

NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2020



Vol. 27 No. 232	16 PAGES	₹5.00
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DELHI AGE | 13

Brangelina battle for their kids

— **BIPLAB BANERJEE**

Full report on Page 4

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Forecast: Mainly clear sky

SUNSET TODAY 6.02 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.11 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 08.13 PM
MOONSET TODAY 9.55 AM

■ **More on Page 4**

■ More reports on Page 3

S. Jaishankar

Roger Penrose	Reinhard Genzel	Andrea Ghez
<p>space that capture everything that enters them. Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez discovered that an invisible and extremely heavy object governs the orbits of stars at the centre of our galaxy. A supermassive black hole is the only currently known explanation. — <i>Agencies</i></p>		

– *PTM*

– *PTI*

ing to the new farm laws, will only increase unemployment. "Lakhs of people work at the mandis. Where will those people go if mandis are closed," Mr Gandhi addressing a rally in Pehowa

Mr Gandhi's tractor rally "Kheti Bachao Yatra" was stopped briefly outside Haryana Tuesday afternoon by dozens of policemen. Ambala IGP Y. Puran

■ **Turn to Page 4**

Boris Johnson

2,000 jobs in construction and support 60,000 more. He said the UK would become "the world leader in clean wind energy".

"Your kettle, your washing machine, your cooker, your heating, your plug-in electric vehicle — the whole lot of them will get their juice cleanly and without guilt from the breezes that blow around these islands," he said.

IN BRIEF

6 men arrested for betting on IPL match

New Delhi: Six men, allegedly found running a betting module here on the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) matches in the United Arab Emirates, were arrested following a raid at a place in South Delhi's Rajpur Khurd village, the police said on Tuesday. A laptop, nine mobile phones, and stake amount of ₹1,19,700 used for betting on the ongoing IPL 2020 cricket match between Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bangalore was recovered during the raid, the police said. A raid was conducted at around 9.40 pm on Monday after information was received that some people were running a betting module on the ongoing IPL cricket match in an enclosed premise in the area of Rajpur Khurd village, said DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur. A case under relevant sections of the Gambling Act was registered against them at the Maidan Garhi police station, the DCP said, adding that further investigation is underway. The arrested accused have been identified as Gaurav Sejwal (30), Sonu Rath (37), Sahil Luthra (28), Mohit Dagar (27), Hemant Dalal (30), and Sanjay Rath (38), the police said.

Man held for duping bank to tune of ₹97L

New Delhi: A man was arrested for allegedly duping a reputed private bank to the tune of Rs 97 lakh by obtaining multiple loans using fake salary slip, the police said on Tuesday. The accused, identified as Rajesh Sharma, used a fake name (Pradeep) and fake salary slip to obtain multiple loans including personal, credit card, and vehicle loans on high valued cars, it said. Based on a complaint received from the bank last month, a case was registered against Sharma under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code at Paharganj police station, said DCP (Central) Sanjay Bhatia. Later, the police managed to trace the hideout of the suspect and nabbed Sharma from his flat at G.B. Nagar in Noida Extension, he said. During investigation, it was found that the accused had set up two companies — UAI Services under the fake name of Pradeep Sharma and Mindtree as Rajesh Sharma.

2 dead, 8 hurt as roof of house collapses

Ghaziabad: Two persons, including an 18-month-old child, were killed and eight others were injured as the roof of a two-storey house came crashing down on its occupants burying them all under its rubble, police said on Tuesday. The incident happened in Balmiki Colony adjacent to Ravli Road in Ghaziabad's Muradnagar area on Monday evening when the roof of the first floor of the house belonging to Maya, a sanitary worker in the local municipality, was being repaired. The police identified the deceased as Nisha, Maya's daughter-in-law, and her son Raftar. Those injured in the incident were six other family members of Maya and two masons, engaged by her to repair the roof of her two-storey house. All family members of Maya, including she herself and her husband Mahipal besides six others, were in the ground floor of the house when the roof of the first floor collapsed on the ground floor roof, which too came crashing down. — PTI

Armed trio loots ₹4L from bank in Noida

Noida: In a daring broad daylight robbery, three gun-wielding men wearing face masks barged into a bank in Greater Noida on Tuesday and decamped with nearly ₹4 lakh. Of the ₹3,90,410 looted, ₹2,15,410 belonged to the bank and the remaining to a customer who had come there for a transaction, a senior official said. The bank where the incident took place around 3.15 pm is located in Beta-2 police station area, said officials, adding the miscreants had arrived on a two-wheeler. "The trio entered the bank around 3.15 pm. They looted ₹2,15,410 belonging to the bank and another ₹1,74,000 of a customer. In total, ₹3,89,410," said Greater Noida DPC Rajesh Kumar Singh. He said a private security deployed at the bank had tried to stop the fleeing robbers but they manage to escape after hitting him. — PTI

Delhi past peak of 2nd corona wave, says Kejri

39 fatalities in 24 hours, total death count reaches 5,581

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said the national capital is past the peak of the second wave of coronavirus and the situation has been controlled to a large extent.

City, meanwhile, recorded 2,676 new cases and 39 deaths in last 24 hours. Out of total, 2,95,236 patients, 22,720 are active and 2,66,925 are recovered. City death tolls due to Covid-19 stands at 5,581. Mr Kejriwal said the Delhi government increased the testing exponentially to detect the infection.

"Delhi hit the peak of the second wave of Covid-19 on September 17 when 4,500 cases were reported across the city. The situation has been controlled to a large extent. I hope the second wave will slowly pass," said Mr Kejriwal.

Testing in Delhi hit the 60,000 a day mark in September compared to 20,000 tests per day in August. The chief minister also said that 10,000 beds are now unoccupied in hospitals. At one point, 7,200 beds were occupied.

According to Delhi government data, 1,947 new cases on Monday increased the cumulative count to 2,92,560 cases, while 32 fatalities took the number of deaths to 5,542.

Forty-eight deaths were reported on September 29, the highest in a day since July 16, when the city reported 58 deaths.

On Monday, the case positivity rate was 5.47 per cent, while the cumulative positivity rate was 8.82 per cent. The average death rate for the last 10 days stands at 1.41 per cent.

Experts also concurred that Covid cases have come down in the last few days and that Delhi has crossed the peak of the second Covid wave.

"We had a similar experience at the hospital. We had a peak, and then it came down. The number



Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, environment minister Gopal Rai and others visit Bio Decomposer centre at Najafgarh in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

went up again but now we are seeing a decline in admissions. If the numbers persist for a week, we can safely say that we are past the second peak," said Dr Rajesh Chawla, senior consultant, critical care and respiratory medicine at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital. Suresh Kumar, medical director of Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital, said there is certainly a decline in the number of new coronavirus cases as compared to mid-September.

"We can say that the second peak is over now. The number of cases is expected to decrease further," he said, adding that the high number of deaths over the last few days can be attributed to severe patients coming to Delhi for treatment from neighbouring states.

Dr BL Sherwal, medical director of Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, said, "We also saw an increase in hospital admissions around September 16-17 when the cases rose. But the number of admissions has decreased now and discharges have increased."

There were 44,031 active cases across UP on Tuesday. So far, 3,70,753

247 new cases in Noida, tally crosses 14,000-mark

Noida, Oct. 6: Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar registered 247 new Covid cases on Tuesday, taking the district's infection tally to 14,163, official data showed.

The district's active cases count rose to 1,434 from 1,345 on Monday even as 158 more patients were discharged, according to the data released by the UP Health Department for a 24-hour period.

The district has so far recorded 12,673 recoveries, seventh highest in the state, according to the data.

The death toll stands at 56 with a mortality rate of 0.39 per cent, it stated.

As per official figures on Tuesday, the recovery rate of patients in the district dropped slightly to 89.47 per cent from 89.93 per cent on Monday.

There were 44,031 active cases across UP on Tuesday. So far, 3,70,753

patients have recovered across the state, while the death toll linked to Covid climbed to 6,153, the data showed.

Recently, An inspector in Gautam Buddha Nagar succumbed to Covid-19 on Saturday, officials said, recalling his exemplary work as a "frontline warrior" during the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Amit Kumar Singh, in his 40s, was also heading the Phase 3 police station, the officials said.

"He was admitted to the Sir Gangaram Hospital in Delhi for Covid-19 treatment. He was admitted in the ICU (intensive care unit) where he passed away on Saturday morning," according to a police statement.

The Gautam Buddha Nagar Police said Singh was a "dedicated, disciplined, well behaved and popular" policeman. — PTI

Gahlot directs number plate makers not to take bookings

New Delhi, Oct. 6: Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Tuesday directed Kailash manufacturers Gahlot and dealers of high security registration plates (HSRP) not to take new bookings unless a system is put in place to address the issues being faced by vehicle owners. Gahlot also restrained the Transport department from taking coercive measures to enforce rules pertaining to HSRP until further orders.

The Transport department had issued a public notice asking vehicle owners to get HSRP and colour-coded stickers, saying it would launch a drive to check violations.

With vehicle owners in the city facing various problems while booking appointments online for HSRP and the stickers and also complaining of delays at the dealers' end, Gahlot held a meeting on Tuesday to address the grievances.

As per the Motor Vehicles Act and the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, HSRP and colour-coded stickers are mandatory for all vehicles. Around 30 lakh vehicles in Delhi registered prior to April 1, 2019 don't have these. New vehicles registered after April 2019 come equipped with HSRP and colour-coded stickers.

During the meeting, Mr Gahlot discussed several issues faced by vehicle owners in getting the HSRPs. He instructed original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to put a system in place to address the grievances. Mr Gahlot also instructed them not to book any new appointment for HSRP fitment until then. "Our objective is public convenience. It was misinterpreted by a section of people that we are immediately enforcing the HSRP rule. This created a panic among vehicle owners," Mr Gahlot said. — PTI

Stubble burning: SC seeks response to plea on MSP

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

Concerned over stubble burning in Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh which is causing air pollution in Delhi and some areas surrounding the National Capital Region (NCR), the Supreme Court, on Tuesday, sought response from the Centre to a plea seeking to withhold part of the minimum support price (MSP) and releasing it only after verifying that the farmers didn't burn the stubble.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, however, objected to the plea saying that any "tinkering with the MSP may not be in the interest of the farmers as they may sell their paddy to others instead of bringing it to the government agencies, defeating the very purpose."

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Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde, heading a three judge bench also comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian, had his own doubts.

The bench directed further hearing of the matter on October 16 after the solicitor general sought time for the Centre to file its response. Advocate Charanpal Singh Bagri, representing farmers, objected to the plea of withholding MSP to curb stubble burning. He pointed out that on November 5, 2019, the top court had

ordered that compensation should be granted to those small and marginal farmers who don't burn stubble.

Mocking the plea to withhold a part of the MSP, Mr Bagri complained that the compensation, which was envisaged as an incentive to prevent stubble burning by the farmers, has vanished and instead even those not burning the stubble, as being suggested, will have to wait for getting full price for their produce, pushing them into the bureaucratic red-tape.

The court was dealing with the fresh plea to link MSP payment with burning of stubble. When CJI Bobde wanted to know "whether the smoke from stubble burning kills coronavirus," senior counsel Vikas Singh said the effect will be otherwise as pollution caused by the stubble smoke will aggravate the corona pandemic.

'Delhi's air quality likely to worsen in coming days'

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

The national capital's air quality was recorded in the "moderate" category on Tuesday morning, but it is likely to worsen in the coming days due to a spike in farm fires in Punjab, Haryana and neighbouring border regions.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, said the city's AQI will remain in the "moderate" category on Wednesday and Thursday and will start deteriorating thereafter.

The city recorded an air quality index (AQI) of 177 at 10.30 am which falls in the "moderate" category.

On Monday, the 24-hour average AQI was 179. 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". "A sharp increase in

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stubble burning was observed around Punjab, Haryana, and neighbouring border regions. Boundary layer wind direction is favorable for transport (of pollutants). It will start impacting Delhi in the coming days," the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) said.

Also, there is a marked dip in minimum temperatures recorded in Delhi.

On Tuesday, it settled at 18.2 degrees Celsius, three notches below normal. Low temperatures and stagnant winds help in accumulation of pollutants near the ground, affecting air quality.

Over 65% of beds for Covid-19 patients vacant at city hospitals

New Delhi, Oct. 6: With coronavirus cases here witnessing a decline in the last few days, over 65 per cent of beds for Covid patients in the city hospitals are vacant, data on Delhi Corona app showed.

However, the bed occupancy is higher in private hospitals as compared to government-run facilities.

At the LNJP Hospital, which is the Delhi government's biggest Covid facility, 1545 of 2000 beds are vacant, while the GTB Hospital has a vacancy of 1321 beds against its strength of 1500, according to Delhi Corona app.

Indraprastha Apollo Hospital has 110 out of 300 beds vacant, while only 53 out of 250 beds are unoccupied in Max Smart Saket. At Sir Gangaram Hospital, 60 beds are vacant out of 200 beds earmarked for Covid patients.

Out of the total 15,822 beds for Covid patients in Delhi, only 5,402 are occupied, according to the Corona app, which provides the latest details about the availability of beds and ventilators in the city hospitals.

Also, 561 of 1,321 Covid ICU beds with ventilators are occupied, accounting for over 42 per cent of

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vacant status, data on the app showed.

Delhi recorded 32 Covid fatalities on Monday, taking the death toll to 5,542, while 1,947 fresh cases took the tally to over 2.92 lakh. The city reported 1,947 new cases on Monday, 2,683 on Sunday, 2,258 on Saturday, 2,920 on Friday, 3,037 on Thursday, and 3,390 on Wednesday.

Dr BL Sherwal, medical director of Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, said, "We saw an increase in hospital admissions around September 16-17 when the cases saw a spike. But now the hospital admissions have decreased and discharges have increased. Beds occupancy has gone down.

The awareness and home isolation measures of the Delhi government are to be credited for this, he said. The Covid dedicated facility has 500 beds,

of which 393 are vacant. He said nearly 90 patients are in ICU. Indraprastha Apollo Hospital's Dr Rajesh Chawla said private hospitals are seeing more occupancy as people, who can afford treatment there, prefer them over government facilities. "We had a peak and then it came down and then it went up but now we are seeing a decline in admissions," he said.

Dr Mugdha Tapdiya, senior consultant, internal medicine, Fortis Hospital Vasant Kunj, said there was a time when it was very difficult to find beds in hospitals but now the situation has become a little better.

"The ICU beds are still occupied because once the patient goes in the ICU, they take time and if they go on a ventilator, the recovery takes more. Sometimes, it takes 10-15 days and sometimes even months. There is no movement from the ICU to the outside that is why it is difficult to get ICU beds," she said.

All seven Covid ICU beds with ventilators at the hospital are occupied, while 12 out of 28 ICU beds without ventilators are vacant, according to Delhi Corona app. — PTI

Open-air dining to get North Municipal Corporation's nod

SHASHI BHUSHAN
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

After the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), the BJP-ruled North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) is likely to approve a proposal to allow open-air dining on rooftops and lawns of North Delhi restaurants.

As per the proposal, 'al fresco dining' is a very popular culture abroad and several municipalities in India, like the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), already have a similar policy.

Permission, however, will be granted with certain riders

"The corporation has stipulated 24 conditions in the policy, which the members of the standing committee will deliberate over on Wednesday," said a senior North Corporation official.

A senior official told this newspaper that the policy was drafted after a representation from the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI).

The NRAI had approached the civic body recently with a request to allow them to serve food in open space, citing huge losses due to the coronavirus pandemic.

To use an open area for dining, the restaurant will require 'no objection

AS PER the proposal, 'al fresco dining' is a very popular culture abroad and several municipalities in India, like the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), already have a similar policy. Permission, however, will be granted with certain riders

certificate' (NOC) from the owner of the space or landlord.

"Open space/terrace in front of other shops in the building shall not be allowed to be used as 'service area' even if the landlord has given permission. NOC from the Delhi Fire Service shall be mandatory for using the terrace or part of the terrace for serving food," said the policy.

However, no cooking or preparation of eatables (food) will be allowed in the open area or terrace. The restriction will also cover fast-food stalls, ice-cream kiosks, and paan or cigarette stalls.

"Open space/terrace to be used as the service area shall be neither covered on top with permanent arrangement nor enclosed on sides. No inflammable material will be used for side enclosure or umbrellas," said the proposal.

NCERT textbooks to be available in sign language

New Delhi, Oct. 6: The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) signed a MoU with the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) on Tuesday to make textbooks and other educational material accessible for deaf children in sign language.

"The availability of NCERT textbooks in Indian Sign Language (ISL) will ensure that hearing-impaired children can also now access educational resources and it will be a useful and much needed resource for teachers, teacher educators, parents and the hearing-impaired community," Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot said.

According to officials of the ministry, the cognitive skills of children are

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ACCORDING TO officials, the cognitive skills of children are developed in the childhood and it is necessary to provide them with educational material in accordance with their learning needs

developed in the childhood and it is necessary to provide them with educational material in accordance with their learning needs.

"So far, hearing-impaired children used to study only through a verbal or written medium but after the signing of this MoU, they can study through a single Indian Sign Language also. It will not only enhance their vocabulary, but also enhance their capabilities to understand concepts," Secretary Shakuntala Gamlin said.

The ISLRTC is an autonomous national institute of the social justice and empowerment ministry, which is dedicated to developing manpower for popularising the use of Indian Sign Language, teaching and conducting research.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed in the virtual presence of Gehlot and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank". — PTI

Toddler dead, 10 injured in Ghaziabad slum fire

Ghaziabad, Oct. 6: A two-year-old girl was charred to death and over 10 people were injured as a fire gutted 300 shanties in Ghaziabad district, police said on Tuesday.

Twelve fire tenders took three hours to douse the blaze that broke out at Sihani village on Monday evening. Almost all the people living in the slum were ragpickers, police said.

Many small gas cylinders exploded due to the blaze. Some warehouses, used for storing polythene and other inflammable material, also caught fire, according to the police. Aisha, 2, was burnt alive, while more than 10 people sustained burn injuries, Sihani Gate police station incharge Krishna Gopal Sharma said. The cause of incident will be probed, he added. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

Didi announces jobs for Naxal victims' kin

Kolkata: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday announced jobs and financial aid as compensation for families of those who have lost their lives or have gone missing due to Maoist violence in the tribal Jangalmahal area in the state. Ms Banerjee also announced jobs for the kin of those who have been killed in man-animal conflict in that area. "One member from each family who have lost their near and dear ones to Maoist violence or are missing for more than a decade will be provided with financial compensation of ₹4 lakh and a job in the state home guard force," she said. "We will also provide jobs to one member from each family who have lost their kin in attacks by elephants in the area," she said at an administrative meeting at Kharagpur area of West Midnapore district. — PTI

Covid-19 -ve report must for Sabri visit

Thiruvananthapuram: The expert committee constituted by the Kerala government to suggest measures for the safe conduct of Sabarimala pilgrimage during Covid-19 pandemic this season, has recommended that only 1000 devotees each should be allowed to climb up to the hill shrine on week days and two thousand each on Saturday and Sunday. The expert committee has made Covid - 19 negative certificates mandatory for each devotee visiting the temple during the annual mandalamakaravilakku pilgrimage season. All devotees including those coming from other states with Covid negative certificate will be subjected to another test at the entry points at Nilakkal. All testing and screening activities will be carried out at the Sabarimala base camp at Nilakkal.

CBI books Hanung Toys for 'cheating'

New Delhi: The CBI has booked Hanung Toys and Textiles Limited, along with its directors Ashok Kumar Bansal and Anju Bansal, for allegedly cheating a consortium of 12 banks to the tune of over ₹2,040 crore, officials said on Tuesday. In November last year, authorities at the Delhi airport had detained debt-ridden Hanung Toys' promoter Ashok Kumar Bansal and his wife Anju Bansal, following a lookout circular issued by the Punjab National Bank (PNB). In the complaint filed on behalf of all the 12 banks, which is now part of the CBI FIR, the PNB alleged that the directors of the company indulged in criminal breach of trust, fraud, siphoning and diversion of funds, criminal misappropriation and cheating among others. — PTI

2 fishermen killed in C'garh lightning

Rajnandgaon: Two fishermen were killed and 10 others injured after lightning struck them when they had gone fishing in a reservoir in Rajnandgaon district on Tuesday, police said. The incident took place at around 1.30 pm under Chichola police station area, where 19 fishermen from two villages of Chhuria had gone to Lal Mati reservoir, said Ajaykant Tiwari, station house officer of Chichola police station. Owing to heavy rainfall, they were inside their temporary camps erected on the banks of the reservoir where the lightning struck, he said. While two of them, identified as Rohit Nishad (50) and Bharosa Nishad (55), died on the spot, 10 others sustained minor burn injuries in the incident, he said. — PTI

83% voter turnout in Raj panchayat polls

Jaipur: Over 83 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the third phase of polling for panchayat elections in Rajasthan on Tuesday, the state election commission said. Polling was held in 975 gram panchayats in 17 districts for the post of sarpanch and panch. Polling was held from 7.30 am to 5.30 PM. The final voter turnout was 83.69 per cent, a spokesperson of the state election commission said. There are a total of 31,87,585 voters, including 16.66 lakh males and 15.20 lakh females, in the gram panchayat where the polling was held. The elections were held as per the Covid-19 guidelines issued by the commission. — PTI

Ghosh scores own goal, talks of 'mafia raj' in UP and Bihar

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, OCT. 6

In a sameside goal, West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh has claimed that the state has started becoming a "Mafia Raj like in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar." The BJP rules UP while it's NDA partner: JD(U) is in power in Bihar. The ruling Trinamul Congress praised the Midnapore MP for revealing the "truth" of the two other states.

On BJP leader Manish Shukla's murder at Titagarh in North 24 Parganas, Mr Ghosh on Monday alleged at Kharagpur, "West Bengal is slowly heading towards the Mafia Raj like in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The way a lawyer, also a councillor, was shot dead using a sten



West Bengal is slowly heading towards the Mafia Raj like in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The way a lawyer, also a councillor, was shot dead using a sten gun opposite to a police station, I doubt whether law and order exists in the state.

— Dilip Ghosh, Bengal BJP chief

gun opposite to a police station, I doubt whether law and order exists in the state."

He added, "If this situation continues, I do not know if the election can be held impartially." Mr Ghosh claimed that around 120 BJP workers were killed in West Bengal in the recent years. State urban development minister Firhad Hakim said, "It is good to

hear Mr Ghosh admitted the existence of Mafia Raj in UP and Bihar. He at least spoke the truth. We are happy."

Meanwhile the criminal investigation department (CID) arrested two persons: Mohammad Khurram Khan and Gulab Sheikh on Monday night for their role in Shukla's murder. The two accused, whom the BJP claimed to be TMC workers,

were remanded in police custody by the Barrackpore Court on Tuesday.

Khurram is the president of Bengal Jama Masjid Committee and president of Station Road Trader's Samity in the area, said his cousin Raju Khan. Khurram's photos with TMC leaders: Madan Mitra, Nirmal Ghosh and Dinesh Trivedi are viral. The names of outgoing chairmen of Titagarh and Barrackpore Municipalities: Prashanta Chowdhury and Uttam Das respectively in the FIR further focus the TMC link in the murder.

The CID also recovered the CCTV footage showing how motorcycle-borne miscreants gunned down Shukla in absence of his security personnel as they were on leave.

Diggy & Swara get notice for identity leak of Hathras victim

New Delhi, Oct. 6: The NCW has sought explanation from BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya, Congress leader Digvijay Singh and actress Swara Bhasker for allegedly revealing the identity of Hathras victim on Twitter. The National Commission for Women has also directed them to immediately remove these posts and refrain from sharing such posts in future.

"@NCWIndia has served notices to @amit-malviya @digvijaya_28 and @ReallySwara seeking explanation on their #Twitter posts revealing the identity of the #Hathras victim along with a direction to remove these posts immediately & to refrain from sharing such posts in future," the NCW said in a tweet on Tuesday.

The NCW said it has come across several Twitter posts wherein the picture of the victim of the alleged gangrape incident was used. "In view of the above, you are hereby required to provide a satisfactory explanation to the Commission on receipt of this notice and shall remove and refrain from transmission of such pictures/ videos on the social media as they are widely circulated by your follower which is prohibited by the law," the NCW said. — PTI

Coal Block scam: CBI court finds ex-minister guilty

Convicted for criminal breach of trust

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 6

Former Union minister Dilip Ray was on Tuesday convicted by a Special Court in New Delhi in a coal scam case pertaining to irregularities in the allocation of a Jharkhand coal block in 1999.

Special Judge Bharat Parashar convicted Ray, former minister of state (coal) in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, under various sections of Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act.

The court also convicted two former senior officials of the Union ministry of coal at that time, Pradip Kumar Banerjee and Nitya Nand Gautam, Castron Technologies Ltd (CTL), its director Mahendra Kumar Agarwalla and Castron Mining Ltd (CML).

The court will hear arguments on the quantum of sentence on October 14. The case pertains to allocation of Brahmadaha coal block in Girdih in Jharkhand to CTL in 1999.

In April 2017, the Special Court had framed charges of cheating, criminal conspiracy and criminal breach of trust against Ray and the senior officials.

The accused have been



Dilip Ray

summoned for the alleged offences of criminal conspiracy, cheating and criminal breach of trust under the Indian Penal Code and under relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act.

In its charge sheet, CBI had alleged that the name of former BJP Rajya Sabha member P.K. Agarwalla was not being recommended for prosecution as he has since expired. The CBI in its chargesheet had said that Ray had applied in May 1998 to the ministry of coal (MoC) for allotment of Brahmadaha coal block and it was stated in the application that extracted coal shall be used by the firm for washery and power generation.

When the application came up for consideration, Coal India's views were sought, which in turn sought a report on the viability of coal block on various aspects from the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL).

6-year-old Hathras girl raped by relative, dies

Aligarh, Oct. 6: Even before the outrage over the gang rape-murder case of a dalit woman in Hathras settled, a six-year-old girl from the district, who was allegedly raped by her relative, died during treatment at a hospital in Delhi, police said Tuesday.

The minor was held captive at a relative's house in Iglas area of Aligarh district and was rescued on September 17, Senior Superintendent of Police Muniraj G. said.

"On a complaint by a social organisation police raided the house, which belonged to a relative of the victim, found the girl and admitted her to Jawaharlar Nehru Medical College hospital where she was being treated till four days ago," the SSP told reporters.

The girl was shifted to Delhi's Safdarjung hospital after her condition deteriorated and she died on Monday.

An FIR was registered by police on September 21 on the complaint of the girl's father, a resident of a village in Hathras district, that he suspected the girl

Dalit teen raped in Pratapgarh

Pratapgarh: A Dalit girl was allegedly raped by a man in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh following which the accused was arrested, police said on Tuesday. The incident took place on Sunday when the 17-year-old girl was sleeping in her house and the accused, identified as Chandrakesh verma, entered her room through the terrace and raped her, they said. According to police, the girl was alone in the house at the time of the incident. — PTI

was raped in captivity. Police then arrested the 15-year-old relative who confessed to his crime, the SSP said. "The boy's mother, who is the maternal aunt (mausi) of the victim, is reported to be an accomplice in the crime and is absconding," he said. On Tuesday, the victim's family sat with her body on the main road in

Hathras in protest against the failure of the police to arrest the woman. After persuasion by senior police officials, they agreed to conduct the last rites. The SSP said the Iglas police station SHO has been suspended for negligence.

He also said two police teams have been constituted to trace the woman.

The incident has come to light amid a widespread outrage over the death and alleged gangrape of a dalit woman in Hathras by four "upper caste" men and the Uttar Pradesh administration's response to the incident. The woman's family alleged the body was burnt at night without their approval, but the local police said the cremation was done "as per the wishes of the family". Citing an FSL report, the Hathras police also claimed that the woman was not raped.

The UP government has requested the Centre to order a CBI probe into the incident as "fake narratives were being spread about the case with political motives". — PTI

Hathras-bound scribe arrested over 'PFI links'

Lucknow, Oct. 6: The Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested a journalist and three other people in Mathura while they were on their way to Hathras, home to a dalit woman who died after being allegedly gang-raped.

The Uttar Pradesh police had on Monday said it has arrested four people having links with the Popular Front of India and its affiliate in Mathura.

The PFI had been accused of funding protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act across the country earlier this year and the UP police had sought a ban on the outfit.

The police had identified the arrested persons as Siddique from Malappuram, Atiq-ur-Rehman from Muzaffarnagar, Masood Ahmed from Bahraich and Alam from Rampur.

Hours after the arrest, a

prominent journalist body of Kerala identified Malappuram native Siddique by his full name as Siddique Kappan, saying he is "a senior Delhi-based journalist".

In a letter to Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath, the Delhi unit of Kerala Union of Working Journalists sought immediate release of Kappan saying he is "a senior Delhi-based journalist working for several Malayalam media houses, including azhimukham.com".

The KUWJ wrote a similar letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to order Kappan's release.

Kappan is also the KUWJ's secretary and was proceeding to Hathras only to do his duty as a reporter, KUWJ's Delhi unit president Miji Jose told the chief minister in his letter, urging him to order his release. — PTI

Scindia loyalists dominate BJP list for MP Assembly bypolls

Bhopal, Oct. 6: The BJP on Tuesday declared its much-awaited list for the crucial assembly bypolls in Madhya Pradesh, fielding all loyalists of former Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, including six Congress ministers, who quit with him to join the saffron party in March.

As many as 28 Assembly seats will have bypolls on November 3 in the BJP-ruled state. The BJP has announced candidates for all the bypoll-bound seats.

A revolt by a section of Congress MLAs, most of them considered close to Scindia, led to the toppling of the Kamal Nath government nearly seven months ago.

The six Congress ministers, who were accommodated in chief minister Shivraj Singh

THE BJP has given tickets to all 25 MLAs who quit the Congress to join the saffron party.

AS MANY as 28 Assembly seats will have bypolls on November 3

Mr Chouhan's new Cabinet, have been fielded from the Assembly seats from where they were elected in the 2018 polls.

The BJP has given tickets to all 25 MLAs who quit the Congress to join the saffron party.

The BJP has fielded Tulsiram Silawat from Sanver (SC), Imarti Devi from Dabra (SC), Pradyumna Singh Tomar from Gwalior, Mahendra Singh Sisodia from Bamori, Govind Singh Rajput from Surkhi and Prabhuram

Choudhary from Sanchi (SC) seat, as per the list issued by the BJP's central election committee.

From Jaura the party has fielded Subedar Singh Rajoudha, Aidal Singh Kansana from Sumavli, Raghuraj Singh Kansana from Morena, Girraj Dandotia from Dimni, Kamlesh Jatav from Ambah (SC), OPS Bhadoria from Mehgaon, Ranvir Singh Jatav from Gohad (SC), Munna Lal Goyal from Gwalior-East and Raksha Santram Sironia from Bhandar (SC).

The Congress has already declared its candidacies on 27 seats except Biora.

The bypolls will be held on November 3 and counting of votes will take place on November 10.

— PTI

'58% young women face online harassment, abuse'

New Delhi, Oct. 6: A latest global survey carried out across 22 countries has revealed that girls and young women are one of the biggest targets of online violence and abuse.

Carried out by UK-based humanitarian organisation Plan International, the survey, titled "State of the World's Girls Report", involved 14,000 women aged 15-25 from 22 countries including India, Brazil, Nigeria, Spain, Australia, Japan, Thailand and the United States.

Ahead of the International Day of Girl

Child 2020 on October 11, the survey highlighted that 58 per cent of the respondents accepted having faced online harassment or abuse on different social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok.

The percentage of affected women was similar for different regions around the globe.

"In Europe 63 per cent of girls reported harassment, followed by 60 per cent of girls in Latin America, 58 per cent in the Asia-Pacific region, 54 per cent in Africa, and 52

OF THE GIRLS who have been harassed, 47 per cent have been threatened with physical or sexual violence, while 59 per cent faced abusive and insulting language online

per cent in North America," the report found.

Ranging from threats of sexual violence to racist comments and stalking, online harassment of young women was directed in different manners.

Of the girls who have been harassed, 47 per cent have been threatened

with physical or sexual violence, while 59 per cent faced abusive and insulting language online.

A large number of women from minority and LGBTQ+ communities said they were harassed because of their identities.

"Of the girls who were harassed, 42 per cent of the girls who identified themselves as LGBTQI+; 14 per cent who self-identified as having a disability; and 37 per cent who identified themselves as from an ethnic minority said they get harassed because of it," found the

survey conducted from April 1 to May 5.

Despite the anonymity that social media provides, girls and young women do know something about their harassers. Harassment from strangers was more frequent and more frightening than from people they knew.

"While 11 per cent of the surveyed girls were harassed by a current or former intimate partner, 21 per cent pointed towards friends and 23 per cent knew their harassers from school or work," it said. — PTI

SEARCH FOR MISSING



NIBHA KUMARI

General public is hereby informed that a girl (depicted in the photo), Namely : Nibha Kumari D/o Dinesh Mehto R/o H. No. 228, Gali No. 3, Pal Mohalla, Mandawali Delhi has been missing since 11.09.2020 from her house. In this regard a case vide FIR No. 389/20 u/s 363 IPC dated 16.09.2020 has been registered at Police Station Mandawali, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

Age : 16 Years, Height: 5', Complexion : Shallow, Built: Thin, Wearing : Red colour suit & yellow colour payjama and sleeper in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Mandawali, Delhi at E-mail Id — cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
DPI/198/ED/2020

SHO
P.S. Mandawali, Delhi
East Distt., Delhi
Ph. No. 011-22720809

SHORT TAKES

Bells will toll for opening of temples

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Mandira Sebayata Sangha (OMSS), a state body of servitors, has planned a novel protest to press for their demand for early opening of temples in the state. The OMSS on Tuesday said it has given a call to the priests to ring bells across the state on Wednesday against the government's move to delay reopening of temples. The Sangha informed that bells will be rung at all temples and servitor's houses for nine minutes — from 9 am to 9.07 am — across the state to protest against the state government's apathetic attitude towards their community. "The livelihoods of all the servitors have been jeopardised as the temples across the state have been shut down," said OMSS senior member Kameswar Tripathy.

C'garh: Ultras kill five colleagues

Raipur: Five naxals carrying rewards ranging from ₹1 lakh to ₹3 lakh on their heads were killed by their colleagues in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district over the last two weeks. These killings are the fallout of an ongoing rift within the outlawed CPI (Maoist) over recent murders of civilians by some naxals in south Bastar, they said. The police had last week said top Naxal leader Modiyam Vijja had been gunned down by his juniors at the beginning of this month. "We have got information about the killing of five more naxals by their own outfit members in Bijapur," IGP (Bastar range) Sundarraj P. said. The deceased were identified as Sandip alias Budhram, Janmilitia platoon section commander, Lakhu Hemla, Maoists jantana school in-charge, Santosh, head of Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Majdoor Sangthan, Dasru Mandavi, head of janatana sarkari group and Kamlu Punem, platoon commander.

Yes Bank case: Cox & Kings ex-CFO held

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday arrested Anil Khandelwal, former CFO of the Cox and Kings Group in connection with its money laundering probe into the Yes bank fraud case. The agency also arrested former internal auditor of the group, Naresh Jain, in the same case. "Both were arrested under the provision of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Investigations revealed that Yes Bank had a total outstanding amount of Rs 3,642 crore in respect of Cox & Kings Group of Companies," the ED said in a statement. Earlier this year, the ED conducted searches at the premises belonging to the management of Cox and Kings Group in connection with the case.

Naga accord

■ **Continued from Page 1** the NSCN(I-M) may be isolated in Nagaland if they continue to defy the mood of civil society groups which is mounting pressure for an early solution to Naga political issues.

Apart from rehabilitation of armed cadres after surrender of arms, the final draft agreement also proposes two autonomous councils — one each in Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh — besides the mechanism of transfer of power by holding general elections in the state. The number of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha seats would also be increased to facilitate more representation to Nagas at the Centre.

In 1975, the Centre signed the Shillong Agreement with a moderate faction of the political organisation, Naga National Council (NNC), that had been formed in 1946. After a short spell of peace for two years, the dissident group led by Th. Muivah, Isak Chisi Swu and Shangnyu Shangwang Khaplang rejected the pact outright, and went underground again, spending much of their time in Myanmar. They formed the NSCN in January 1980, and eight years later, in April 1988, it split into the NSCN(I-M) and the NSCN (K) over differences in initiating a dialogue process with the Indian government.

The NSCN(I-M) has been unofficially in talks with the government since 1994, while formal talks with the Centre began only in 1997 when a ceasefire agreement was signed. In August 2015, the government signed a Framework Agreement to seek a final solution with the NSCN(I-M).

Gov, Mamata govt at odds over figures of rape and kidnappings

RAJIB CHOWDHURI
KOLKATA, OCT. 6

West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamul Congress government on Tuesday crossed swords over statistics of rapes and kidnappings in the state with the home department questioning the authenticity of the figures stated by the governor.

The governor, who has been at loggerheads with the state government over a range of issues, also urged chief minister Banerjee to put law and order in place before "attending flames elsewhere" and tweeted figures of rapes and kidnappings in the state in August this year.

"Rapes-223 and

Rapes-223 and Kidnappings-639 @MamataOfficial in August 2020 as per official reports indicate worrisome state of crime against women a cause of concern. Time to douse fire under feet and put law and order in place @WBPolice @KolkataPolice before attending flames elsewhere

— Jagdeep Dhankhar, Bengal governor



Kidnappings-639 @MamataOfficial in August 2020 as per official reports indicate worrisome state of crime against women- a cause of concern. Time to douse fire under feet and put law and order in place @WBPolice @KolkataPolice before attending flames elsewhere," Mr Dhankhar tweeted.

The data, which does not state any agency's name as source, alleges that

Murshidabad witnessed the highest number incidents of rape at 51, followed by Nadia at 24 and Malda at 22 among the districts. It also claims that East Midnapore recorded the highest number incidents of kidnapping at 77, followed by West Midnapore at 69 and South 24 Parganas at 68.

Countering it, the state home department, which is led by Ms Banerjee herself, in the evening tweeted, "Rajbhavan dissemina-

tion of WB "statistics" on rape and kidnapping is not based on any official report, data, or information. Allegations are baseless, ill-founded, and misleading; totally incongruous with authentic facts and figures."

Mr Dhankhar was quick to express his displeasure and asked that the tweets by the state home department be withdrawn.

Those responsible "for such outrageously incorrect assertions to run down a constitutional office will not be without consequences," he warned.

The governor slammed the state director-general of police and the state home department for showing "defiance to directive to apprise on nose-diving law and order and now such untruths".



Family members and daughter (inset) of martyr Army JCO Sukhdev Singh after his mortal remains arrive at his Peoni village in Udhampur district on Tuesday. Singh lost his life in a ceasefire violation by Pakistan along the LoC in Nowshera sector of Rajouri district on Monday. — PTI



English medium in Andhra primary schools: SC expresses reservation

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed its reservation over the

Andhra Pradesh government's policy of introducing English medium for the Class 1 to 6 even as the state government defended it, saying it would benefit the lower strata of the population who can't afford to send their children to private English medium schools.

Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, heading a three-judge bench also comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian, said that while they (bench) personally agreed with the view of imparting education through English medium, but they can't impose their views.

Indicating that the world over the view is that the

initial education should be in the mother tongue, the court said that the Andhra Pradesh policy has to meet the provision of the Right to Education Act which says that the medium of instructions, shall, as far as practicable, be the mother tongue.

CJI Bobde told senior counsel K.V. Viswanathan that the argument he is advancing is not the only point of view, but there were other views as well.

Trying to persuade the court, Mr Viswanathan said that besides English medium, there are Telugu medium schools and students attending Telugu medium schools will be provided free transport for going to school and coming back home.

Mr Viswanathan cited a top court constitution bench judgment which said that the medium of

instruction for children would weigh in favour of the choice of the parents. He said 96% of parents have opted for English medium schools.

Solicitor-general Tushar Mehta said that foundation education should be in mother tongue only and referred to the provisions of the Right to Education Act. However, Mr Viswanathan said that without education in English medium, it would be difficult for students of vernacular language to come to the Supreme Court and practice.

Apparently unimpressed CJI Bobde said that what was important in primary education is the foundation and other things, including the English language can be learnt later. The case was adjourned for further hearing next week.

■ Company will overhaul engines of Mi-17 V5

Chinese-owned firm to get IAF contract

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

At a time of heightened India-China tensions in eastern Ladakh, Motor Sich — a Chinese majority owned company — is said to be all set to get a contract to overhaul engines of Indian Air Force's frontline Mi-17 V5 helicopters.

The IAF is reported to have pronounced Motor Sich as the lowest bidder or L1 for the contract.

The development comes when India has banned Chinese apps and tightened norms for Chinese investment into India on security grounds.

Ukrainian aerospace company Motor Sich is one of the world's foremost manufacturers of helicopter and airplane engines. However, a controversy broke after Chinese attempt to buy a majority stake in Motor Sich to get hold of its advanced military technology, which was opposed by the US and Ukraine.

According to a Reuters story in August this year, Chinese Investors through Skyrizon hold



A C-17 Globemaster flies along with IAF jets during the full dress rehearsal for the 88th IAF Day celebrations at Hindon Airbase in Ghaziabad. — BIPLAB BANERJEE

around 80 percent of Motor Sich through several foreign companies.

Sources said the defence ministry (MoD) is set to award a contract for overhauling of VK-2500-3 engines of IAF's Mi-17 V5 helicopters to Motor Sich.

The Russian helicopters, the original suppliers of the V5 helicopters to India, is said to have written to the IAF on September 28, 2020 that they are represented only through their original equipment manufacturer JSC UEC-Klimov for all overhauling and supply of parts of the said helicopters.

The letter also informed

Indian Air Force that the Russian federation had withdrawn its licenses from Motor Sich in 2018 for the overhauling of the VK 2500 engines. It is alleged that ministry of defence was kept in dark about this development.

It is reported that a delegation of Russians was in New Delhi to ensure the overhauling through JSC UEC Klimov and to invite MoD representative to their St Petersburg facilities to satisfy them about the OEM status, cancellation of license to Motor Sich and the capability for the overhauling of VK 2500 engines.

Centre may line-up big ticket projects

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 6

J&K, LADAKH ANNIV

The Centre is expected to announce major development schemes for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on the first anniversary of the two becoming Union Territories. Formal notification for J&K and Ladakh being made UTs was issued on Oct 31 last year following the abrogation of Article 370 in J&K.

Home minister Amit Shah has held a number of meetings in last few days to review developments in the two UTs over last one year. Senior home ministry officials claimed that over the past year since J&K and Ladakh become UTs the main focus of Centre has been on improving the basic infrastructure like roads, power and health.

"Several parts of Kashmir Valley, particularly in South Kashmir, did not even have proper basic roads and connectivity and no power. Now we have successfully managed to connect most villages in South Kashmir by proper roads, most of these villages now have power also and

health centres. Same has been the situation in Ladakh also. Now we are even planning to restore 4G services in all parts of the Kashmir Valley which were disrupted following the abrogation of Article 370," a senior ministry official remarked.

Sources said after having worked on improving the basic infrastructure since the two became areas became UTs, the Modi government now wants to go in for "big-ticket development projects" both in J&K and Ladakh and the same could be announced on the first anniversary.

These, officials added, could be in form of new power and industrial projects in J&K while in Ladakh there could be a major focus on construction of national and state highways in the months ahead. There is a possibility that a major hospital, on lines of AIIMS, could be announced for Jammu, Srinagar and Ladakh along with some important educational institutions on lines of IIT and IIM.

Won't back down: Rahul

■ **Continued from Page 1** Kumar said a conditional permission has been granted to the Congress leader's rally, where a gathering of not more than 100 people will be allowed.

Mr Gandhi also said he feels he gets "beaten up so much in politics" because he instinctively stands with the weak.

Striking an emotional chord, he said he owed a debt to Punjab and Punjabis and was standing with them against the farm laws.

"I remember in 1977, my grandmother (Indira Gandhi) lost an election. There was nobody in the house, but there were Sikhs in my house. She was protected by Sikhs in 1977. I will never forget that," he said.

Claiming that several institutions, including the media, that protect the voice of the people have been "captured" by the BJP-led Centre, he said, "Give me free press and institutions which are free, this government will not last for long."

Quad meet...

■ **Continued from Page 1** economic interests of all countries having legitimate and vital interests in the region. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Indo-Pacific concept has gained increasingly wider acceptance."

The Quad meeting is significant given the aggressive Chinese military posturing and tensions in the past few months in the South China Sea, Ladakh and the Taiwan Straits. It is being seen by observers as sending a strong message to Beijing that it will not be allowed to browbeat its neighbours, including India, Japan and the Asean nations. The Quad is officially an arrangement that aims to preserve a "rules-based order" in the Indo-Pacific region.

'India failed to appoint lawyer in Jadhav case'

Islamabad, Oct. 6: A Pakistani court was on Tuesday informed that India has failed to appoint a lawyer to represent death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav in the case of the review of his death sentence by a military court in this country.

This comes after Pakistan on Thursday once again rejected India's demand that an Indian lawyer or a Queen's counsel should be appointed for Jadhav to ensure a free and fair trial in the case.

Fifty-year-old retired Indian Navy officer Jadhav was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017.

The Islamabad high court had last month set a new deadline for India to appoint a legal representative for Jadhav.

The three-member bench of IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah, while hearing the law ministry's request on Tuesday to provide a counsel to Jadhav was informed that India had failed to appoint a lawyer by October 6 as was instructed by the court despite it being conveyed for the second time to do so. — PTI

Cop killed while saving J&K BJP worker from militants

AGE CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, OCT. 6

A policeman was killed while foiling an assassination attempt on a local BJP leader by suspected militants in Jammu and Kashmir's central district of Ganderbal on Tuesday night, the police here said.

The police said that the BJP worker was targeted by gunmen in Nunar area of Ganderbal, about 25 km north of Srinagar city centre.

The slain policeman was identified as constable Altaf Hussain.

A report, however, said that militants had actually targeted the BJP worker's home with gunfire

and in the retaliatory fire by his PSOs one of the unidentified attackers was killed.

Meanwhile, fighting broke out between a group of holed up militants and security forces in Sugan area of southern Shopian district after the latter laid siege to it to conduct a search operation on Tuesday evening. The police said that the militants were asked to surrender but they opened fire.

er's home with gunfire and in the retaliatory fire by his PSOs one of the unidentified attackers was killed.

Meanwhile, fighting broke out between a group of holed up militants and security forces in Sugan area of southern Shopian district after the latter laid siege to it to conduct a search operation on Tuesday evening. The police said that the militants were asked to surrender but they opened fire.

Steady decline in Covid cases: Govt

VINEETA PANDEY
NEW DELHI, OCT. 5

Union health ministry on Tuesday said that a constant decline in fresh cases of novel coronavirus has been noted in the last fortnight and the total number of active cases for the last several days have remained under 10 lakh, raising hope that the virus may have reached its peak in the country.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said the national capital is past the peak of the second wave of Covid-19 and the situation has been largely controlled while Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan

said though peak and trends cannot be predicted a decline in fresh cases in the last 14 days has been observed.

With 61,267 new cases in the last 24 hours, India till date has recorded a total of 66.85 lakh cases with total deaths at 1,03,569, including 884 in 24 hours.

"Average daily new cases of Covid-19 have declined from 84,179 registered between September 2 to September 8 to 77,113 recorded between September 30 to October 6...New recoveries have been more than new cases over the last two weeks and the new cases reported in the last 14 days are

below previous highs of 90,000 cases per day," said Mr Rajesh Bhushan.

The average daily positivity rate has declined from 9.21% recorded between September 16-22 to 6.82% registered between September 30 and October 6 and 10 states, including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, account for 77% of the active cases in the country.

Health ministry officials said about 48% of the total Covid-19 deaths in the country are concentrated in 25 districts of 8 states, out of which 15 districts are in Maharashtra alone.

Cinema to reopen Oct. 15 onwards

New Delhi: After seven months of shutdown, cinema halls will reopen on October 15 with 50 per cent capacity and one-seat distance between the viewers, I&B minister Prakash Javadekar said. "Cinema halls are shut for last seven months. They are now opening from October 15. For safety of people, we have come out with SOP to be followed," he said, adding, "Cinema halls shall be allowed to open with 50% capacity." — PTI

THE ASIAN AGE

7 OCTOBER 2020

GST cess: Centre must act quickly, responsibly

The decision of the GST Council meet on Monday to extend the collection of GST compensation cess beyond 2022, five years after the launch of GST, is a welcome move but the Hamletian indecision on the ways to compensate the states for their losses is not. The GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017, mandates that the Union government compensate the states on their shortfall in GST revenue calculated against a 14 per cent yearly growth over the figures of 2016-17, which was taken as the base year, for five years, ending 2021-2022. A public fund was to be formed for the purpose to which the cess, imposed on luxury and sin goods, would be deposited and shared among the states as per the approved formula. The Council has now decided to extend the period of levying the cess beyond 2022.

It is estimated that there will be a revenue loss of ₹2.35 lakh crores which needs to be compensated as per the Act. Of this sum, ₹97,000 crores is calculated to be the loss due to the implementation of GST and the rest on account of the pandemic. The Centre has suggested that it will create a special window in association with the Reserve Bank of India to help the states borrow ₹97,000 crores at a special rate. Alternatively, the states will be allowed to borrow the entire sum of ₹2.35 lakh crores from the market. While 21 states ruled by the BJP and its allies have agreed to the arrangement of the special window but 10 states, ruled by parties that are politically opposed to the NDA dispensation, have said the government must honour its commitment as per the law and compensate the state. If it has no money, then it should borrow and give the states, they hold.

The Union government's insistence on passing on the entire burden on to the states is untenable. It's a fact that both the Centre and the states are hard-pressed for money. However, it must be remembered that by taking over the state's powers on taxation with the implementation of GST, the Union government also took up the added responsibility of guiding the economy to growth and meet the developmental needs of the states since the latter are left with practically no tool to incentivise growth.

Covid-19 has broken the back of most states who find the financial and human resources in short supply. There are no immediate signs of growth, too. The Centre has wisely chosen to distribute the GST compensation cess that has already been collected and the IGST dues to the states; it should help avoid another rebuke by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, which caught it red-handed for rerouting the cess money collected in 2017 and 2018 to the Consolidated Fund of India instead of keeping it in a separate fund. The government must act wisely again and offer to meet its legal and moral obligation to the states when the Council meets next on October 12. Procrastination, especially on money matters, is a costly affair; any finance manager will vouch for that.

Towards an HCV-free world

They are the mysterious zombies of microbiology, coming to life only inside living bodies, hard to kill because they are smaller than bacteria, and not quite living themselves. From Ebola to the coronavirus and HIV, viruses are humanity's biggest enemy. Perhaps the only virus to have a cure, however, is the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), thanks to the efforts of British scientist Michael Houghton, US researchers Harvey Alter and Charles Rice and a few others, who have also designed accurate tests to identify it.

The viruses Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B had been discovered by the mid-1960s. But it was Prof. Alter who, while studying transfusion patients in 1972, showed that there was another infection at work. Prof Houghton, while at the pharmaceutical firm Chiron in 1989, isolated the flavivirus' genetic sequence. And Prof. Rice, in 1997, established the connection of the virus with the disease, Hepatitis.

Collaboration had been critical to the work of all three scientists. In 2013, Houghton declined the Gairdner Award, Canada's most prestigious international science prize, as it did not include Qui-Lim Choo and George Kuo, his two colleagues. The latter did not win the Lasker Award, either, which was won by Houghton and Alter in 2000 for discovering the virus.

An estimated 71 million people worldwide suffer from chronic HCV infection, requiring liver transplants. HCV is the primary cause of liver cancer and kills about four lakh people annually. While its identification has made blood transfusions a whole lot safer, the development of drugs against this organism means, for the first time in human history, eradication may be accomplished.

In a pandemic year, which has also been dubbed the "year of the virus", therefore, the award of the Nobel Prize 2020 to the trio is a fitting recognition.

THE ASIAN AGE

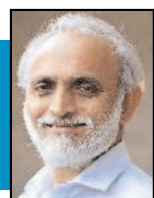
T. VENKATRAM REDDY
Editor in Chief

Printer & Publisher: K. SUDHAKAR
THE ASIAN AGE offices are located at:
New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone: (011) 23211124. Mumbai: Sigma House, # 43, Ground Floor, R. A. Kidwai Marg, Near Wadala Rly Station, Wadala (West), Mumbai - 400 031 Phone (022) 24195301 Fax (022) 24195347 Kolkata: 4th Floor, Chowdhury Building, 8/A Little Russell Street, Kolkata 700 071. Phone: (033) 2289 0676/77 Fax (033) 2289 0686
Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office in the United Kingdom Air surcharge for Kathmandu and J&K ₹1
Published and Printed on behalf of and for
Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Infotech Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301. Mumbai: Dangat Media Pvt Ltd, Plot No 22, Digha MIDC, TTC Industrial Estate Area, Vishnu Nagar, Digha, Navi Mumbai-400708. Kolkata: Satyajug Employees Cooperative Industrial Society Ltd, 13/A, Prafulla Sarkar Street, Kolkata 700 072. London: Quickmarsh Ltd, 8th Floor, Block 2, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ.
RNI Registration number: 57290/94 Postal registration numbers: DL(S)-05/4189-15-17



Subhani

Hathras: Yogi govt's offensive misguided



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

The confusion behind the aggressive response by UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath's government to the alleged gangrape-murder of a 19-year-old dalit girl in a village near Hathras is screamingly clear in the 21 cases filed against those who have protested, raised their voices against the venal crime against a member of an oppressed community. The charges against the protesters include conspiracy, treason and abetting enmity between communities and castes. The chief minister had earlier said that those who are raising a hue and cry against the alleged rape-murder want to create obstacles in Uttar Pradesh's progress on the economic front. The ironies and the half-truths and lies embedded in the argument against the alleged conspirators are much too obvious to have to be spelt out.

Apart from those who have been accused of the alleged rape-and-murder crime, the police had mishandled the case from day one. When the victim was taken to the hospital in Hathras first, then to the one in Aligarh, the medical reports from these two places should have immediately been dispatched for forensic examination, instead of waiting to do so for nearly two weeks. The police had waited till the victim's declaration before her death was recorded by a magistrate. And a heinous crime was committed by the police in hurriedly, and furively, cremating the body in the dead of the night under the false presumption that a daytime funeral would create law

and order problems. The police making a statement based on the forensic report that there was "no rape" was a clumsy, shoddy attempt to play down the magnitude of the crime.

Chief minister Adityanath, along with so many of his colleagues in the ruling BJP in the state, at the Centre and in the country at large, believe that they do not owe any apology to the people when horrible crimes are committed against the weak and the innocent. They have this misplaced notion of masculinity that expressing sympathy for the victims of crime, especially where the party is in power, is a sign of weakness and a confession of failure. This is a weakness that pervades across all BJP ranks, starting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, home minister Amit Shah and chief minister Adityanath. It must be stated point blank that an expression of compassion and admitting to failure and mistakes is sign of strong people, and not of the weak. The aggression of the BJP leader is a symptom of cowardice, more than anything else.

The UP police's counter-aggression carries signs of the BJP's pathological belligerence. This is evident in the manner that the Delhi police, which functions under the control of Union home ministry, and therefore directed by Union home minister Amit Shah, approached the East Delhi communal riots at the end of February this year. There was not a word of sympathy from Mr Shah or anyone else for those killed in the riots and

who suffered huge losses to property. The relentless attempt was to go after the supposed conspirators. Though Mr Shah, at the all-party meeting he convened soon after the riots, called for the setting up of peace committees, he is loath to voice concern and sympathy for the victims of the riots because a majority of the victims of the Delhi riots were Muslims.

What Mr Modi, Mr Shah and Mr Adityanath need to do is to get rid of this macho attitude towards violence and reach out to the victims. Most of the protests by the victims of the Delhi riots were Muslims. What Mr Modi, Mr Shah and Mr Adityanath need to do is to get rid of this macho attitude towards violence and reach out to the victims. Most of the protests by the victims of the Delhi riots were Muslims. What Mr Modi, Mr Shah and Mr Adityanath need to do is to get rid of this macho attitude towards violence and reach out to the victims. Most of the protests by the victims of the Delhi riots were Muslims.

What Mr Modi, Mr Shah and Mr Adityanath need to do is to get rid of this macho attitude towards violence and reach out to the victims

Hathras case was Uma Bharti, who wrote to chief minister Adityanath to allow Opposition party leaders to go to Hathras and meet the dalit family of the victim.

There are then two major blunders that the Adityanath government has committed. The first is the attempt to play down the magnitude of the crime. The first was the police statement based on the forensic report about it not being a rape, as though the brutal assault on a teenage girl which resulted in her death was no serious matter. The murder does not become less of a heinous crime because the medical report found no traces of rape. The second folly of the police was to rush through the cremation, which should be treated as a crime because it was an attempt to suppress and destroy evidence.

Filing cases against those who protested, whether it was their business to protest or not, or whether they indulged in hyperbole or not, is an attempt take the focus away from the basic fact that a 19-year-old was assaulted and killed. That the girl belonged to a dalit family is not an extraneous factor, given the caste animosities in an Indian village, where all castes, including the dalits, are engaged in a power tussle. And in most of these cases of power tussle, dalits are at a disadvantage though there is more talk about the exploitation of dalits from all around and there is little action to do away with the exploitation. The Adityanath government can hope to win over the dalits by protecting them rather than filing cases against those who spoke out in support of the murdered dalit girl and her family.

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

LETTERS

PRINT MONEY

On the call for Atma-nirbhar Bharat American economist and Nobel laureate Joseph E. Stiglitz has said that this boosts nativism but is not realistic as a lot of products, including vaccines, are imported. Holding India and the US responsible for not handling the Covid-19 situation well, he said that India should not shy away from spending on controlling the pandemic and helping the vulnerable and if there is problem of resources, taxes on the super-rich should be raised as India has a lot of billionaires. India could also print money. The noted economist was speaking at a FICCI-organised session and had food for thought of our policymakers.

M.C. Joshi
Lucknow

ARAB'S CAMEL

THE BJP, from a mere two LS seats in 1984, rose to eminence today, and had no compunctions in enticing regional allies into its deceptive fold to then usurp their space like the proverbial Arab's camel. Soon enough, it outgrew the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. Mamata Banerjee fears the BJP more than the CPI(M) or the Congress. The opportunistic Paswans, never out of a government, are poised to grow in electoral size.

R. Narayanan
Navi Mumbai

ORDINARY EFFORT

ROYAL CHALLENGERS Bangalore (RCB) came up with an ordinary effort with both bat and ball as Delhi Capitals (DC) ran out easy winners in their league match at the Dubai International Stadium on Monday. Openers Prithvi Shaw (42) and Shikhar Dhawan got the victors off to a rollicking start, putting on 68 for the first wicket, and Marcus Stoinis provided the late impetus to carry DC to a big total. Captain Virat Kohli (43) ploughed a lonely furrow for RCB as DC catapulted to the top of the points table.

N.J. Ravi Chander
Bangaluru

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

Karti Chidambaram



Restrict whips to no-confidence motions, please

From its Parliament, India expects a great deal. It is the highest legislative body and the principal check on executive overreach and inefficiency, holding the council of ministers answerable to the public. The structure and function of the Parliament determine the way this country is governed. But this institution is dying today, and with it, our entire system of governance. It began when the first party fiat trumped debate and reason.

Debate calls on people to engage. If people disagree, it requires them to discuss, air differences, test the weight of one's argument against another's until one has either convinced the other or agreed to disagree. The point of debate in Parliament is to appeal to the conscience and shared constitutional values of elected representatives and to rely on their independent thought to determine what is best for the country and their constituents. The aim is to ensure MPs make the most informed decision every time they are called upon to vote. But with the autonomy of voting long gone, debate has become

meaningless.

Ideally, MPs should be driven by the four C's when they vote in Parliament: Constitution, Country, Constituency and Conscience. These four are enough to guide an MP on any piece of legislation placed before them for a vote. Armed with these, every MP should be an independent actor capable of consensus and dissent beyond narrow partisan lines. Party fiat and whips should be restricted only to no-confidence motions.

The overwhelming majority the BJP enjoys in Parliament has intensified the old rot, but it is important we realise that this majority is itself part of a greater issue with our parliamentary structure: the first past the post (FPTP) system. If a party's seat share in the Lok Sabha corresponded to the actual number of people who voted for it, then the BJP, which won 37 per cent of the eligible votes cast in 2019, would have only 202 seats. The Congress, at 19.5 per cent, would have 105 seats. The majority the BJP has in the Lok Sabha does not reflect the actual

percentage of people who cast a vote for the party in 2019.

Skewed majorities are not, by themselves, necessarily a problem. But with the death of debate in India, we have given ourselves an elected tyranny of the "majority". Our problem is not unique. We have seen it in other democratic systems around the world. People have battled to restructure and renegotiate checks and balances to counter the weaknesses of their systems. In the United States, this happened first through the creation of term limits. The efforts continue today in debates on the role of filibusters and the electoral college. The failure to address these grave issues hurt countries when they most need independent, critical thought. This should have served as a lesson to us.

Parliament in 2020 is a farce of democracy. The legislature has been reduced to a rubber-stamp. The Opposition is aware that it is fighting lost battles against a blinkered government, whose legislative agenda is backed by the guaranteed votes of ruling party MPs. Parliamentary proceedings are

now performance for an audience of news channels and social media outside. Inside, no matter how they go, the outcome is preordained.

The last year has been highly "productive" for Parliament, with long sittings and a large number of bills passed. But the oversight of standing committees has declined, and with it, the degree of scrutiny over governance. Hugely consequential legislation has breezed through Parliament with little or no debate, particularly the abrogation of Article 370 and the Citizenship Amendment Act. Ordinances have been promulgated with abandon. The first week of this session saw a united Opposition make impassioned arguments for greater government accountability on Covid-19, border dispute, transformative labour codes and for the rights of farmers whose livelihoods the three new laws threaten. They were met by an intractable Treasury bench. The vital Question Hour was gone, and written responses produced more questions than answers. Crucial policies like the NEP (National Education Policy), draft EIA

(Environment Impact Assessment) and NDHM (National Digital Health Mission) were spared rigorous parliamentary debate simply because they were announced during a pandemic.

We need not wait for a massive constitutional amendment that replaces our FPTP system. Structural changes take time to implement, and even longer to win confidence. But the danger to democracy posed by the all-knowing Great Leader is immediate. There is also an immediate solution, which will require from every party of the House a return to the ideals upon which our democratic system is built: debate, freed from the shackles of whips, fiats and dik-tats, and the freedom to vote based on Constitution, Country, Constituency and Conscience before and above all else. Arguably, this will be the most revolutionary change any party can make today.

Karti P. Chidambaram is Member of Parliament from Sivaganga constituency and member, All India Congress Committee

IN BRIEF

2 envoys recalled from Belarus

Warsaw: Poland and Lithuania have recalled their ambassadors from neighbouring Belarus, where hundreds of people have been detained during massive protests against the authoritarian president who won a sixth term in office in an election widely seen as rigged. The foreign ministries of Poland and Lithuania, nations that offer support to the Belarusian opposition, have said they were recalling their ambassadors from Minsk for consultations. Poland suggested ambassadors from some other European Union nations were also being recalled. The move by Poland and Lithuania followed Friday's announcement by Belarus that it was recalling its ambassadors from the two countries and urging them to do the same. Belarus also demanded that Poland and Lithuania scale down their missions in the country because of their "destructive activity."

Gynaec fathered 17 children

The Hague: A gynaecologist who worked at an artificial insemination program at a Dutch hospital fathered at least 17 children using his own sperm without informing the parents, the hospital announced on Tuesday. Gynaecologist Jan Wildschut, who has since died, worked at the Sophia Hospital, now known as Isala Hospital, in the eastern city of Zwolle from 1981 through to 1993. "From a moral perspective, Isala finds it unacceptable that a gynaecologist-fertility doctor was both practitioner and sperm donor," the hospital said in a statement. The hospital said that the gynaecologist's donor children, who have been confirmed using DNA tests, and his family are in regular contact and have a good relationship with each other. Authorities have created a DNA profile of the gynaecologist so that other children born following fertility treatment at the hospital can check if Wildschut also is their biological father.

Embezzlement: Jail for Maldives ex-V-P

Male: The former vice president of the Maldives has been sentenced to 20 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to money laundering and embezzlement under orders from the former president. The Criminal Court on Monday night also fined Ahmed Adeb \$129,800. The prison sentence, which will be shortened by one year because he served time after a previous conviction on the same charges, also covered charges of corruption and possession of an unlicensed firearm. Adeb was a protégé to former President Yameen Abdul Gayoom during the early years of his presidency between 2013 and 2018. He had been sentenced to 33 years in prison in 2016 for several counts including masterminding a blast in a presidential speedboat in which Yameen's wife was wounded. He was freed from all charges after Yameen lost re-election in 2018. Under the new President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, many cases perceived to be politically motivated were revisited. After his release, Adeb testified against Yameen in court.

CHURCH FAILED TO TACKLE CHILD SEX ABUSE

London, Oct. 6: An independent report said Tuesday that the Church of England allegedly failed to protect children and young people from sexual predators for decades, preferring instead to safeguard its own reputation, and created a culture where abusers were able to hide. The report, published by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, also found examples of clergymen being ordained despite a history of child sexual offenses.

The inquiry heard that, from the 1940s to 2018, 390 people who were either members of the clergy or in positions of trust associated with the church had been convicted of sexual offences against children. The report found that the Church of England failed to take the abuse allegations seriously. "Over many decades, the Church of England failed to protect children and young people from sexual abusers, instead facilitating a culture where perpetrators could hide and victims faced barriers to disclosure that many could not overcome," the inquiry's chairwoman, Alexis Jay, wrote.

Don discharged, back in WH

Waves at reporters, tells followers will be back on campaign trail soon

Washington, Oct. 6: US President Donald Trump has returned to the White House after being discharged from a military hospital where he was under treatment for the deadly Coronavirus since Friday, telling his followers that he would be back on the campaign trail soon, and not to be "afraid" of the disease and not let it "dominate" their lives.

Trump, 74, who appeared to be healthy, waved at reporters on Monday. In an unusual move, Trump climbed up the South Portico stairs instead of the elevators to go to his residence, showing his fitness. The president removed his mask on the balcony of the White House, where several staff and aides have tested positive for the virus in recent days.

Earlier, he was discharged from the Walter Reed National Medical Center after doctors found him fit enough to go back home.

"Will be back on the Campaign Trail soon!!! The Fake News only shows the Fake Polls," Trump said in a tweet, moments before leaving Walter Reed National Medical Center in Bethesda, a Maryland suburb of Washington DC.

In a mass email to his supporters after his arrival at the White House, Trump asked them not to be afraid of Covid-19. The US is the worst hit nation and has some 7.4 million cases of Covid-19 and 210,000 deaths.

"I'm telling you: Don't be afraid of Covid. Don't let it dominate your life! This is the greatest country in the world and under the Trump Administration, we have developed some really great drugs and knowledge. WE WILL BEAT THIS, TOGETHER!" he said.

— PTI



US President Donald Trump gestures after walking out of Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland before heading to Marine One, to return to the White House after being discharged. — AFP

Vaccine nod: WH nixes FDA norms

Washington, Oct. 6: The White House has blocked new Food and Drug Administration guidelines on bringing potential vaccines for Covid-19 to market that would almost certainly have prevented their introduction before the Nov. 3 election.

At issue was the FDA's planned instruction that vaccine developers follow patients enrolled in their trials for at least two months to rule out safety issues before seeking emergency approval from the agency.

A senior administration confirmed the move Monday evening, saying the White House believed there was "no clinical or medical reason" for the additional requirement.

The White House action was first reported by *The New York Times*. The intervention by Trump officials is the latest example of the administration undercutting its own medical experts

working to combat the pandemic that has killed more than 210,000 Americans.

FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn has been attempting to shore up public confidence in the FDA's vaccine review for weeks, vowing that career scientists, not politicians, will decide if the shots are safe and effective for mass vaccination.

But President Donald Trump has repeatedly insisted that a vaccine could be

authorized before Election Day, even though top government scientists working on the administration's vaccine effort have stated that that timeline is very unlikely.

Last week seven former FDA commissioners blasted the administration for "undermining the credibility" of the FDA in a *Washington Post* op-ed and called for the release of the pending vaccine guidelines.

— AP

Pence vs Harris in V-P debate today

Washington, Oct. 6: Vice-President Mike Pence and his Democratic challenger Senator Kamala Harris are all set for a debate in the Sal Lake City of Utah on Wednesday. This will be for the first time in the American history that an Indian origin person will be taking up the podium for a vice-presidential debate.

Political analysts believe that an aggressive Harris, 55, will easily prevail over Pence, 61, during the only vice-presidential debate and help her running mate Joe Biden, 77, to widen his lead over Trump, 74. Biden, in the last few days, has widened his lead over Trump by double digit.

However, the Trump Campaign believes that Pence could come out with a stellar performance during the debate. The debate gains added significance, given the Covid-19 infecting Trump, triggering speculations that Pence may be taking over the reigns of the country temporarily. Also, many believe that Harris will be the real force in a Biden administration. Both Pence and Harris has said that they are well prepared for the debate, which would be moderated by journalist Susan Page, Washington Bureau Chief, *USA Today*.

According to media reports, plexiglass will be installed between Pence



Mike Pence



Kamala Harris

and Harris on the debate stage. "The debates are a crucial part of making our democracy work and I am honoured to participate," Page said in a statement. The debate will be divided into nine segments of approximately 10 minutes each, said the Commission on Presidential Debate.

The moderator will ask an opening question after which each candidate will have two minutes to respond.

— PTI

Lawyers: Trump can't use job as a shield in defamation suit

New York, Oct. 6: Lawyers for a woman who claims President Donald Trump raped her in a department store dressing room a quarter century ago said Monday that he can't hurl insults at her and then cite his job as reason to remove himself as a defendant in a defamation lawsuit, forcing taxpayers to pay up if he loses. "Only in a world gone mad could it somehow be presidential, not personal, for Trump to slander a woman who he sexually assaulted," lawyers wrote in a Manhattan federal court filing on behalf of E. Jean Carroll, a media figure who hosted a daily "Ask E. Jean" advice show in the mid-1990s, when she now says she encountered Trump at a luxury store.

"There is not a single person in the United States

— not the President and not anyone else — whose job description includes slandering women who they sexually assaulted," the lawyers asserted. The Justice Department last month tried to substitute the US as the defendant, saying courts have recognised that elected officials "act within the scope of their office or employment when speaking with the press, including with respect to personal matters".

The move would put taxpayers on the hook for any potential payout in a lawsuit seeking damages and a retraction of the statements. A message was left with a spokesperson for Trump lawyer Marc Kasowitz, along with the Justice Department.

Attorneys Roberta Kaplan and Joshua Matz, representing Carroll, asked a

judge to refuse the government's request to replace Trump as a defendant or force it to prove that defaming Carroll three times in June 2019 with a "slew of lies" was part of his job.

They wrote that the defamatory attacks included assertions that Carroll had falsely accused other men of rape, that she lied about him to advance a secret political conspiracy and sell books and that he had never met her even though they'd been photographed together. The lawyers noted that Trump also had said: "She's not my type."

And they said the move to substitute the US as defendant and move the case from state to federal court was part of a pattern of maneuvers designed to delay progression of the case.

— AP

Protests: Kyrgyz poll results nullified

Moscow, Oct. 6: The Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan declared the results of the weekend's parliamentary election invalid on Tuesday after mass protests erupted in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, and other cities, with opposition supporters seizing government buildings overnight and demanding a new election. Hundreds were injured, and one person died.

Members of several oppo-

sition parties announced plans to oust the president and form a new government. The decision to cancel the results of the vote was made in order to "prevent tension" in the country, head of the Commission Nurzhan Shaldabekova told the *Interfax* news agency.

Mass protests in the capital, Bishkek, and other cities broke out after the authorities announced early results of Sunday's

parliamentary election. They attributed the majority of votes to two parties with ties to the ruling elites, amid reports of vote buying and other violations. Supporters of a dozen opposition parties took to the streets on Monday, demanding the cancellation of the vote and a new election. Police moved to disperse the crowds with water cannons, tear gas and flashbang grenades. Some 590 people sus-

tained injuries in clashes with police, the Interfax news agency reported, citing Health Ministry.

The violent crackdown failed to curb the unrest, and during the night the protesters broke into the government complex that houses both the parliament and the presidential office. Interfax reported that opposition supporters also took control of Bishkek's City Hall.

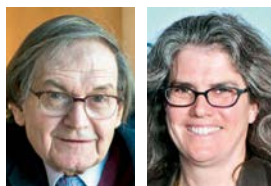
— AP

3 scientists share Nobel physics prize

Stockholm, Oct. 6: Three scientists won this year's Nobel Prize in physics Tuesday for advancing our understanding of black holes, the all-consuming monsters that lurk in the darkest parts of the universe. Briton Roger Penrose received half of this year's prize "for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity", the Nobel Committee said.

German Reinhard Genzel and American Andrea Ghez received the second half of the prize "for the discovery of a supermassive compact object at the center of our galaxy". The prize celebrates "one of the most exotic objects in the universe", black holes, which have become a staple of science fact and science fiction and where time seems to stand still, according to the committee. Black holes are perhaps the most mysterious and powerful objects in astronomy.

They are at the centre of every galaxy, and smaller ones are dotted around the universe. They are the ultimate cosmic dead end. "Black holes, because they are so hard to understand, is what makes them so appealing," Ghez



From top L: Roger Penrose, Andrea Ghez, Reinhard Genzel.

said. "I really think of science as a big, giant puzzle." Penrose proved with mathematics that the formation of black holes was possible, based heavily on Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity. "Einstein did not himself believe that black holes really exist, these super-heavyweight monsters that capture everything that enters them," the committee said. "Nothing can escape, not even light."

Martin Rees, the British astronomer royal, noted that Penrose triggered a "renaissance" in the study of relativity in the 1960s, and that, together with a young Stephen Hawking, he helped firm up evidence for the Big Bang and black holes.

— AP

Pompeo: China actions critical

Tokyo, Oct. 6: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Tuesday that China's increasingly assertive actions across the region make it more critical than ever for the four Indo-Pacific nations known as the Quad to cooperate to protect their partners and their people from Chinese "exploitation, corruption and coercion".

He made the remark at a meeting in Tokyo with the foreign ministers of Japan, India and Australia, who together make up the Quad. The talks were the group's first in-person since the Coronavirus pandemic began. Pompeo accused China of covering up the pandemic and worsening it, while threatening freedom, democracy and diversity in the region with its increasingly assertive actions.

"It is more critical now than ever that we collaborate to protect our people and partners from the Chinese Communist Party's exploitation, corruption and coercion," Pompeo said. "We see in the East and South China Seas. The Mekong, the Himalayas, the Taiwan Strait.

These are just a few examples." The talks come less than a month before the US presidential election and amid tensions between the Washington and Beijing over the virus, trade, technology, Hong Kong, Taiwan and human rights.

They follow a recent flareup in tensions between China and India over their disputed Himalayan border, while relations between Australia and China have also deteriorated in recent months. Japan, meanwhile, is concerned about China's claim to the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, called Diaoyu in China, in the East China Sea.

Japan also considers China's growing military activity to be a security threat. Japan's annual defence policy paper in July accused China of unilaterally changing the status quo in the South China Sea, where it has built and militarised man-made islands and is assertively pressing its claim to virtually all of the sea's key fisheries and waterways.

— AP

OPPN TO RALLY AGAINST PAK GOVT ON OCT. 16

Islamabad, Oct. 6: Pakistan's Opposition parties will hold their first combined rally against the Imran Khan-led government on October 16, weeks after launching an alliance to seek the "selected" prime minister's resignation and an end to the role of the powerful military in the country's politics. On September 20, the leaders of 11 major Opposition parties formed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) to launch a three-phased anti-government movement under an "action plan" starting with countrywide public meetings, protest demonstrations and rallies before a "decisive long march" towards Islamabad in Jan. 2021.

Pakistan's Opposition parties have agreed to hold their first anti-government rally on October 16 in Gujranwala city in Punjab province, Ahsan Iqbal said. The Opposition leaders had announced that they would use all political and democratic options, including no-confidence motions and mass resignations from Parliament.

— PTI

NEW SURVEY Minority and LGBTQ+ community women harassed because of their identities

58% young women face online harassment: Report

New Delhi, Oct. 6: A latest global survey carried out across 22 countries has revealed that girls and young women are one of the biggest targets of online violence and abuse.

Carried out by UK-based humanitarian organisation Plan International, the survey, titled "State of the World's Girls Report", involved 14,000 women aged 15-25 from 22 countries including India, Brazil, Nigeria, Spain, Australia, Japan, Thailand and the United States. Ahead of the International Day of

Girl Child 2020 on October 11, the survey highlighted that 58 per cent of the respondents accepted having faced online harassment or abuse on different social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok. The percentage of affected women was similar for different regions around the globe.

"In Europe 63 per cent of girls reported harassment, followed by 60 per cent of girls in Latin America, 58 per cent in the Asia-Pacific region, 54 per cent in Afri-

ca, and 52 per cent in North America," the report found. Ranging from threats of sexual violence to racist comments and stalking, online harassment of young women was directed in different manners. Of the girls who have been harassed, 47 per cent have been threatened with physical or sexual violence, while 59 per cent faced

abusive and insulting language online.

A large number of women from minority and LGBTQ+ communities said they were harassed because of their identities. "Of the girls who were harassed, 42 per cent of the girls who identified themselves as LGBTQ+; 14 per cent who self-identified as having a disability;

and 37 per cent who identified themselves as from an ethnic minority said they get harassed because of it," found the survey conducted from April 1 to May 5. Despite the anonymity that social media provides, girls and young women do know something about their harassers.

Harassment from strangers was more frequent and more frightening than from people they knew. "While 11 per cent of the surveyed girls were harassed by a current or former intimate partner, 21 per

cent pointed towards friends and 23 per cent knew their harassers from school or work," it said.

Thirty six per cent of the respondents said they were harassed by anonymous social media users. Whilst women were listed in the examples of known harassers, none of the girls interviewed suggested women were behind the unknown accounts, many directly mentioned they thought they were men.

— PTI

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,574.57	1.54
Nifty 50	11,662.40	1.38
S&P 500*	3,413.49	0.14
Dollar (₹)	73.46	-0.21
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.25	-0.37
Euro (₹)	86.47	-0.47
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,879▲454	0.87
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.18	0.89
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.026	0.022
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.778	0.016

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Govt removes export curbs on N-95 masks

The government has removed export curbs on N-95 masks, to promote outbound shipments of the product. "The export policy of N-95/FFP-2 masks or its equivalent is amended from restricted to free category, making all types of masks freely exportable," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification. In August, a monthly export quota of 50 lakh units was fixed for N-95/FFP2 masks.

Dinesh Kumar Khara appointed SBI chairman



The government appointed SBI's senior-most MD Dinesh Kumar Khara as the chairman of the country's largest lender. He replaces Rajnish Kumar, who completed his three-year term on Tuesday. The central government appo-ints Dinesh Kumar Khara as chairman of State Bank of India for a period of three years with effect from the date of his taking over charge of the post on or after October 7, a notification said.

PSR IT Services wins AWS Rising Star Partner award

Hyderabad-based PSR IT Services Pvt Ltd said it has won the 2020 Amazon Web Services (AWS) Rising Star Partner of the Year award in India. The award is given to an AWS Partner with the highest achievements in a year. PSR offers end-to-end cloud computing and virtualisation services with strategic consulting. The firm recently ventured into cloud services with offerings like advisory and deployment and migration.

Mahindra's Thar gets over 9,000 bookings

Mahindra & Mahindra said its all-new Thar SUV has crossed 9,000 units of bookings since its launch on Oct. 2. Only 18 cities have been covered in the first phase of markets where test drive and demo vehicles are available for the vehicle, M&M said. "Despite test drives being available in just 18 cities...we have received over 9,000 bookings," Veejay Nakra, CEO, automotive division, M&M, said.

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Govt fills vacancies; policy meet from today New members give MPC a dovish tilt

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, OCT. 6

After delaying the monetary policy by a week, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday announced that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) would be meeting from October 7 to 9. The announcement comes after the government finally appointed new external MPC members late Monday and completed the appointment process of the crucial panel that decides on interest rates.

The MPC is widely expected to keep rates unchanged due to elevated retail and rising core inflation. According to economists, the new external members are more neutral-to-dovish in their policy views, which could tilt the overall MPC in a dovish direction.

According to a government notification, Ashima Goyal, Shashanka Bhide and Jayanth R. Varma will be the three nominees on the committee. The three seats have been vacant since the term of the previous members Chetan Ghate, Pami Dua and Ravindra Dholakia ended on September 22.

All three members, who have been appointed for a period of four years i.e. till October 2024, will join RBI governor Shaktikanta Das, deputy governor Michael Patra and executive director Mridul Sagar on the committee. Following the appointment, Goyal, a member of



Ashima Goyal

Shashanka Bhide

Jayanth R. Varma

the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, has resigned from the post. A professor at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Goyal has written extensively on macro-economic issues. Even before the Covid-19 outbreak, Goyal had argued in December 2019 for the need to look through high inflation, describing the policy pause as "shocking". More recently, in August 2020, when the MPC voted for a pause in rates, she reiterated the need for more policy easing. Previously, she also advocated tweaking the reverse repo rate to nudge banks towards lending and has argued for the RBI to be a "fast acting lender of last resort" in credit markets to address financial stability.

Overall, her views place her firmly in the dovish camp. Varma, a professor of finance and accounting at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, specialises in financial markets and their regulation. He has written about the need for the RBI to embrace uncon-

ventional monetary policy and be the "market maker of first resort" in credit markets and "buyer of last resort" in systemically important markets.

Bhide is a senior advisor, National Council of Applied Economic Research, a think-tank and is a real economy specialist and has worked mostly on agriculture and rural economy, as well as poverty, among other areas. His views on monetary policy are not well-known, so could be neutral on issues, analysts said.

"We believe that the new external members are more neutral-to-dovish in their policy views, which will tilt the overall MPC in a dovish direction. However, we do not expect any immediate impact on policy, given the current high levels of inflation. We expect a dovish hold this week...Thereafter, we continue to expect a cumulative 50 basis point of rate cuts, as we expect growth to remain below trend and inflationary pressures to subside," said Sonal Varma, MD & chief economist for Nomura Holdings.

FM, Bhagwat play different tunes

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 6

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday vigorously defended the farm bills, saying those will reduce the levies paid by farmers at different levels while selling their produce. She also allayed fears about discontinuation of the minimum support price system, saying, "MSP was there, it is there and will always be there."

Ironically, her defence of the bills came on a day when RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said agriculture was never a subject of trade in India but was part of the culture and a "dharma".

Addressing the press in Chennai, Sitharaman said farmers are paying 8-8.5 per cent of their sale proceeds as taxes and other charges to the mandis, intermediaries and for inter-state sales. The new bills will bring down these significantly.

The bills, she said, will give farmers a higher price for their produce.

But Bhagwat seems to hold a contrary view. "Agriculture is not just to feed people and do business, agriculture is dharma for us," he said addressing an event at Kota. "In our ancient texts, it is linked to goddess Lakshmi...It is linked to our culture and sanskar, it is not just an avenue for employment...we have to establish agriculture as a way of life, then only agriculture will prosper," he said.

Q2 may see robust earnings, guidance by IT companies

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 6



As the September quarter earnings season kicks off with the IT companies, the positive rub off of the pandemic is likely to be the highlight in their management commentaries, along with robust revenue growth and deal wins, some of which are already disclosed.

Tata Consultancy Services will announce its second quarter financial results on Wednesday, October 7, followed by Infosys on October 14 and HCL Technologies on October 16.

Analysts expect companies to resume the practice of giving guidance from this quarter onwards, as business visibility has improved.

"We expect the management to guide for strong 2HFY21 (including seasonally weak 3QFY21) in terms of revenue growth on the back of a solid deal backlog. We also believe broad-based consensus among large-cap and mid-cap companies regarding acceleration in technology demand said," said Suyog Kulkarni, senior research analyst at Reliance Securities.

Fitch Ratings expects IT companies to guide for high single digit growth, helped by low costs, for the years 2021 and 2022. "We expect the Indian industry will continue to take advantage of its low-cost operations and maintain its strong foothold in the global IT sector. We forecast the industry's revenue to rise by a high single-digit percentage during 2021-2022, after a relatively flat year in 2020," Fitch Ratings said.

The pandemic disruption that impacted IT companies' operations in the April-June quarter has largely reduced. Kotak Securities analysts expect a robust September 2020 quarter for IT services companies, led by steady demand in large verticals and negligible supply-side impact—an aspect that impacted June 2020 quarter revenues and margins. "We expect YoY increase and stable margins on a sequential basis. The deal pipeline is strong across companies although accompanied by greater scrutiny in select large deals. In our view, IT services spending is set to accelerate, driving elevated growth for well-positioned service providers and multiple expansions," Kotak Securities said.

"Revenue growth will be led by two factors—reasonable demand trends across key large verticals, viz. financial services, telecom and insurance, and supply-side factors that impacted revenues in the June 2020 quarter are down to trickle—companies with large exposure to BPO and ERD were

impacted in the June 2020 quarter," Kotak Securities added.

"The impact of the coronavirus pandemic is likely to be only moderate and short term, as customers focus on transforming their businesses digitally, moving services and work platforms online, and minimise spending on legacy services. Most companies have reported robust deal wins that should support growth in 2021-2022, despite the revenue decline in 2Q20," Fitch Ratings said.

Research company Gartner forecasts that the Indian IT services market revenue will expand by a CAGR of 10 per cent and reach \$350 billion in 2025.

Fitch believes companies which focus on digital businesses, such as automation software and cloud-based service delivery, are likely to perform better than those with a focus on business process management (BPM) and legacy application and infrastructure services. Fitch expects the growth of IT spending in the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) vertical to recover, and that will spur the revenue growth of IT services firms in the medium term.

Gold imports plunge as arbitrageurs leave

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 6

Arbitrageurs having left the bullion market with falling prices, gold imports in September declined 59 per cent on a year-on-year basis and 81 per cent sequentially.

Gold imports in September at 11 tonnes fell 59 per cent against 27 tonnes in the same month last year. On a sequential basis, gold imports were down 81 per cent against 60 tonnes brought in during August.

August was an aberration in gold imports trends. Imports have been declining since the lockdown due to store closures and lack of end-consumer demand. In May the country had imported 1.4 tonnes and in June 11 tonnes. However, by July, the imports had moved up to 30 tonnes.

As the prices were rising in July and August, the market saw arbitrageurs and large investors getting active in the market. They have

been trying to use the arbitrage opportunity of import tariff rate, which is revised every 15 days, expecting that the prices will further move up.

This saw a surge in imports to 60 tonnes in August. However, gold prices fell and are now trading around \$1,918 levels, almost \$150 per ounce down from August's record high levels.

As the prices fell, arbitrageurs also left the bullion market. Many are still stuck with the gold imported at higher prices. This also saw gold being offered in the bullion market at a discount over the market rates.

With fewer takers for the yellow metal in the retail market, imports in September fell back to post-lockdown levels.

Industry insiders say the surge in August and the fall in September are clear evidence of arbitrageurs' presence. It also shows the disconnect between the fundamental market of gold buyers and those who use the metal for arbitrage.

16 phone projects cleared

New Delhi, Oct. 6: The government on Tuesday said it has cleared 16 proposals from domestic and international companies entailing investment of Rs 11,000 crore under the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme to manufacture mobile phones worth Rs 10.5 lakh crore over the next five years.

The companies include iPhone maker Apple's contract manufacturers Foxconn Hon Hai, Wistron and Pegatron, apart from Samsung and Rising Star.

Domestic companies whose proposals have been approved include Lava, Bhagwati (Micromax), Padget Electronics (Dixon Technologies), UTL Neolyncs and Optiemus.

"The Ministry of Electronics and Information and Technology has approved 16 eligible applicants under the PLI Scheme," an official statement said. This will generate more than 2 lakh direct jobs and nearly 6 lakh indirect employment opportunities, it said.



Move to shut old coal power plants

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH OCT. 6

The government is considering a proposal that may force some of its dirtiest coal plants to close, as policy makers increasingly focus on climate change.

The plan under consideration by the power ministry would cap plants' so-called heat rate, which is a measure of how much coal energy is needed to produce each unit of electricity, according to people with knowledge of the issue.

Power stations totalling 10 gigawatts have been



identified as breaching the proposed benchmark and more could be added, said the people, who asked not to be named as the discussions are ongoing and no

ment said. That would account for roughly 5 per cent of the coal power capacity in India, the world's second-biggest consumer of the fuel after China.

The power ministry wasn't immediately able to respond to a request for comment.

Efforts to close old coal plants have gathered pace amid rising outcry against air pollution. Besides, the shut downs can also boost the use of more efficient facilities that have remained underutilised for years.

—PTI

policy has been finalised. That would account for roughly 5 per cent of the coal power capacity in India, the world's second-biggest consumer of the fuel after China.

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Efforts to close old coal plants have gathered pace amid rising outcry against air pollution. Besides, the shut downs can also boost the use of more efficient facilities that have remained underutilised for years.

—Bloomberg

Services PMI jumps in Sept.

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 6

Services PMI rose in September, but still remained in the contraction zone as the job scenario is yet to see a major revival post-lockdown.

Despite the manufacturing Purchase Manager's Index registering growth in September, the Services PMI of IHS Markit remained contracted below 50 for the seventh straight month. The 50-mark separates expansion from contraction.

However, at 49.8, the index saw a recovery from 41.8 in August. From the lowest level of 5.40 in the month of April, Services PMI has been improving month-on-month. But the improvement has remained way behind the pick-up seen in manufacturing PMI. The manufacturing sector PMI released last week had touched an eight-and-a-half-year high supported by accelerated increases in new orders and production.

As per the survey, while participants were upbeat about the year-ahead outlook for business activity

for the first time since April, there were further reduction in new work and employment. Incoming new business fell moderately, however, and at the slowest rate since March. Input costs rose at a quicker pace, while the rate of charge inflation was broadly similar to August.

"The relaxation of lockdown rules in India helped the service sector move towards a recovery in September. Participants of the PMI survey signalled broadly stable business activity and a much softer decline in new work intakes," Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit, said in a release.

"Backlogs data suggest that hiring efforts will continue in the near term, so we could see a better employment trend in coming months provided that people are willing to leave their hometown in search of vacancies," De Lima said.

The lockdown saw massive job losses of 122 million across salaried class, small traders and wage earners, as per the data from CMIE.

DANONE TO SELL \$570M STAKE IN JAPAN'S YAKULT

CORINNE GRETLER OCT. 6

Danone is moving to sell the rest of its stake in Japan's Yakult Honsha Co, two years after it disposed of most of its holding. The maker of Activia yogurt is starting the sale of its remaining 6.61 per cent stake in the producer of probiotic drinks through an accelerated bookbuilding process, the company said in a statement on Tuesday. The stake is worth about 60 billion yen (\$570 million).

Danone sold about two-thirds of its Yakult stake in 2018 for about \$1.6 billion. The firms will continue commercial partnerships, including joint ventures in India and Vietnam.

—Bloomberg

A LONG SEASON US giants will clash for the first time with homegrown JioMart Amazon launches month-long festive sale

SARITHA RAI OCT. 6

Amazon.com Inc is extending its Diwali sales event to an entire month this year, hoping to outdo rival Walmart Inc's Flipkart in the race to unlock latent demand as India's shoppers emerge from drawn-out pandemic lockdowns.

Both Seattle-based Amazon and Flipkart are pulling out all the stops for the country's most important shopping season, which starts in mid-October. But unlike Flipkart, which is sticking to a six-day event, Amazon plans to keep the discounts going right up to the mid-November Diwali celebration, having seen a 60 per cent



surge in new merchants on its platform.

"This is a long season of festivities and our celebration has been designed to run through its entire duration," Manish Tiwary, vice president of Amazon India's consumer business, said in a virtual media event on Tuesday.

As the American rivalry heats up in the world's largest untapped e-commerce market, the two giants will clash for the first time with a new homegrown competitor, Reliance Industries Ltd's JioMart. The online shopping platform of India's largest conglomerate has already begun advertis-

ing discounts and deals for everything from groceries and fashion to home decor.

The US retail giants have been warring in the second-most populous country, half a world away, since Walmart acquired control of Flipkart Online Services for \$16 billion two years ago. Amazon has itself poured \$6.5 billion into its India operations. This year, both have invested in excess of \$1 billion to build up their capabilities and declared that they are making "long-term" bets on the country.

Meanwhile, Reliance has raised about \$24 billion from big-name US investors like Facebook Inc and Alphabet Inc's Google for its digital serv-

ices and retail units. To meet the demand spike, Amazon said it has created 100,000 seasonal jobs and plans to open 10 new fulfillment centres to warehouse products from its 650,000 sellers. Flipkart announced that it would add 70,000 positions.

Adding a new element this year, both have also recruited thousands of local stores to serve customers. Amazon said over 20,000 small stores have signed on to its Local Shops programme over five months to vend basics like household essentials and fresh flowers. Flipkart said it has enrolled over 50,000 retailers to deliver in more than 850 Indian cities.

—Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Afghan cricketer dies after mishap

Kabul: Afghanistan's top-order batsman Najeeb Tarakai has died of the injuries he sustained in a road accident last weekend, the country's Cricket Board (ACB) said on Tuesday. He was 29. The Afghanistan Cricket Board had on Saturday tweeted that Tarakai was "severely injured in a car accident" suffered on October 2 and had undergone a surgery. According to ACB, Tarakai, who was initially treated in Nangarhar, was expected to be shifted to Kabul or outside the country as soon as possible. Tarakai represented the national team in 12 T20Is and one ODI. The right-handed batsman made his international debut at the 2014 T20 World Cup in Bangladesh. — PTI

Saina, Kashyap no to Denmark Open

New Delhi: Star Indian badminton couple Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap on Tuesday pulled out of the Denmark Open Super 750 tournament, which will restart the international calendar at Odense from October 13. The BWF World Tour was shut down following the completion of the All England Championships in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "I withdrew from Denmark Open. I decided that I will start the season from January only with the Asian tour," Saina, the London Olympics bronze-medallist, said. Asked if she has any fitness concerns, Saina, a two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist, said: "There is no injury issue but if three tournaments were there it would have made sense... I thought directly from January, I can go for the Asian tour." — PTI

Djokovic in Last 8 as Kenin survives

Paris: Novak Djokovic defeated Karen Khachanov in straight sets to make the French Open quarter-finals for the 11th consecutive year on Monday while Sofia Kenin escaped trouble to also clinch a spot in the last eight. Top seed and 2016 champion Djokovic won 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 against Russian 15th seed Khachanov to draw level with Rafael Nadal on a record 14 quarter-final appearances in Paris. Stefanos Tsitsipas overcame an eye problem to become the first Greek man to reach the last eight of the French Open with a 6-3, 7-6 (11/9), 6-2 win over Grigor Dimitrov. Australian Open champion Kenin recovered from a set down against Fiona Ferro, the last home player left in the singles draw, to advance 2-6, 6-2, 6-1. — AFP

United sign Cavani, Arsenal add Parthey

London: Manchester United's search for a striker ended with the signing of veteran free agent striker Edinson Cavani, while Arsenal secured midfielder Thomas Parthey from Atletico Madrid before the summer transfer window closed. The 33-year-old Cavani is prolific scoring 200 goals in 301 games during seven years at Paris Saint-Germain but he was released at the end of his contract in June. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Kolkata Knight Riders 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

International Friendlies: Armenia vs Albania from 6.30 pm; Denmark vs Faroe Islands from 9.30 pm; Portugal vs Spain from 12.15 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2, HD; Cyprus vs Czech Republic from 9.30 pm; Germany vs Turkey from 12.15 am (Thursday) on Sony Six, HD; Austria vs Greece from 12.01 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 3, HD; France vs Ukraine from 12.40 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

WWE NXT

Bouts from 5.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

Published by K. Sudhakar for and on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited at Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002. and Printed by him at BFL Infotech Limited, C - 9, Sector - III, Noida - 201301. Editor - T. Venkatram Reddy, RNI Registration number 57290/94, Price in Nepal - Nep. Rs. 20.00 per copy.

Surya eclipses Royals

Yadav's unbeaten 79 leads Mumbai to 3rd straight win

SCORECARD

Mumbai Indians: Quinton de Kock c Buttler b Tyagi 23, Rohit Sharma c Tewatia b Gopal 35, Suryakumar Yadav (not out) 79, Ishan Kishan c Samson b Gopal 0, Krunal Pandya c Gopal b Archer 12, Hardik Pandya (not out) 30. **Extras:** (b-5 lb-2 w-5 nb-2) 14. **Total:** (for 4 wkts, in 20 overs) 193. **FoW:** 1-49, 2-88, 3-88, 4-117. **Bowling:** Ankit Rajpoot 3-0-42-0, Shreyas Gopal 4-0-28-2, Jofra Archer 4-0-34-1, Kartik Tyagi 4-0-36-1, Tom Curran 3-0-33-0, Rahul Tewatia 2-0-13-0.

Rajasthan Royals: Y Jaiswal c 'de Kock b Boult 0, J. Buttler c Pollard b Pattinson 70, S. Smith (c) c 'de Kock b Bumrah 6, S. Samson c Sharma b Boult 0, M. Lomror c sub (AS Roy) b Chahar 11, T. Curran c H. Pandya b Pollard 15, R. Tewatia b Bumrah 5, J. Archer c Pollard b Bumrah 24, S. Gopal c 'de Kock b Bumrah 1. A. Rajpoot c Sharma b Pattinson 2, Kartik Tyagi (not out) 0. **Extras:** (lb-1, w-1) 2. **Total:** (all out in 18.1 over) 136. **FoW:** 1-0, 2-7, 3-12, 4-42, 5-98, 6-108, 7-113, 8-115, 9-136, 10-136. **Bowling:** T. Boult 4-0-26-2, J. Bumrah 4-0-20-4, J. Pattinson 3.1-0-19-2, R. Chahar 3-0-24-1, K. Pandya 2-0-22-0, K. Pollard 2-0-24-1.

Earlier, Mumbai suffered a mini middle-order collapse after a good start before late-hitting from Yadav and Hardik Pandya (30 not out off 19) enabled the defending champions to amass 51 runs in the last three overs. — PTI

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	6	4	2	0	8	+1.488
Delhi Capitals	5	4	1	0	8	+1.060
Royal Challengers Bangalore	5	3	2	0	6	-1.355
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	2	2	0	4	-0.121
Chennai Super Kings	5	2	3	0	4	-0.342
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	2	3	0	4	-0.417
Rajasthan Royals	5	2	3	0	4	-0.826
Kings XI Punjab	5	1	4	0	2	+0.178

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

PACER PRITHVI WILL REPLACE INJURED BHUVI

Dubai, Oct. 6: Unheralded left-arm pacer Prithvi Raj Yarra was on Tuesday named as replacement for Sunrisers Hyderabad's senior pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL due to a thigh muscle injury. Bhuvneshwar sustained the injury while bowling the 19th over of Chennai Super Kings' innings during their October 2 clash in Dubai and hobbled out of the field after just one delivery.

Sunrisers confirmed on Tuesday that the India pacer will not take further part in the tournament and he will be replaced by the 22-year-old Prithvi Raj. "Bhuvneshwar Kumar is ruled out of #Dream11IPL 2020 due to injury. We wish him a speedy recovery! Prithvi Raj Yarra will replace Bhuvi for the remainder of the season," Hyderabad tweeted. — PTI

Ashwin serves first, last warning

Dubai, Oct. 6: India and Delhi Capitals off-spinner R. Ashwin says sparing Aaron Finch in the clash against Royal Challengers Bangalore was his first and last warning to batsmen backing up too far at the non-striker's end and he should not be blamed if he runs them out in future games.

Royal Challengers Bangalore opener Aaron Finch was caught short of the crease when he backed up too far during Monday's IPL game but Ashwin did not dislodge the bails and only gave a warning to the Australian.

The off-spinner, though, put out the warning on his twitter page. "Let's make it clear !! First and final warning for 2020. I am making it official and don't blame me later on. @RickyPonting #runout #nonstriker @AaronFinch5 and I are good buddies btw #IPL2020," Ashwin tweeted.



Delhi Capitals' R. Ashwin had the opportunity to 'Mankad' Aaron Finch of Royal Challengers Bangalore in the first over of their IPL match on Monday.

Ashwin had courted controversy when he ran out Jos Buttler during last year's IPL when the England batsman backed up too far at the non-striker's end. Several cricketers criticised him for not showing sportsman's spirit.

It became an issue before the start of this year's IPL when Delhi

Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting said he would not let Ashwin run out batsmen in that fashion after the veteran joined them having played for Kings XI Punjab, in 2019.

Ashwin and Ponting had a discussion on the issue after they arrived in the UAE.

Ponting was seen smil-



Well Finch was out. Ashwin is kind. I am sure Ponting is like "You should have got him out!" Rolling on the floor laughing #RCBvDC — VIKRAM SATHYAE, Stand-up comedian

I think India's tour of Australia would have begun right there had you mankanded him. — VARUN

A rule is a rule, if it can't be concrete then scrap (it). Covering in name of sportsmanship gives batsman an undue advantage of at least a metre. Ashwin is completely right at his end. — ANKUR AMBASTA

ing when Ashwin let Finch continue with a warning on Monday. — PTI



Suryakumar Yadav of Mumbai Indians plays a shot against Rajasthan Royals in an Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

— BCCI

Captain Karthik faces uphill task

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 6: Under-fire Kolkata Knight Riders captain Dinesh Karthik will have to figure out urgent fixes for his star-studded team's faltering performances when it takes on a resurgent Chennai Super Kings in the IPL here on Wednesday.

KKR acquired England's World Cup-winning skipper Eoin Morgan but the management reposed confidence in Karthik and asked him to lead the side.

However, a few of his baffling decisions apart from his own poor run with the bat — 37 runs from four matches — has put the Indian wicketkeeper-batsman in the line of fire. Promoting himself ahead of the star duo of Morgan and Andre Russell and preferring Sunil Narine in the opening slot over Big Bash sensation Tom Banton — who has been compared with Kevin Pietersen — has put 35-year-old Karthik in the dock.

Narine has looked woefully out of sorts, managing only 27 runs from four matches at 87.09 strike rate and it's high time that the team brings in the big-hitting English youngster.

KKR have plenty of resources in bowling but Karthik, it seems, has not been able to manage them well and their match against Delhi Capitals could be a case in point.

Chennai, on the other hand, rediscovered some of the form that made them three-time champions.

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 20
- Chennai: 13
- Kolkata: 7

MEETING IN 2019

- Chennai Super Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 7 wickets in Chennai.
- Chennai Super Kings defeated Kolkata Knight Riders by 5 wickets in Kolkata.

FOR THE RECORD

- Eoin Morgan made 44 off just 18 balls with one four and five sixes in the previous match against Delhi Capitals. It was his third successive 30+ score in this IPL.
- Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who smashed 299 sixes in 288 innings of 322 matches, needs just one six to become the 22nd batsman to complete a triple century of sixes in Twenty-20 cricket

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

After three losses on the trot, the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led side would look to make its ascent to top-four from being at the bottom.

Not known to tweak his side much, Dhoni persisted with Shane Watson and the Aussie veteran finally came to form with an unbeaten 83. — PTI

Kohli rues dropped catches after loss

Dubai, Oct. 6: Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli says dropping the sitters has hurt his team, which endured a 59-run drubbing at the hands of Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League.

All-rounder Marcus Stoinis was dropped on 30 by Yuzvendra Chahal, after which he went on to score a 26-ball 53 and power the Capitals to 196 for four at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Monday.

Kohli himself had dropped KL Rahul twice in RCB's loss to Kings XI Punjab earlier in the tournament. "Those important chances in between, we need to grab when the opportunity comes our way. It is not like we are dropping half chances, we are dropping sitters and those things hurt you," Kohli said after the match.

"We got into the game after the first six and then Stoinis batted really well in the end, we gave him a life, he took the game away from us," he added.

RCB have won three of five matches. However, both their losses have come while chasing big targets.

"I think it is about rectifying those small mistakes. The conversation around chasing is always to have a big partnership, with the dew setting in had we kept 7-8 wickets at the end of 10 overs, the game would have been on," Kohli said.

— PTI

SHAW HAPPY THAT CAPITALS PLAYING PERFECTLY TO PLAN

Dubai, Oct. 6: In-form opener Prithvi Shaw feels Delhi Capitals are doing everything "perfect" in all departments of the game after they climbed to the top of the points table with four wins out of five games in the ongoing IPL.

Shaw provided DC yet another blazing start against the Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday, smashing a quickfire 42 off 23 balls.

"It is a very good start to this tournament and we have to carry this momentum. Whatever we do in practice sessions, we just have to execute ourselves in the match and rightly, we are doing perfectly," the 20-year-old said.

"Everything is going perfect, you know, the batting, bowling — skills-wise we are going in the right direction, so really happy for the team.

"I think this is the momentum we have to carry throughout this tournament and this is the start we all wanted, especially in the powerplay, without giving any wicket away." — PTI

Win over KXIP shows 'Dad's Army' are back in business



Hemant Kenkre
Silly Point

When fans tuned in to watch the last of the double-headers at Dubai on Sunday evening, the show was billed as 'Daddy's Day Out'. The brilliance of young turks who have stormed the desert so far was totally eclipsed by two senior citizens (in cricketing terms): 36-year old Faf du Plessis and Shane Watson, the irrepressible Australian who is 39 years of age.

Chennai Super Kings (CSK), which was languishing right at the bottom of the standings of the

Indian Premier League (IPL) after four games, inched upwards after a resolute win over Kings XI Punjab (KKIP) in their fifth outing. Standing in the sixth place of the table, the team can now breathe easier as they ended their sequence of consecutive losses.

CSK has been in the news, in the recent past, for a variety of reasons. Right from the time their staff (and two players) got infected with Covid-19 and the pull-out of their star performers Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh, the

team's ability to perform at their standard best was being questioned. To cap it, their losses in the second till fourth match, made matters worse. Not to forget the critics favourite pastime of interrogating the batting position (and ability) of skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

That winning the match against KXIP was paramount in the minds of the CSK players would be an understatement. To get back on the right side of their followers and fans they needed to make the victory special. The collective experience of Watson and du Plessis ensured that once they had the game in their grasp, they held on to it and achieved a 10-wicket win with plenty to spare. Their undisturbed partnership of 181

runs happens to be the highest for their team and the second-highest while chasing a target in the IPL without losing a wicket.

Dhoni is not known to show any kind of emotions publicly, and Sunday night was no different. Post match viewing showed the seasoned campaigner merely scratching his stubble as the openers came back undefeated, with two valuable points in the kitty and tons of confidence. Whatever doubts that their fans may have had about CSK's campaign in the 13th edition of the IPL must have disappeared thanks to the resolute statement made by the two veterans.

While on veterans, team CSK has many key players that are pushing on the wrong side of the thirties

— South African Imran Tahir being 41-years of age. With captain Dhoni, Watson being one year away from reaching 40, du Plessis and Dwayne Bravo are 36 and Ambati Rayudu and Kedar Jadhav standing at 35-years, CSK is the oldest team with the average age passing 30 years. Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) stand a shade below 30 while the average age of all other teams are in the 26 to 28 years band.

Being over thirty has its privileges (in terms of experience) and its disadvantages especially when criticised for being slower than those younger.

Age, they say, is a mere number for those who believe in their own ability to deliver and not go by what outsiders have to say. Two instances from the

past are proof on how cricketers (and athletes) had responded to those who judged them based on their age.

Martina Navratilova, the evergreen Tennis superstar who, at age 46 years became the oldest player (of either sex) ever to win a grand slam title countered her critics by saying she was enjoying herself and "the tennis ball does not know the age of the players".

From an Indian perspective, those that followed the game in the early 80s would remember members of the Indian team sporting T-shirts with the letters 'OT' boldly printed on the front.

The two alphabets was their response to criticism that they had passed the age of thirty and were slow on the field of play.

'OT' or 'Over Thirty' became a proud badge of those seniors, a few of whom became part of India's historic 1983 World Cup win at Lord's a few years later. They made a statement, just the way Watson and du Plessis did on Sunday night with their awesome display.

While responding to barbs about CSK being labelled 'Dad's Army' last year, Dhoni had made it very clear that he had instructed his team to play within their limitations and not extend themselves on the field of play. Watching his team's last performance, it's obvious that they have their work plan cut out and are back in business. Season 2021 may well see a few players sporting 'OF' on their shirt fronts with pride for crossing forty.