, Prabhat Jha, is hoping to get a gubernatorial assignment. Ram Madhav, who was a party general secretary and a player in the northeastern states and Jammu & Kashmir, is aspiring to head the party in his home state

#### Swamy's allegation

**S**ubramanian Swamy filing yet another complaint against Congress president Sonia Gandhi for allegedly giving "wrong"

information on her educational qualification is not news. In a letter addressed to the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Mr Swamy observed, "In our country, the educational qualification is highly valued and obtained after much effort. Hence our culture has given such high value to educational qualifications. Mr Swamy's focus on obtaining a higher educational qualification is being viewed with a lot of interest. Some cynics wonder why Mr Swamy, an astute politician, currently unhappy with the BJP leadership for its failure to "discipline" in-house Swamy-baiter Amit Malviya, has written this. Mr Malviya heads the BJP IT cell and weeks before the BJP organisational reshuffle, Mr Swamy had boasted that Mr Malviya would be removed. Nothing happened.

The controversy around Sonia's educational qualification was first raked up in 1999 when the Congress president reportedly attributed her English language course obtained in Cambridge to the University of Cambridge. Sonia had apologised, pointing that it was a "typing mistake".



By WAQYANAWIS

Man of many bosses

He has been described as an 'eighth wonder' of the world. Uttar Pradesh's senior bureaucrat Navneet Sahgal has a knack of bouncing back. The former principal secretary to chief minister Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav, has now become head of the informa-

tion and public relations department under

chief minister Yogi Adityanath after the Hathras gang-rape outrage. Yogi, struggling to counter adverse media coverage, had no choice but to think of Mr Sahgal as his Man Friday. Mr Sahgal also holds the distinction of serving as personal secretary to Union minister Akhilesh Das who had belonged to the Congress during Manmohan Singh era. In a state where bureaucrats get marked over their alleged political affiliation, Mr Sahgal, currently additional chief secretary, is proving to be an exception. Exceptional.

#### Midnight 'news' alerts

**J**ournalists covering the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) are both intrigued and annoyed for getting WhatsApp messages on almost a daily basis post-midnight. The message, attributing information to a prominent LJP leader, makes sensational claims such as LJP walking out of NDA or fighting all Bihar Assembly seats independently. While it disturbs the sleep of many scribes, mornings usher in business as usual within the NDA.

#### Abandoned Kamal Nath

All is not well between former Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath and senior party leader Digvijaya Singh. At one point when the Congress was in power for 15 months from December 2018 to March 2020, the Nath-Diggy jodi was a bada bhai-chhota bhai pair. But now that crucial Assembly by-polls have been announced in 28 seats, Digvijaya is not to be seen.

Kamal Nath, at 72, is fighting a lone and grim battle to regain a foothold in MP politics. Chances of dislodging Shivraj Singh Chouhan regime are slim as the BJP needs to win barely one third of the seats going to polls while the Congress would need almost all of them: the 20 out of 28 seats for Congress is seen as a figure that would rattle everyone in the BJP from Bhopal to New Delhi. The Nov. 10 verdict is keenly awaited when results of these by-polls would be declared along with the Bihar Assembly outcome.

> The writer is a keen observer of the goings-on in backrooms of power

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# IN BRIEF

#### **Reunification: German anniv**

Berlin, Oct. 3: Germany is marking the 30th anniversary of its reunification on Saturday, drawing a generally positive picture of the progress made in knitting together east and west amid celebrations that are low-key because of the Coronavirus pandemic. Germany was reunited on October 3, 1990, after four decades of Cold War division. East Germany joined the western federal republic less than a year after the east's Communist rulers - under pressure from growing protests — opened the Berlin Wall and the rest of the highly fortified border between the two states. While much progress has been made since then, economic and other differences between the west and the less-prosperous east

# **Sudan, rebels**

seal peace deal

Juba: Sudan's transitional authorities and a rebel alliance signed on Saturday a peace deal initialed in August that aims to put an end to the country's decades-long civil wars, in a televised ceremony marking the agreement. "The next biggest challenge is to work with all local and international partners to preach the agreement and its benefits," Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok tweeted on Friday upon his arrival at Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Reaching a negotiated settlement with rebels in Sudan's far-flung provinces has been a crucial goal for the transitional government, which as-sumed power after a popular uprising led the military to overthrow President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. Sudanese civilian leaders hope the deal will allow them to revive the country's battered economy by slashing military

#### much of the national budget. **Afghan car bomb**

spending, which takes up

attack: 15 killed Jalalabad: At least 15 people were killed and more than 30 others wounded in a car bomb attack that targeted a government building in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday, officials said. The explosion occurred at an administrative building that also housed some military facilities in the Ghani Khel district of Nangarhar province, the governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani said. "The car bomb detonated at the entrance of the district headquarters building. Several armed attackers tried to enter the building after the attack but were killed by security forces," he said. Provincial police spokesman Farid Khan confirmed the details. He said most of the victims were Afghan security force members but several civilians were also among the dead. No one had so far claimed responsibility for the attack but Khan blamed the Taliban. Both the Taliban and the

# **RICK MORANIS PUNCHED IN ATTACK**

Islamic State group are active

in the region.

Los Angeles, Oct. 3: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" star Rick Moranis was assaulted in an apparently random street attack in New York.

The 67-year-old actor was punched in the face by a random passer-by when he was walking on Central Park West near 70th Street, reported *New* York Post. A CCTV video footage, released by the police, showed a man dressed in black hoodie with a backpack on his shoulder punch Moranis with a closed fist directly into the face. Afterwards, the actor fell to the ground and the suspect nonchalantly walked away.

Moranis, who suffered pain in his head, back and right hip, went to a local hospital to be evaluated, police said. He later filed a complaint with the police. In a statement, Moranis' spokesperson said that the actor is doing "fine"

"Rick Moranis was assaulted on the Upper West Side yesterday. He is fine but grateful for everyone's thoughts and well wishes," the representative said. Moranis rose to prominence with his work on Canadian comedy sketch series

"Second City Television". He later became one of the most sought-after comic stars

in the 1980s and 1990s His film credits include 1984's "Ghostbusters" and its 1989 sequel, "Spaceballs", "Parent-hood" and "The Flintstones"



A demonstrator holds up a placard reading "Fake news Trump tested positive" to protest against masks and virus restrictions during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic in Konstanz, southern Germany, on Saturday

# **Cavalier WH approach to Covid catches up with Don**

Washington, Oct. 3: Masks were rarely spotted in the West Wing. Crowds of peo-ple gathered shoulder to Jinping wishes Trump, shoulder on the White Melania speedy recovery House South Lawn. And Air Force One streaked across the sky from one massive campaign rally to **Beijing, Oct. 3:** Chinese President Xi Jinping on another. With ready access to testing and the best public health minds at his dis-Saturday wished a speedy posal, President Donald recovery to his US counterpart Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump should have been the American safest from Covid-19. Instead, he floutwho have tested positive ed his own government's for Coronavirus. In a message to Trump, Xi, 67, said that after learning President Trump guidelines and helped create a false sense of invul-nerability in the White House, an approach that and Melania have tested positive for Covid-19, he has now failed him as it did a nation where more

a week earlier had been the site of his celebratory

nomination of a new

Supreme Court justice as

he charged toward the

Several people at the

event, including a US sen-ator, have since tested pos-

itive for the Coronavirus.

Trump is now ensconsed at Walter Reed Medical

Center after running a

fever and feeling fatigued

following his early-morn-

ing revelation that he had

tested positive for the virus. "He let the country

down by disregarding the

CDC, ignoring federal guidelines and acting like he

was Superman," said pres-

idential historian David

Brinkley. "He did not just

downplay the virus, he paraded around like a peacock, making fun of those

From the pandemic's ea-

rly days, Trump, by his

own admission, played down the severity of the

virus. He repeatedly sug-

gested it would "disappe-

ar" and for a while was pu-

shing for the American economy to fully reopen by Easter, just a month

after the pandemic fully engulfed the nation. And

he soon began resisting

the advice of public health

experts on his own coron-avirus task force, includ-ing Dr. Anthony Fauci and

Dr. Deborah Birx. He pub-

licly clashed with the he-

ads of the Food and Drug

who took it seriously."

November election.

and his wife Peng Liyuan than 200,000 people have extend sympathy to them died. Marine One, the presidential helicopter, lifted off Friday to take and wish them a speedy recovery, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Leaders and prominent Trump to a military hospital from the same White figures from around the House lawn that less than world on Friday sent their

pathy to President Donald Trump and his wife Melania, wishing they would recover from the COVID-19 illness, state media reported. "He sincerely hoped that they would recover as soon as possible," the **Korean Central News** Agency reported.

North Korean leader

sent a message of sym-

Kim Jong Un on Saturday

sident Ram Nath Kovind wished Trump and the first lady a quick recovery. "Wishing my friend @PO-TUS @realDonaldTrump best wishes to Trump and his wife. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Preand @FLOTUS a quick

recovery and good heal-th," Modi tweeted. "Our prayers and best wishes are with you dur-ing this time," Kovind said.

In a message posted on his official web page, Russian President Vladi-mir Putin wished Trump well, saying: "I am sure that your inherent vitality, good spirits and optimism will help you cope with the dangerous virus.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, also sent well wishes. "My best wishes to President Trump and the First Lady. Hope they both have a speedy recovery from Coronavirus," Johnson tweeted.

organ of the body have

been reported. Doctors

also increasingly recog-

nize that some people have

Older age, being male

and having any other

health problems increase

the chance of severe illness, and Trump has those. At 74, "his age would be

the primary risk factor,"

said Dr. David Banach, an

infectious diseases physi-

cian at the University of

long-lasting symptoms. TRUMP'S RISKS

# Trump's age, health woes may make Prez more ill times develops but compli-cations in virtually every

Washington, Oct. 3: President Donald Trump has several strikes against him — age, obesity, elevated cholesterol and being male — that could put him at greater risk of becoming seriously ill from the Coronavirus infection he

disclosed early Friday. Here's what experts say about Trump's outlook and next steps.

SIGNS AND SYMP-TOMS: Infection causes mild or no symptoms in about 80 per cent of cases. About 15 per cent of people become seriously ill and 5 per cent get critical-

Administration and the

Centers for Disease Cont-

rol and Prevention over

everything from the risks

associated with opening

schools to the timetable

Those on the White House staff dared not break

with the president, who

wanted to embody a nati-

on on the way back, not

one fixated with health

for a potential vaccine.

ly ill. Symptoms, when they do occur, usually appear two to 14 days after infection and can include loss of smell or taste, coughing, a sore throat, trouble breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea and fever. Up to half of patients who are hospitalised don't have a fever when admitted but nearly all develop one. How people fare varies — some seem to be recovering and then suddenly worsen. Pneumonia, often with a specific appearance on X-rays, some-

Connecticut's health sysguidelines that would remind a nervous public about the virus rather than an economic resurgence. Experts urged the widespread use of masks, including CDC Director Robert Redfield, who testified before Congress last

use, telling aides that he didn't like how he looked in them and that it sent a message to the public that he was worried about his health. He has worn masks only sporadically and politicised their use, saying he didn't need them because he was tested and most people he saw were

# 2 US SENATORS, TRUMP EX-AIDE **TEST VIRUS +VE**

**Washington, Oct. 3:** Two US Senators, a former adviser to President Donald Trump, his campaign manager and three White House journalists have tested positive for Covid-19, joining several officials working at the presidential palace to have contracted the infection.

Republican Senators Thom Tillis from North Carolina, and Mike Lee from Utah confirmed they have been tested positive for Coronavirus.

"Over the last few months, I've been routinely tested for Covid-19, including testing negative last Saturday, but tonight my rapid antigen test came back positive," Tillis said. Hope Hicks, 31, is the closest aide of the President to have tested positive. Former White House counsellor Kellyanne Conway also announced on Twitter that she has been tested positive. Trump Camp aign Manager Bill Stepien tested positive as well. The White House Correspondents Association confirmed that three member journalists have tested positive.

# **PENCE-HARRIS DEBATE ON**

Washington, Oct. 3: The vice presidential debate between Mike Pence and Kamala Harris next week will go on as scheduled after President Donald Trump tested positive for the Coronavirus on Friday. An official with the Commission on Presidential Debates confirmed that no changes are anticipated to the Wednesday night debate in Salt Lake City. Both Pence and Harris underwent tests for the Coronavirus on Friday and tested negative. Pence's physician said in a memo that the vice president was not considered a "close contact" of anyone infected

# Azerbaijan Prez criticises mediators; fighting rages on

Baku, Oct. 3: Heavy fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan continued Saturday in their conflict over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, while Azerbaijan's president criticised the international median tors who have tried for decades to resolve the dispute. Fighting that started September 27 is the worst to afflict Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas since the 1994 end of a war that left the region in Azerbaijan under the control of ethnic Armenian local forces backed by Armenia. Shushan Stepanian, a

spokeswoman for the Armenian Defence Ministry, said that "intensive fighting is taking place along the entire front line," and claimed that Armenian forces had shot Azerbaijan's defence ministry did not respond to the claim of planes being shot down, but said Armenian forces had shelled civilian territory within Azerbaijan, including the city of Terter. Nagorno-Karabakh officials have said more than 150 servicemen on their side have been killed so far. Azerbaijani authorities haven't given details on their military casual-

ties but said 19 civilians have been killed and 55 more wounded.

Nagorno-Karabakh was a designated autonomous region within Azerbaijan during the Soviet era. It claimed independence from Azerbaijan in 1991, about three months before the Soviet Union's collapse. Full-scale war that broke out in 1992 killed an estimated 30,000 people. By the time it ended in 1994, Armenian forces not only held Nagorno-Karabakh itself but substantial areas outside the territory's formal borders.

Several United Nations Security Council resolutions have called for withdrawal from those areas, which the Armenian for-ces have disregarded. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said in a television interview that the forces must withdraw from those areas before fighting can stop.

In the interview with al-Jazeera, a transcript of which was distributed Saturday by the presidential press office, Aliyev criticised the so-called Minsk Group of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has tried to mediate a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dis-

# Belarus: No foreign media credentials

Kyiv, Oct. 3: Belarus, ro- the Belarus Foreign Mincked by weeks of protests against its authoritarian president and Western condemnation over a crackdown on dissent, on Friday rescinded the accreditation of all journalists working for foreign news outlets and said they must apply for new ones in a process that could take a

week or more. The action was the latest by Belarusian authorities against journalists and news media amid the wave of large protests that have occurred almost daily since the country's authoritarian president won a sixth term in a disputed Aug. 9 election. "In the current situation, we are forced to exercise our sovereign right and apply the necessary protective measures, including in

istry said in a statement announcing the move.

The ministry said that journalists working for foreign media can apply for new credentials begin-ning Monday; temporary accreditation applications will be considered within five days, and permanent within 30 days.

The largest protests aga inst President Alexander Lukashenko have taken place on Sundays. Earlier this week, authorities in Belarus suspended for three months the credentials of the popular independent news website tut.by which has covered the protests. Some credentia-Īled foreign journalists were deported in August, including two from AP, and the credentials of two Belarusian nationals wol the form of new provisiking for AP were revoked

# Take legal step to bring Nawaz: Imran earlier sent a request to

Islamabad, Oct. 3: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked his party leaders to devise a legal strategy to bring back former premier Nawaz Sharif from the United Kingdom as in the absence of an extradition treaty between the two countries it would be difficult to get him extradited, according to a media

Presiding over the first meeting of a committee recently formed to count-er the Opposition, Prime Minister Khan on Friday asked Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leaders to foil all moves of the Opposition aimed at destabilising the government and "maligning" the Army, the

Dawn News reported. The government had

the British government for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader's repatriation to ensure that he faces the corruption cases pending against him in the courts. Sharif has been living in London since Novem-

ber last year when he was allowed to go there for medical treatment. A source privy to the meeting told Dawn that the prime minister was committed to bringing back Sharif from London

and directed the committee members to devise a legal strategy because in the absence of an extradition treaty between Pakistan and the UK, it would become difficult to get him extradited.

# NEW ISTUDY Killings of at least 30 transgender or non-gender conforming people documented in 2020

# Sexual, gender minorities more likely to be crime victims

study of its kind found that people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or gender non-conforming are nearly four times as likely to be victims of violent crime than those outside such communities.

Although other research has long shown that LGBTQ people and gender minorities are disproportionately affected by crime, the study published in Science Advances, a multidisciplinary journal, on Friday looked at data that has only been collected since 2016, making for the

national study to examine the issue. It found that members of such communities, referred to as sexual and gender minorities, experienced a rate of 71.1 violent victimisations per 1,000 persons a year, compared with 19.2 per 1,000 a vear among non-sexual and gender minorities. But it was the fact that sexual and gender minorities are victims of such a variety of crimes at such disparate rates — and who they're victimised by — that surprised researchers, said lead author Andrew R. Flores, an assistant profes-

ty. For example, researchers found that such a population is much more likely to be victimised by some-one they know well than a person who is a non-sexual and gender minority.

month that face coverings

could be a more effective

safeguard than a vaccine.

Trump has eschewed their

The fact that sexual and gender minorities are victimised by people close to them at such higher rates "does kind of raise questions hopefully future research can address about the nature of these incidents and the nature of these relationships," Flores said. "There are certain socialisations that goes in that. I think many people are so-

• THE STUDY also found that sexual and gender minorities are burglarized at twice the rate of other households, and that they're more likely to be victims of other types of property theft.

cialised and have a certain disdain for trans and queer people," said Tori Cooper of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a national organisation that advocates for the LGBTQ community. Cooper is the director of community engagement for the organisatio-

n's Transgender Justice Initiative. A survey of more than 12,000 LGBTQ teens around the country released in 2018 by the Human Rights Campaign found that 67% report they've heard family members make negative comments about LGBTQ people. Coo-per said transgender people are particularly vulnerable, especially by partne-

rs or people close to them. The HRC has documented the killings of at least 30 transgender or non-gender conforming people in 2020 alone. The majority were Black and Latina transgender women. "The-

re's an incalculable amount of transphobia ... that plays into these relationships," Cooper said. The new study didn't have a large enough sample of surveys by transgender people to come to a conclusion about their specific victimization rates, but Flores said other research has shown they are particularly vulnerable. The study also found that

sexual and gender minorities are burglarised at twice the rate of other households, and that they're more likely to be victims of other types of property theft. The study is based

on a national crime surve conducted by the federal Bureau of Justice Stati-stics, which until 2016 had not asked respondents about their sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Trump administration, without seeking public comment, announced that it was moving the sexual orientation and gender identity questions from the general demographic section of its national crime survey to a part of the survey only pertaining to victims. This will limit what researchers can learn about crime dispariOUR CRITIC'S RATING Outstanding ★★★★★ | Great ★★★★ | Good ★★★ | Okay ★★ | Poor ★ | Truly Terrible TT

# Forgotten wars, B-grade beauties and a tuber that costs €1,20,000

**SUPARNA SHARMA** 

**New Delhi, Oct. 3:** Most normal people live their lives, and sometimes they go to the movies. But some, like me, live their lives just so they can go to the

That is why I have, over the years, found friends and places conducive to movie addiction.

One such annual outing is the Toronto International Festival (Tiff). Spread over 11 days in September, Tiff challenges movie addicts with 400-odd films. And for the especially unshackled ones, those who will battle sleep and the longest human queues to catch a gore-fest, it has a special section called Midnight Madness to showcase the year's craziest, bloodiest, most mind-bending B-grade glo-

B-grade, the name derives from Hollywood of the 1930s and 40s when big budget films had an add-on — a less-publicised, cheaper, shorter feature (like the B-side in music). These films cost less, but have, over the years, come into their own as an art form with their own set of rules.

B-grade films are in an excited state of being. They are loud — the music, camerawork, the sets, costumes—and dialogue are quotable one-liners in the middle of hyper action. Cinematically, they are creative, edgy, risky, always risqué.

All things are exaggerated in these deliciously crazy films which pay homage to all sorts of mythos — Roman, Greek, Ottoman and those contained in comic books.

This year's truncated digital version of Tiff had just three films in the Midnight Madness section and I man-

#### **VIOLATION**

Violation, a debut feature in English by Madeleine Sims-Fewer and Dusty Mancinelli, is a high-strung raperevenge thriller-horror movie about two sisters. Greta and Miriam are tied to each other by kinship and deep childhood grouses.

Violation opens with an aerial shot of a car on a long road winding through wooded hills, spooking us with memories of *The Shining*. The setting is a forest where the younger sister lives with her husband. The elder one is visiting with her hus-

There's tension between the sisters, between one set of husband-wife, one set of in-laws. Also, one sister can't hold thoughts in her head. She blurts

There's talk of hunting, long walks through an eerily quiet jungle with the camera huddling up next to the humans as it catches animals with fangs foraging for food. And then the film moves to a wooden cabin which named "The Fool's Errand" — with an



seems like the setting of some forbid-

It's an elaborate setup to murder,

drain, slice and dispose and has been

planned with a long shopping list. It's

supposed to be over in one fell swoop, but some people are more durable

A head is smashed, but it comes

alive. There's an attempt to suffocate

it with plastic bags and tape, there is slashing, blood, beating, throttling, hanging upside down, canisters, plas-

tic sheets, ice box, a saw and much

The film's narrative feels jumbled

up, as if the screenplay was broken

into pieces and then rearranged as a puzzle. But it's not. Violation is

meticulously, cleverly paced, with one

thing leading tangentially to another,

and then a previous fight, an argu-

This adds intrigue. As does the inti-

mate camera which catches the slight-

Violation's lust for high tension and

gore is boundless. Its gaze at all that is nauseating is unflinching. No matter

what is oozing out of where, it likes to

B-grade films are not for the faint

hearted. And this one made me want

**SHADOW IN THE CLOUD** 

Midnight Madness, however, is

Shadow in The Cloud, a mid-air

action-horror-thriller directed by

It is set in 1943, in a plane — a B-17

New Zealander Roseanne Liang.

The clear winner of this year's

est movements, zooms in on creepy-

den fornication.

than they seem.

puking and scrubbing.

ment making sense.

to throw up.

■ Quo Vadis, Aida?

all-male, testosterone-raging, ball-grabbing crew. Just as it's about to

take off from the Auckland Allied Air

Base, a beautiful blonde babe with an

She, Capt. Maude Garrett (Chloë Grace Moretz), is in uniform and is

guarding a bag rather possessively.

It's a top secret mission, she says. The

rather obnoxious men are irritated by

her presence, her box and start behaving like a pack of jerks.
"Oh, I got a big package

and two heavy machine guns, loaded.

Imagine a film where the camera is

trapped, throughout, in the dicky of a

car with a character. Shadow in The

The camera is always focused on

Garrett as she listens to the men

taunting, humiliating, harassing her.

She endures, responds, tries to fend them off gently till she sees real threats looming — Japanese fighter

Shadow in The Clouds, an excep-

tionally well-written and directed

feminist film about a breast-feeding

mommy who slays monsters and

a\*\*holes, is deliciously random, but

with the chops to execute it all in style

Chloë Grace Moretz (Hit-Girl from

*Kick-Ass*) electrifies the film with her

sensuous presence and makes the

thrilling ride riveting, hugely satisfy-

jets, and a gremlin on board.

Clouds is that claustrophobic film.

arm in a sling climbs on board.

for you right here, sweet-

heart," one says, and Garrett is sent off to sit in

solitary confinement — in

the ball turret (an orb dangling from the plane's

belly). It has a seat, a view

■ Truffle Hunters







**QUO VADIS, AIDA?** 

Perhaps the biggest compliment to a feature film is to wonder mid-way if it's a documentary.

Bosnian film Quo Vadis, Aida? by writer-director Jasmila baniæ feels like we really are in the middle of the Srebrenica massacre of July 1995, when 8,372 Bosniak men and boys were slaughtered by units of the Bosnian Serb Army under the command of Ratko Mladic.

The film is set in the UN military base operated by Dutch peacekeepers, and it stays mostly with UN translator Aida (Jasna Duracic) as she tries to save her family of two sons and husband even as 30,000 men, women and children clam-

our for UN protection.

Human history is pockmarked by wars, genocide, but few are as devas-tating as the massacre of Srebrenica where the UN peacekeepers didn't just fail to stop the murders of Bosnian Muslims who had sought refuge there, but actively handed over young boys and men to Bosnian Serb forces knowing that they would be We watch in shock as armed Bosnian Serb soldiers are allowed

ing food at the very people they will soon take away for slaughter, all under the aegis of the UN. Quo Vadis, Aida? is a direction mar-

into the mission and they start throw-

vel as it captures large, surging crowds awaiting rescue and then riding busses to their death.

In 2005, Kofi Annan, then Secretary-



Srebrenica mass murder as the worst crime on European soil since the Second World War, and a tragedy that

■ Shadow in the Cloud

and a strong contender

would haunt the UN forever. Quo Vadis, Aida? is a heart-breaking reminder of that deadly folly, and a

It is Bosnia's official Oscar entry,

#### **NOTTURNO**

A young boy wakes up early each morning and waits by the side of a road hoping to find work.

A group of elderly grieving matriarchs walk through what looks like a make-shift, now abandoned, jail. This is where their sons died. They wail as they touch the walls, recalling, remembering, saying, "Here you were tortured, beaten...'

Children at a psychiatric clinic paint memories on sheets of paper—
of life with ISIS, of "being sad, scared", of being beaten for no reason.
They draw sketches of Yazidi women tied up, of Al Baghdadi, of hangings, slit throats.

If peace has a pace and a sound as it begins to return tentatively, cautiously to a land wrecked by violence and loss, Gianfranco Rosi's documentary

Notturno captures it as is.

There is very little dialogue in the film that he shot over three years on the borders between Iraq, Kurdistan, Syria and Lebanon, but the constant

sound of bullets circles the azaan. Notturno shows us snapshots of life trying to raise its head from the

debris of tyranny, death, beatings, occupation, the ISIS apocalypse.

making the graffiti illegible. But when Notturno is outside, the horizon is almost in its sight.

Inside a house a mother listens to her daughter's voice messages. She talks about being safe, about being moved, tells her mother she is okay, then calls to ask if her family will pay and buy her back from her captor.

The Tiff website describes Notturno as "a film of light made of the dark material of history."

#### THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS

The Truffle Hunters, directed and produced by Michael Dweck and Gregory Kershaw, is about charming geriatric men who go on long walks in the forest with their dogs and return with tubers that sell for  $\in 4,000$ -4,500 per kilo (₹3,44,180 - 3,87,203).

Specifically, though, *The Truffle Hunters* follows Birba, Carlo, Sergio and their beloved dogs into the forests of northern Italy's Piedmont region as they hunt for that particularly elusive white truffle — the Alba truffle.

The knobby-shaped white truffle from Alba is desired and loved for its unforgettable aroma and flavour. Ranging in size — from that of a strawberry to an apple - they can be sold for up to € 1,20,000 for a little over 1 kg. Kilo for kilo, that makes it the most expensive ingredient in the world.

At high-stake auctions, truffles are brushed clean gently and then placed on lipstick-red velvet cushions, flanked by thin models and vintage

wine bottles.

The Truffle Hunters beautifully captures a moment of what feels like the last days of an enchanted era. Of men in their 70s and 80s, who still go hunting at night, to their secret places, looking for truffles that grow a few inches underground and only a few months each year. Each piece is individually sniffed out by the dogs these hunters have trained and loved since puppyhood.

And now, in their last days, their main concern is not who to hand over their hunting or training secrets to that is something they won't do - but who to bequeath their house, land, all possessions to. It has to be someone who will love their dogs

Some hunters got married, most didn't. But they all eat with their dogs, talk to them, feed them pears as they reminisce about a world and a time when greed didn't drive people, especially on days when their dogs fall ill because someone lay a poisonous trap for them.

The Truffle Hunters has the gentle pace of the men who walk through magical forests with their dogs, sniffing for tubers. It's a warm, funny film that makes us care for these men who will leave their dogs behind, but take

# A charming story ring-fenced by an anti-dalit worldview

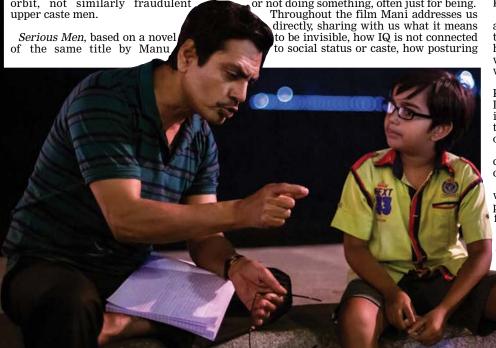
#### **SUPARNA SHARMA**

udhir Misha, director of the beloved Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi (2003), has been shooting duds for a while. But with Serious Men he seems to have regained his form, if not his sharp pol-

Serious Men is an entertaining, well-made film that tells the story of Ayaan Mani, a Dalit man who resents being invisible, and when he is seen he is subjected to daily humiliations, lucrative offers to convert, vote-bank politics. The film's plot is about a desperate man's desperate attempts to make sure his child, born in a pool of fraud by a hotel's poolside, amounts to something. Except that the seemingly sweet, benign story of *Serious Men*, which is rooted in reality, is ring-fenced by a worldview

that is seriously anti-dalit. While the film is sympathetic to men like Mani, it sets out to teach him a lesson. Merit, Serious Men says, is every-

thing, it's the great equalizer, and not opportunity. This karmic cycle of misdemeanours and comeuppance only sucks Mani into its orbit, not similarly fraudulent



Joseph, opens with the posturing of an impatient, serious man who frowns and growls at the world. It seems to be in his way as he is rushing about doing very important things. Astro-physicist Aravind Acharya (Nassar) acts as if he's on emergency duty to save the world with his discovery of alien

microbes. They hold answers to humankind's profound questions, he believes, and is in the pursuit of another round of government funding for his spatial explorations.

Everyone around Acharya defers to him, assuming that what sounds like gibberish to them are words of wisdom, for he is a man of greater knowledge, superior intellect and with a plan.

But Ayyan Mani (Nawazuddin Siddiqui), a dalit Tamilian, sees through Acharya and intenly watches how he fakes his way through the world.

Mani is Acharya's clerk, a la Massey Sahib, and is summoned to be shouted at for doing or not doing something, often just for being.

Mani watches how others worship at this altar of bullshit, and he wants a piece of it.

during meetings.

**Serious Men** CAST: Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Indira Tiwari, Nassar, Sanjay Narvekar, Shweta Basu Prasad ING ON:: Netflix RATING: ★★

Adi (Aakshath Das) seems like a bright kid who is shy and hard of hearing. A convent school rejects him at first. But

Tiwari), Mani's wife, is oblivious to his

is power, all the while picking up Acharya's small gestures that stitch together a VIP

identity. It includes Acharya leaning and

whispering into a female assistant's ears

He too wants to be like

them, the serious men. And

with people lower than him

in stature, cunning and gumption, Mani tries out the

same urgent, intemperate

demeanour, complete with

nonsensical chatter, irri-

tability and fancy neck-ties.

It works.
But it's too late for Mani.

So all his hopes are pinned on his child. Oja (Indira

when, a few years later, Adi is a hailed as a genius in the dalit chawl, called "Abdul Kalam", the school admits him.

In class, Adi often gazes out of the window, and when the teacher asks him what he's thinking, he talks of photosynthesis for humans, about the "arrow of time", and when probed further, he snaps, "I can't deal with primitive minds like you".

Enter a father-daughter politician duo — Keshav (Sanjay Narvekar) and Anuja Dhavre (Shweta Basu Prasad) — who, impressed by his scientific knowledge and the awe he inspires in the dalit chawl, pick

on Adi, and recruit him.

They have an agenda. A high-rise housing complex where Mani's dingy, rat-infested chawl squats.

Mani, who often uses his caste to get his way, is more than willing. And all goes as per plan till the day when, Sayani, Adi's schoolfriend, is being thrashed by her mother for doing badly in an exam and lying about it. Mani's plan and Adi's formidable reputation begin to unravel. Exam papers were

bought, and there were a father's instructive susurrations into his son's ears. As Mani's life begins to spiral out of control, affecting Adi the most, he turns his sights on his boss,

actor who is able to convey the machinations of his character's mind even while holding still. As a desperate father on a dogged pursuit of his and his son's life amounting to something, he and little Aakshath Das hold the film together and are supported by a very strong ensemble of actors, including Indira Tiwari, Nassar, Sanjay Narvekar and Shweta Basu Prasad.

Serious Men, adapted from a novel, credits four writers — Bhavesh Mandalia, Abhijeet Khuman, Niren Bhatt and Nikhil Nair.

The film's story is one part satire on significant men who posture, and lesser men who imitate that posturing, and one part political pamphlet about merit being supreme, about merit trumping all, irrespective of opportu-

Manu Joseph is a fine writer but here he

betrays a rather abhorrent worldview. Writers have a right to tell whatever stories they want to tell. But storytellers are like puppeteers who move their characters in certain ways, they decide what happens to them, what life lesson we draw from them.

Though the satire of Serious Men is primarily pivoted on upper caste Acharya and how he fools the world with gibberish and his nonsensical research, the film never interrogates him. In fact, the film redeems him by making him Adi and Mani's saviour

Mani, on the other hand, is enveloped in ambiguity. Even when most vulnerable and narrating a story about his mother, we are made to feel it's counterfeit.

And at the end, status quo reigns for all, except Mani and Adi.

The outlier is sent further away from the power centre, and the whole set-up seems to have been created to trump Mani, to teach the dalit father and son a lesson.

I have not read Serious Men, but I read somewhere that Joseph claims kudos for daring to show a poor dalit character as con-

There are no literary bravely awards to be given out for showing lower caste characters as fraudulent, dishonest. That has been the upper caste's narrative for ages about "neeche log".

But if kudos are being doled out for reiterating upper caste prejudice about lower castes, they are Joseph's to take.



# James Bond's No Time To Die pushed again, to '21

The release of the James Bond film "No Time To Die" has been delayed again, this time to 2021, because of the effects of COVID-19 on the theatrical

MGM, Universal and Bond producers, Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli, said on Twitter Friday that the 25th installment in the franchise will now open globally on April 2, 2021. "No Time To Die" was originally sup-

posed to open in April 2020 but was pushed back to Nov. 12 in the U.K. and Nov. 20 in the U.S. It was one of the first Hollywood films to abandon its release before cinemas in the U.S. shut down in mid-March because of the coronavirus

The film from director Cary Joji Fukunaga stars Daniel Craig as 007, Rami Malek, Lashana Lynch and Ana de Armas.

In a related move, Universal moved its "F9," the ninth installment of the "Fast & Furious" franchise starring Vin Diesel to May 28. Its previous April 2 release date would have put it in direct competition with Bond.

Other major studios have made similar decisions over the past few weeks.

Cinemas remain closed in New York and Los Angeles, two of North America's biggest markets.

Ticket sales for Warner Bros.' "Tenet," the first blockbuster to open in theaters worldwide after months of coronavirusrelated closures, have not been as strong

as hoped for in the U.S.

The Walt Disney Co. last week delayed the planned 2020 releases of a handful of major movies until 2021. They include Marvel's "Black Widow" and Steven Spielberg's "West Side Story." Universal delayed "Candyman" to next year.

SHORT TAKES

#### **IPL** player reports corrupt approach

New Delhi: A cricketer, competing in the Indian Premier League in the UAE, has "reported a corrupt approach", putting BCCI's anti-corruption unit (ACU) on a high alert. The 13th edition of the IPL in being held in the UAE in a bio-secure environment, which has significantly reduced the chance for persons with dubious credentials approaching the player directly. The threat though still remains by and large due to the online network of corruptors. BCCI ACU chief Ajit Singh confirmed the development to PTI. "Yes (a player has reported aproach), Singh, the former DGP of Rajasthan Police confirmed the news. "We are tracking him. It

will take some time," he said when asked if the alleged corruptor or "person of Interest" has been nabbed. As per anticorruption protocols, the name of the player (Indian or overseas) or franchise is not

#### **Tsitsipas through** to fourth round

revealed for confidentiality

purposes. - PTI

Paris: Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to the fourth round of the French Open on Saturday after his opponent Aljaz Bedene retired with an ankle injury while trailing 6-1, 6-2, 3-1. Slovenian Bedene, who defeated Tsitsipas in straight sets when they met at Rotterdam earlier this year, first called for the physiotherapist on Court Suzanne Lenglen to get treatment on his right ankle after going down 5-0 in the opening set. After returning to court Bedene won the first game to get on the scoreboard and then got his ankle strapped before the start of the second set. Tsitsipas, the reigning ATP Finals champion, kept his focus and went about his business smoothly, hitting 28 winners and breaking the 56th-ranked Bedene's serve five times before he decided he could no longer continue. - Agencies

#### **Neymar sizzles** in PSG's big win

Paris: Nevmar scored his first goals of the season to help Paris Saint-Germain make up some lost ground in the French league with a 6-1 rout of visiting Angers. PSG moved up to second in the sixth round after winning four games straight. The defending champions started with two defeats. Kylian Mbappe, who also scored, had the first big chance at Parc des Princes in the fifth minute saved by the quick reacting Angers goalkeeper Paul Bernardoni. But the home side did not have to wait long for the breakthrough, a fine goal from Alessandro Florenzi in the seventh minute. The Italian defender lifted the ball over an opponent with his fist touch, then lobbed it over another defender inside the far post with his next.

#### **Union Berlin** rout Mainz 4-0

Berlin: Former Germany striker Max Kruse launched Union Berlin to a 4-0 rout of Mainz for their biggest ever Bundesliga win and their first of the sea son Finland forward Joel Pohianpalo also scored, just seconds after coming on for his debut, to wrap up an unhappy start for new Mainz coach Jan-Moritz Lichte. Former assistant coach Lichte took over Mainz on an interim basis on Monday when the club fired Achim Beierlorzer after losing their first two games and players boycotted a training session in support of a demoted player, Adam Szalai. — AF

#### Live on

CRICKET

**IPL:** Mumbai Indians vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 3.30 pm; Kings XI Punjab vs Chennai Super Kings from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**TENNIS** 

French Open: Matches from 2.30 pm on Star Sports, Select 2

**FOOTBALL** 

English Premier League: Leciester City vs West Ham from 4.30 pm; Arsenal vs Sheffield United from 6.30 pm; Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur from 9 pm; Aston Villa vs Liverpool from 11.30

pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

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# DELHI DHAMAKA

# Shreyas leads from front as DC down KKR in run-feast

**Sharjah, Oct. 3:** Shreyas Iyer showed his class with a captain's knock and pacer Anrich Nortje honoured his skipper's heroics by bowling a splendid penultimate over in Delhi Capitals' 18-run victory over Kolkata Knight Riders in a thrilling IPL match here on Saturday.

Iyer's (88 no off 38 balls) magnificent power-hitting after Prithvi Shaw's opening act pro-pelled Delhi Capitals to an impressive 228 for four after being put into bat first by Dinesh If Iyer and Shaw weren't not

enough, Rishabh Pant (38 off 17 balls) dusted off his rustiness with a quickfire knock. The target was difficult but not

impossible but Delhi produced the best effort by a pace bowling unit on a placid track with KKR

finishing at 210 for 8. Harshal Patel, as Ishant Sharma's replacement, did well enough to finish with 2 for 34 in 4 overs while the ever-improving Nortje (3/33 in 4 overs) was also

SCORECARD Delhi Capitals: P. Shaw c Rana c sub (AR Patel) b HV

Shubman Gill b Nagarkoti 66, S. Dhawan c Morgan b Varun 26, S. Iyer (not out) 88, R. Pant c Shivam Mavi b Russell 38, M. Stoinis c Varun b Russell 1, S. Hetmyer (not out) 7. Extras (w 2) 2. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 228. FoW: 1-56, 2-129, 3-201, 4-

221. **Bowling:** Cummins 4-0-49-0, S. Mavi 3-0-40-0, C. Varun 4-0-49-1, S. Narine 2-0-26-0, A. 4-0-29-2, Russell Nagarkoti 3-0-35-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubman Gill c Pant b Mishra 28, S. Narine b Nortje 3, N.

impressive. However, it was Kagiso Rabada (1/51 in 4 overs), who dismissed the dangerous Andre Russell (13) cheaply, was taken to task by Eoin

Morgan (44 from 18 balls) and

Rahul Tripathi (36 off 16 balls) in

Patel 58, A. Russell c Nortje b Rabada 13, D. Karthik c Dhawan b HV Patel 6, E. Morgan c Hetmyer b Nortje 44, P. Cummins c HV Patel b Nortje 5, R. Tripathi b Stoinis 36, K. Nagarkoti (not out) 3, Shivam Mavi (not out) 1. Extras (b 4, lb 2, nb 2, w 5) 13. Total (for eight wickets in 20 overs) 210.

**FoW:** 1-8, 2-72, 3-94, 4-117, 5-117, 6-122, 7-200, 8-207. Bowling: K. Rabada 4-0-51-1, Nortje 4-0-33-3, R. Ashwin 2-0-26-0. M. Stoinis 4-0-46-1. H. Patel 4-0-34-2, A. Mishra 2-0-

the 18th over that got KKR 23

With 31 to get from 12 balls, Nortje bowled a superb 19th over getting rid of Morgan and only giving five runs in the process. With 26 needed off the last over

Marcus Stoinis (1/46 in 4 overs) proved his utility as a bowler by removing Tripathi with a slower yorker after being smashed by the batsman in an earlier over.

With their third win, Delhi (six points from four games) move to the top of the table.

Earlier, if the Powerplay belonged to Shaw, who blazed his way to 66 off 41 balls with four boundaries and as many sixes, Iyer dominated the remaining part of the innings with his silken smooth batting as he scythed the opposition attack with seven fours and half a dozen

A few of Iyer's sixes landed either in the top tier or got lost in the car park adjoining the stadium, such was the timing rather than brute force that the DC skipper used.

Containment was never possible on such a track with Capitals batsmen hitting as many as 14 sixes and 18 boundaries in the entire innings.



# Upbeat Sunrisers take on MI

an explosive batting lineup that complements their effective death bowl ing, Mumbai Indians will have their nose ahead in the IPL match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Sunday.

To add to SRH's worry, doubts remained over seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar's participation in the match. Bhuvneshwar picked up an injury on Friday night and was unable to complete his final over in the game against Chennai Super Kings. He walked off the field with the help of the team physio.

In the event the experienced seamer misses out, table-toppers Mumbai will fancy their chances more at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium, whose boundaries are much shorter than Dubai and Abu Dhabi and have been a paradise for power-hit-

The defending champions, having humbled a strong Kings XI Punjab in their last game, are unlikely to make any changes to the winning



Sunrisers Hyderabad's Priyam Garg (left) and Abhishek Sharma.

Skipper combination. Rohit Sharma is in sublime form and he can pummel any attack into submission on his day. Rohit has scored 170 runs from four games this sea-

While the poor form of Quinton De Kock is worrisome, the prolific Suryakumar Yadav would be more than keen to convert his starts. The biggest positive for the

defending champions is that their middle-order has finally delivered with Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard launching into opposition attacks with their big-hitting prowess. Young Kishan has been the find for MI, after his blistering yet responsible knock against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

# **NUMBERS GAME**

**OVERALL:** Matches: 13 Mumbai: 6

**MEETING IN 2019** 

Mumbai beat Sunrisers by 40 runs at Hyderabad. Mumbai beat Sunrisers in Super Over at Mumbai.

FOR THE RECORD

David Warner holds the record for the most number of 50+ scores in IPL. He has made 48 fifty plus scores (four hundreds and 44 fifties) in 130 innings

Trent Boult who has played 99 matches since 2009 will complete his century of matches in T20. - S. PERVEZ QAISER

Hopefully, this year shows these kids what they're capable of.

— DAVID WARNER SRH captain on performance of youngsters Priyam Garg and Abhishek Sharma

# **CHENNAI SEEK TURNAROUND IN CLASH OF KINGS**

**Dubai. Oct. 3:** Hit hard by a start that least defines them, Chennai Super Kings would be desperate to find answers to their predicament when they take on Kings XI Punjab in an IPL match here on

Sunday. So used to be on top of their game in the previous editions, sitting at the bottom of the points table now with three losses in four matches is an unknown territory for the Mahendra Singh Dhoniled side.

Nothing has worked for them despite having the resources. They even made three changes to their playing XI against Sunrisers Hyderabad but neither comeback of Ambati Rayudu nor the presence of Dwayne Bravo could lift the gloom. A misfiring toporder, save Faf du Plessis. combined with inadequate run-flow in the middle overs and the habit of leaving way too much for the climax, proved to be their bane.

# RCB skipper Virat Kohl en route to his first half-century of the IPL

# Kohli back in form, RCB win

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 3:** Captain Virat Kohli roared back to form with an unbeaten 72 and stitched a 99-run stand with Devdutt Padikkal (63) to power Royal Challengers Bangalore to a comfortable eight-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here on Saturday.

This was after wrist spinner Yuzvendra Chahal snared three wickets in an impressive bowling show that helped them restrict

RR to 154 for 6. Kohli's knock came off 53 balls with seven fours and two sixes. It was RCB's third win in four matches. Padikkal yet again pro-

duced an impressive innings before he was dismissed by Jofra Archer in the 16th over, after hitting six fours and one six. The young RCB opener

allowed his captain to get in and settle down before Kohli produced some of his trademark shots later on to accelerate. The RCB needed 31 runs after Padikkal's dismissal

and another in-form bat-man AB de Villiers (12 not out) ensured that his side reached the target with five balls to spare. Having failed to score big in his earlier three innings

(14, 1, 3), Kohli took time to settle down and scored mostly in ones and twos initially. Padikkal continued his

good form having scored 56, 1, 54 in his three earlier innings. He reached to his fifty in 34 balls. He was the

# **SCORECARD**

Rajasthan Royals: Jos Buttler c Padikkal b Saini 22, Steve Smith b Udana 5 Sanju Samson c & b Chahal 4, Robin Uthappa c Udana b Chahal 17, Mahipal Lomror c Padikkal b Chahal 47, Riyan Parag c Finch b Udana 16, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 24, Jofra Archer (not out) 16. Extras (LB-1, NB-1, W-1) 3. Total (for six wickets in 20 overs) 154. FoW: 1-27, 2-31, 3-31, 4-70, 5-105, 6-114.

Bowling: I. Udana 4-0-41-2, Washington 4-0-20-0, N. Saini 4-1-37-1, Y. Chahal 4-0-24-3, A. Zampa 3-0-27-0, S. Dube 1-0-4-0.
Royal Challengers Bangalore:

Devdutt Padikkal b Archer 63, Aaron Finch Ibw b Gopal 8, Virat Kohli (not out) 72, AB de Villiers (not out) 12. Extras (B-1, W-2) 3. Total (for 2 wickets in 19.1 overs) 158. FoW: 1-25, 2-124.

**Bowling:** J. Archer 4-0-18-1, J. Unadkat 3-0-31-0, S. Gopal 4-0-27-1, T. Curran 3.1-0-40-0, R. Tewatia 4-0-28-0, R. Parag

dominant batsman in RCB's opening stand of 25 runs with Aaron Finch who was out in the third over with a score of 8. Earlier, Chahal returned

with figures of 3/24 from his four overs to restrict RR to 154 for 6.

Chahal jumped to joint top spot in the bowlers' with Kings XI

Punjab's Mohammed Shami on eight wickets.

W L N/R Pts NRR Delhi Capitals 4 3 1 0 6 +0.588 4 2 2 0 4 +1.094 **Mumbai Indians** 4 2 2 0 4 -0.084 Sunrisers Hyderabad Kolkata Knight Riders 4 2 2 0 4 -0.121 4 2 2 0 4 -0.317 Rajasthan Royals Kings XI Punjab 4 1 3 0 2 +0.521 4 1 3 0 2 -0.719 Chennai Super Kings

# NUMBERS GAME — CSK vs KXIP

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

**HEAD TO HEAD** 

**OVERALL:** Matches: 22 CSK won: 13

Punjab won: 9

**MEETING IN 2019** 

Chennai Super Kings defeated Kings XI Punjab by 22 runs at Chennai. Kings XI Punjab beat Chennai Super Kings by six wickets at Mohali

Mohammed Shami who has taken eight wickets at an average of 14.75 in four innings is the joint highest wickettaker this edition

M.S. Dhoni who has smashed 299 sixes in 287 innings of 321 matches needs just one more to become the 21st batsman to complete a triple century of sixes in T20 cricket

- S. PERVEZ QAISER

# Young guns manifest the richness of Indian cricket and Chahal and Rashid



# Ayaz Memon

#### **Over The Top**

nsane hitting by batsmen, especially in the death overs, has been one of the major talking points of the IPL's second week. Power-hitters like Rohit. Rahul and Samson from the top order, and Pollard and Hardik Pandya as finishers, have peppered the grounds with

sixes galore. Then there is Rahul Tewatia, who hit five sixes in an over to transform defeat into victory for Rajasthan over Punjab, making a Himalayan taryet got into full throttle!

Interestingly, while flat pitches, fast outfields and enabled Super quential.

Shami, Cummins, Rabada among pacemen

get of 223 look like a stroll in the park. And Watson, Warner, Russell, Bairstow, Morgan and Pant — who binge on sixes — haven't

small grounds (Sharjah) several scores of 200+ plus already, apart from two stirring Over finishes, bowlers haven't exactly been rendered inconse-

the losing side, it is because their batsmen For India's superstars, it's been a mixed bag so far. Rohit has hit splendid form and, after losing the first match, has inspired Mumbai to the top of the table as much with his bat-

ting as tactical nous in

among spinners have been quite superb. If they've

sometimes still finished on

crunch situations. M.S. Dhoni was able to lift his batting form against Sunrisers yet is still short of the vigour of old that would help him win matches off his own bat. His problems are compounded by the fact that CSK are also bottom of the

points table currently. That RCB were able to

clinch a thrilling Super Over climax against Mumbai Indians, and the he hit the winning shot, is only small redemption for Virat Kohli. He's otherwise had three batting failures in a row, and despite two victories, RCB still look undercooked

The highlight of the past week for me, however has been the performance of young Indian players, manifesting the richness of cricket talent in the country as well as the role played by the IPL in exposing them to the world. Take the match between

CSK and SRH on Friday. While Warner and Rashid played big roles in the team's success, it was the rollicking partnership 19-year-old between Priyam Garg and 20-yearwhich turned things around.

All looked lost when Warner and Williamson were dismissed off successive deliveries before Garg and Sharma played with great intrepidity to break CSK's stranglehold. SRH's young bowlers Natarajan, Khaleel and Samad played their part splendidly too.

This is not an isolated example where India's youngsters have shone. KKR, who have invested in Shubhman Gill, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Shivam Mavi and Varun Chakravarthy have started reaping rewards already.

Gill is becoming widely regarded as India's best young batsman. Coach Ravi Shastri, who I spoke to, thinks very highly of

Abhishek Sharma him and sees him as someone who should be a "regular fixture for India in all formats.

spinners Ravi (Punjab) and Bishnoi Rahul Chahar (Mumbai) have caught the eye too even if they haven't claimed as many wickets as Chahal or Rashid.

Getting into a slightly older age group, there is Navdeep Saini, Sanju Prithvi Shaw, Samson. Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer who are also serving their teams with great efficiency, some of them with

excellence. A bulk of these players have come from the under-19 teams, but the IPL showcases their talent to India's selectors, coaches and captain whose business it is to track performances of

players, especially young sters. The importance of the IPL in fast-tracking players into the Indian team is evident from what's happened in the past 12 years: R. Ashwin, Rahane, Jadeja, Rahul, even Rohit and Kohli to an extent have benefited from playing in the league. Of course, not everybody

who has excelled in the IPL has made it to the India team or been able to sustain a place, as the examples of Paul Valthaty, Manpreet Gony, Pawan Negi and several others

highlights. Having got the platform and the attention, it is still up to the player to make the most of the opportunity. An India career does not come free, whatever the earnings in the IPL.