

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
VIJAYAWADA | TUESDAY | 20 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 31.0°C
Min: 24.0°C
RH: 81%
Rainfall: 1.1mm

Forecast: Possible Light Rain and Humid.
Max/Min temp. 31/24 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+43,632)	(+542)
75,90,514	1,15,163

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+948)	(+4)
TS: 2,23,059	1,275
(+2,918)	(+24)
AP: 7,86,050	6,453

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,05,06,016

DEATHS

11,21,068

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES **213**

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Shuddha Chavithi till 11.23 am
Star: Jyeshtha till 2.14 am (Wednesday)
Varjyam: 9.06 am to 10.35 am
Durmuhurtam: 8.33 am to 9.19 am; 10.46 pm to 11.36 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HIJRI CALENDAR

Rabiul Awwal 2, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.35 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 4.45 pm
Maghrib: 5.56 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.01 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.43 PM
MOONRISE TODAY 9.31 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 9.58 PM

COUNTER POINT



Forget about your two-wheeler that has been washed away... we got two cars in its place!

IN BRIEF

Indian research critical: Gates

New Delhi: India's research and manufacturing will be critical to fighting Covid especially for making vaccines on a large scale, Bill Gates said on Monday. Addressing the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting 2020, Gates delved upon the difficulties in vaccine development and diagnostics of Covid-19. He said India is "very inspiring" as it has made huge strides in improving the health of its people. "India's research and manufacturing will be critical to fighting Covid especially when it comes to making vaccines at large scale," he said.



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Tejashwi woos Chirag Paswan ahead of polls



WORLD | 5

Dr Fauci was sure Trump will get Covid

SPORTS | 8

Super Over star Shami draws allround praise



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Sweet Dasara



Temple staff sort laddu offerings to be sold to devotees during Navratri festival, at the Kanaka Durga temple in Vijayawada on Monday. — PTI

Heavy rains forecast in AP coast

Low pressure forms over Bay of Bengal, to weaken by Oct. 25

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 19

A fresh low pressure has formed over east central Bay of Bengal and is likely to become well marked in another 72 hours.

It will remain in the Bay for another three days and slowly move towards north Odisha and West Bengal.

Reports from Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said it will become a depression on Tuesday and a deep depression the following day.

The system will take a curve and move toward Bangladesh and Assam, sparing the Odisha and Bengal coasts.

Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rains are likely over Odisha, coastal Andhra Pradesh and parts of Tamil Nadu. The system will weaken around October 25.

Reports said the continuous low pressure systems in the Bay of Bengal are

All gates of Tungabhadra dam open after big inflows

NAGABHUSHANAM HOSKOTE | DC ANANTAPUR, OCT. 19

All gates of Tungabhadra Dam have been opened following heavy inflows being received from upstream areas.

Gates had to be opened as Tungabhadra Reservoir has already reached its full storage level of 100.86 tmc feet, but is continuing to receive 20,607 cusecs inflows from Hampi in Bellary district, Raichur in Karnataka and Mantralayam in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh.

delaying the withdrawal of southwest monsoon and the onset of the northeast monsoon.

TB Dam superintendent engineer Venkata Ramana said water is being released towards High Level Main Canal as per allocations.

PABR (Penna Ahoobulum Balancing Reservoir) has reached a level of 2.87 tmc feet on Monday due to 1,411 cusecs of inflows being received from Tungabhadra. Similarly, Mid Pennar Reservoir has got 5 tmc feet to meet irrigation and drinking water needs of the district.

Srisaillam Reservoir continuing to receiving heavy inflows and is also releasing water downstream. On Monday, inflows into Srisaillam reservoir were 5,68,632 cusecs while outflows are 5,30,662 cusecs.

Handri Neeva Sujala Sravanthi and Galeru Nagari Sujala Sravanthi authorities are filling irrigation tanks and supplementary reservoirs in Kurnool, Anantapur, Kadapa and Chittoor districts. Jeedipalli and Gollapalli reservoirs are being filled with Krishna waters and connecting tanks are also receiving waters in southern parts of Anantapur district.

Andhra Pradesh from October 20. Last year, it touched the southern coasts on October 16.

GREEN | PRINT

Kadapa social forestry department uses Miyawaki method for afforestation

Mini forest raised in 9 months at varsity

NAGESWARA RAO BALLEDA | DC KADAPA, OCT. 19

A mini Miyawaki forest has been grown over 10 acres of land on the Yogi Vemana University campus in just nine months utilising funds from the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS).

With the initiative of Kadapa district social forestry department, saplings of red sandal, bus-

tard teak, Indian gooseberry, Arjuna (maddi), pongam, sacred fig, parijatam, Indian rosewood, pomegranate, guava, and so on, have grown very quickly, creating a pleasant atmosphere within the university.

The Miyawaki method of afforestation was introduced by the Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki to grow forests double quick. It is designed to prevent air pollution by growing more plants in a small area for generating oxy-

- THE AVERAGE number trees required per head in the world are 422.
- COUNTRY-WISE TREES PER HEAD ARE: India: 28, the UK: 47; China: 130, Ethiopia: 143, France: 203, the US: 699; Australia: 3,266; Greenland: 4,964.

gen. The plantation on Yogi Vemana University campus, stated to be the largest in the country, was taken up by its botany department in December 2019 in collaboration with the social forestry department.

The project benefited

labour too by wages amounting to ₹70 lakh under the MNREGS. Saplings have been planted over an extent of 10 acres with vermi compost, cow dung and urine mixture, cocoa peat, and organic fertilisers. A separate bore well was drilled specifically

to water this forest. It has delivered excellent results within just nine months.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, divisional forest officer (social forestry) the Bondala Nagaraju said that 1.06 lakh saplings have been planted by the department. The soil is salty. As many as 200 trenches were dug and 532 seedlings planted in each trench. In just nine months, the plants have grown into thick vegetation, where biodiversity is

thriving. Vice Chancellor Munagala Surya Kalavati said that the university has a total of two lakh plants including those cultivated under the Miyawaki method. This is providing plenty of oxygen for students on the campus. Madhusudan Reddy, an assistant professor with the university's botany department, said 25-30 varieties of plants have been planted here. Some of the plants have already grown to a height of 10 feet.

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

Pending announcement of a new sand policy shortly, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has ordered officials to curb graft in mining and transporting of sand, apart from ensuring that it is available to people at reasonable cost.

Reviewing the sand policy at his camp office on Monday with mines minister Peddyreddy Ramachandra Reddy, transport minister Perni Venkataramaiah, civil supplies minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao and

officials, the CM underlined that the new policy should be transparent and make sand available in each constituency.

He said that everyone should be able to pay the prescribed amount in the form of a challan and collect sand at a fixed rate. He asked sleuths of the Special Enforcement Bureau to be vigilant and curb sale of sand at exorbitant prices. He emphasised on cutting down the transport cost of sand as it was quite high. For the purpose, the quantum of sand being mined could be increased. Supply should be streamlined in a man-

ner that big companies, including central agencies, approach AP for their sand requirements. The CM said supply of sand should be subsidised for construction of government structures and for houses being built by weaker sections. If need be, coupons could be issued. He asked officials to find out within how many kilometres distance could sand be supplied at subsidised rates to villages located in the river basin. He told officials to collect opinions from all stakeholders before formulating the new sand policy for the state.

Nadda: CAA after pandemic is over

DC CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA, OCT. 19

Hoping for success in the Assembly polls in Bihar and West Bengal, BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda said on Monday that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) will be implemented soon

after Covid pandemic ends in India, blaming the ongoing pandemic for the delay in the CAA's implementation. Referring to the "Gorkhaland" separate statehood demand, Mr Nadda also made it clear the BJP was "determined and committed" to fulfil its promise.

HC SEEKS STEPS TO STOP COVID OVERCHARGING

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

The AP High Court directed the state government to submit details on steps taken up to curb overcharging of Coronavirus infected patients by some private hospitals in the state.

The court held a hearing on a petition filed by social activist, Thota Suresh Babu, alleging that some private hospitals were overcharging patients infected with Covid-19 on Monday.

The court asked the additional advocate general, Sudhakar Reddy, as to what measures were taken by the state government to control such malpractices. The additional AG replied by saying that the state government had initiated action against some private hospitals permitted to treat Covid-19 patients for overcharging them.

However, the HC told him to file a counter affidavit with details on measures taken by the state government to curb such malpractices in two weeks.

Sale of Andhra Pradesh handloom and handicraft products poised for a boost...National and international marketing opportunities on the anvil to bolster the income of weavers and handicraft workers

Apco Online Store & Lepakshi Web Store


Inauguration today

- Online sale of handloom products through APCO Online Store... Host of products including Mangalagiri, Venkatagiri and Dharmavaram cotton & silk sarees, dress materials and bed-sheets among others...
- Kondapalli, Etikoppaka, Udayagiri, Bobbili and many more handicrafts also to be sold through Lepakshi Web Store...

https://apcohandlooms.com

https://lepakshihandicrafts.com

Sri Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh,
to launch online stores today




OTHER STORIES

MINISTERS HAIL CM FOR APPOINTING BC CORPORATIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 19

MLAs and ministers of ruling party in East Godavari district have hailed the Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, on appointing BC corporations and executive bodies in the state.

They said that it is a historical event in the state and BCs would not forget Jagan as he is taking all steps for the welfare of the BCs. Agriculture minister, Kurasala Kannababu, social welfare minister, Pinepe Viswaroop, BC welfare minister, Chelluboyina Srinivasa Venugopala Krishna, Kakinada MP, Vanga Gita, MLC, Pandula Ravindra Babu, MLAs, Parvatha Purna Chandra Prasad, Jakkampudi Raja, Dwarampudi Chandrasekhara Reddy, Ponnada Satish, Rapaka Vara Prasad, Kondeti Chittibabu and others garlanded and performed abhishekams with milk to the statues of Dr B. R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and former Chief Minister, Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy.

They commended Jagan for respecting the BCs.

Rajahmundry MP, M. Bharat, said that Jagan has understood the problems of BCs and he wants to increase their living standards.

JAGAN WILL BE IN HEARTS OF BCs, SAYS SPEAKER

DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIKAKULAM, OCT. 19

Continuing to express his loyalty to Jagan, speaker Tammineni Sitaram said Jagan will live in the hearts of backward communities for years for the service he has been doing for the community.

"I belong to the most backward class and Jagan put me in the highest position in the state. Similarly, he gave importance to 139 backward communities and created 56 corporations and reserved 50 per cent of the chairperson posts to women," Sitaram said, adding that October 18 was an historic day for the BCs and should be written in gold letters.

Several leaders who were present at the meeting said Jagan gave good representation to the BCs in the cabinet and created five BC deputy chief ministers. Rs 33,500 crore has been transferred to beneficiaries in 16 months in office, benefitting 2.71, 37, 253 people under various schemes.

There were celebrations all over the north coastal Andhra over the announcement of corporations and their heads. Nominated persons offered floral tributes to the late Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy and Jagan thanking them for creating the new bodies.

BRAHMINS UPSET WITH TELUGU DESAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, OCT. 19

Many Brahmin leaders lamented the lack of minimum representation of the Brahmin community in the Telugu Desam party's national working committee and the party politburo.

This is being seen as proof that the attitude of the Telugu Desam towards Brahmins has not changed at all. Leaders working to strengthen the party at the national level are questioning whether any Brahmins are visible. Telugu Desam, which has set up a jumbo politburo with about 25 members, is being questioned for ignoring Brahmins, even though it gives priority to almost all social groups.

What was the secret behind the TD party giving priority to Arya Vysyas and Muslims and not giving priority to Brahmins, asked Brahmin leaders. Competent leaders among the Brahmins in the TD party say that despite their many hardships and losses for the party, the stepfatherly treatment of them is hurtful.

With the sole exception being that the Brahmin corporation was set up for the first time in the state of Andhra Pradesh to this day, the vast majority of the Brahmin community thinks the time is near when a tough decision has to be taken to change the mindset of the party supremo, who is thinking of restricting the Brahmins to just a few small posts in the state committee.

The future will determine whether those who think and make decisions will perform pujas, homas and yajnas to bring back those who insult them to power.

Fear of outbreak of diseases worries people

Residents living in flooded areas urge authorities to pipe out the water from the colonies immediately

VADREVU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, OCT. 19

The danger of outbreak of diseases is worrying those living in submerged residential colonies in the city and adjoining villages in Kakinada Rural, Pedapudi, Pithapuram, Gollaprolu and Peddapuram mandals in East Godavari district and Akiveedu and Attili mandals in West Godavari district.

On Sunday evening, both the Godavari districts experienced heavy rains.

People of residential colonies say that the stench from the stagnated water is nauseating and they are unable to reside there. The water entered their houses and has remained stagnant. Many government and private employees purchased house-sites and built houses in adjoining villages like Indrapalem, Kovvada, Chidiga and other areas as they were available at throwaway prices a decade back.

Some government employees are sleeping in their offices and their family members have gone to their relatives' houses.

"We are engaging tractors to go to our offices. We are not able to reside there due to the stinking smell as waters have mingled with drain water. To make matters worse, snakes and other poisonous insects are entering our houses," said A. Appa Rao of Chidiga colony.

He said that the ground-water has also become discoloured. He urged authorities to pipe out the water from the colonies immediately. In Kakinada, SDRF and NDRF teams are using boats to take people to safer areas.

Kakinada Municipal Corporation Commissioner Swapnil Dinkar Pundkar said that the stagnated water is being piped out with motors.

East Godavari district medical and health officer K.V.S. Gowriswara Rao said that medical and health personnel, including ANMs, are collecting data of the health issues.

He said that there was a possibility of an outbreak of malaria, dengue and typhoid. He said that necessary drugs have been supplied to all Primary Health Centres. He said that steps like spreading anti-larva fogging are being taken.

Kakinada Municipal Commissioner Swapnil Dinkar Pundkar said that 'boat ambulances' have been arranged for giving medical treatment to the victims, if necessary.

He said that 14 rehabilitation centres have been arranged for the victims in Kakinada City.



ATCHANNAIDU NAMED AP TD CHIEF

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

Telugu Desam boss N. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday appointed senior leader and MLA K. Atchannaaidu as the party's AP president and also members for national committee and for the party politburo. He appointed 25 members for the politburo in AP and 27 members for the party's national panel.

Accordingly, Prathibha Bharathi, Galla Aruna Kumari, D.K. Sathya Prabha, Kotla Suryaprakash Reddy, Mecha Nagewara Rao, Chiluvuru Kasinath were appointed as national vice-presidents. Nara Lokesh, Varla Ramaiah, Ramamohan Naidu, Nirmala Ramanaidu, Beeda Ravichandra, Kothakota Dayakar Reddy, Bikkani Narasimulu and Kambampati Ramamohan will be the national general secretaries.

Speaking to media persons, Mr Atchannaaidu vowed to make all-out efforts to get the party back to power in the next elections.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy watching flood-affected areas of Krishna, Guntur districts through an aerial survey on Monday.

8 SPEED BOATS, 30 SWIMMERS SENT TO TS

Vijayawada: Following a request from the Telangana state government for speed boats to be used for relief operations in flood-hit Hyderabad, CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy directed the State Disaster Management Authority to send the requirements immediately. The authorities are sending eight speed boats, five from the AP State Disaster Management Authority and three from the tourism department and also 30 master swimmers and adequate number of life jackets to Hyderabad.

CM takes up aerial survey of flood-affected areas

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

Chief Minister Y.S. Jaganmohan has carried out an aerial survey to get first hand information on extent of damages to the crops in rain/flood affected areas falling under Krishna and Guntur districts on Monday.

The CM inspected flood hit areas and inundated agriculture and horticulture crops located in Nandigama, Avanigadda, Penamaluru, Mylavaram,

Thadikonda and other Assembly segments in addition to the flood hit island villages and areas located along the Krishna river course.

The CM directed the officials to enumerate the extent of crop loss in rain/flood affected areas and provide input subsidy to the affected farmers expeditiously.

The Chief Minister said that if the input subsidy was given to the farmers early, it would help the farmers to raise crops

during rabi season. The Chief Minister asked the officials to find out extent of damage or loss to crops and houses in other districts in addition to loss of livestock and directed them to provide relief to the affected persons immediately.

The state government was providing five varieties of essential commodities free of cost to the flood affected people in East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts.



Due to heavy rains to Bhupathipalem reservoir at Rampachodavara and landslides disrupted the traffic between Rampachodavaram and Bhadrachalam in EG district.

Untrained staff manned Bangla vessel

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 19

Though depression and high velocity winds are attributed to the snapping of anchorage and drifting

the Bangladesh vessel *MV Maa* to run aground in Visakhapatnam beach, many sources close to the incident said the vessel had untrained captain and the sailors.

The captain and the sailors never sailed in the sea as per our assessment. They seem to be having experience in sailing in inland water bodies and rivers. They might not

have handled the vessel properly at the time of crisis, which led to losing the anchorage," a senior official from the Port said.

However, the hull of the vessel is intact.

APSPDCL set to launch optimised power distribution, transmission

PATHRI
RAJASEKHAR | DC
NELLORE, OCT. 19

AP Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (APSPDCL) is all set to launch an optimised power distribution and transmission system known as 'Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition' (Scada) in selected cities in its operational area to minimise the incidence of power outages by properly monitoring and controlling critical electrical equipment in the grid.

According to sources in APSPDCL, work related to the system is nearing completion in Vijayawada and Guntur districts and Nellore district is next in the line.

Scada is a computer-based software programme that is fed with data collected from generation, substation, transmission and distribution systems through a com-

State prohibits strike in power companies

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

The state government has imposed a ban on strikes in all the services falling under the Transmission of Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Limited and in the three distribution companies for six months with immediate effect.

The state government issued GO RT No. 83 on Monday declaring that any service falling under

AP Transco, APEPDCL, APSPDCL and APCPDCL, was considered as an essential service as defined under the provisions of AP Essential Services Maintenance Act, 1971. Accordingly, the state government prohibited striking work in the public interest for six months. Earlier, the state government prohibited strikes in the same institutions for a period of six months from April 16 to October 15.

influence and errors and assistance to operators for faster decision-making, apart from automated meter reading.

APSPDCL officials said that the Scada project is part of the integrated power development scheme (IPDS) formerly under the restructured accelerated power development reforms programme (R-APDRP) by the centre aimed at covering urban areas with a population more than 30,000.

Executive engineer at APSPDCL, Nellore City, P. Srihari Rao, said Scada allows power to be supplied to consumers from alternative sources when the main source of supply fails. The system isolates the problem area and restores power supply to the rest of the area within no time in case of any outage in the city, he added.

He said that Scada will be implemented in 13 sub-stations in SPSR Nellore district in the first phase.

TD demands 25k per acre relief to farmers

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 19

Telugu Desam national general secretary, Nara Lokesh, has demanded that the state government pay ₹25,000 per acre as crop compensation to every farmer and the Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy should get down on the ground and speak with the farmers to understand their problems instead of roaming in helicopters supposedly conducting aerial surveys.

Visiting rain-hit farmers in Jaggampeta, Yerravaram and other areas in Prathipadu constituency, EBC Colony at Gollaprolu, Uppadain U. Kothapalli mandal and other areas, Mr Lokesh enquired about flood loss from the farmers. He told the reporters at EBC Colony in Gollaprolu that ruling party MLAs and ministers were mocking him always due to lack of power, but he doesn't know ego in power. The floods were continuing in the state for the past three months but the government did not bother about it.

As many as 750 farmers died in the past 17 months, of which 64 were in EG which agriculture

minister, Kurasala Kannababu, represents, said Lokesh, adding that the YSRC government has divided the farmers by caste and OC farmers have not got any scheme.

When the TD was trying to know and highlight the farmers' issues, the ruling party was harassing them, alleged Lokesh, stating said that the government could pay only ₹25 crore to the farmers since January 2020. He said that Jagan should know that it will not benefit the farmers.

Stating that when the TD was in power, the then Opposition party demanded ₹5,000 for each farmer, now Jagan is giving only ₹500, Lokesh made it clear that the TD would not keep silent if the electricity meters are fixed to the farm power connection. He said that the TD released funds for modernisation of the Suddagadda reservoir and the present government cancelled the tenders on the pretext of reverse tendering.

Claiming that the TD completed 70 per cent of work on the Polavaram project, Lokesh said now even two per cent of the work has not been completed.

Lokesh slandering YSRC, says Kannababu

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 19

Agriculture minister, Kurasala Kannababu, strongly condemned the comments of Telugu Desam general secretary, N. Lokesh, on the YSRC government.

He lashed out at Lokesh and party leader N. Chandrababu Naidu, telling reporters here on Monday evening that Lokesh was making false statements about the ruling party's activities.

When Naidu was chief minister, the farmers were cheated in the name of loan waiver scheme, alleged Kannababu, adding that Lokesh was being recognised only as Naidu's son but did not have any qualities of his

own. He said that the TD has already experienced the curse of the farmers.

Mocking Lokesh by saying that TD was recognising only the farmers at Amaravati, but not other parts of the state, Kannababu said that TD was the cause for inundation of the agricultural fields and other colonies due to the Yeleru project. He said that if the TD would have modernised the Yeleru reservoir instead of Purushothapatnam and Pattiseema lift irrigation schemes, the people and the farmers would not have faced the present problems.

Explaining the flood situation, Kannababu said that due to heavy rains for

the past three months, in particular in Rayalaseema, meant that all irrigation projects are full to the brim.

1,07,700 acres of crops have been damaged in Visakhapatnam, Guntur, East and West Godavari districts and 2,974 fish ponds have incurred great losses. 40 colonies in Kakinada Rural mandal have been inundated and ₹42 crore were sanctioned to the horticulture department to help the farmers, said Kannababu, explaining the rationale behind Jagan's aerial survey.

The government had released ₹125 crore to the farmers last year as input subsidy, but Lokesh was claiming it was only ₹25 crore, railed Kannababu.

Tender documents of 3 projects sent for judicial preview

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

As the state government is taking up development of three major projects shortly, their tender documents were submitted for judicial preview to ensure transparency in their execution.

The first major project of Ramayapatnam port located in Prakasam district will be taken up for development under Land Lord model. The revised estimated contract value is about ₹2,646.84 crore for construction of 5.05 km length of break waters, four multi-purpose berths, dredging quantity of about 15.52 million cubic meters and development of internal and external infrastructure with construction period fixed for 36 months under phase-I.

The second major project of Bhavanapadu port located in Srikakulam district will also be taken up under Land Lord model. The estimated contract value is about Rs 2,573.15 crore for construction of 2.2 km length of break waters, four multi-purpose berths, dredging quantity of about 18.1 million cubic metres and development of internal and external

infrastructure with construction period for 36 months under phase-I.

The third major project involves development of four fishing harbours at Juvvaladinne in Nellore district, Nizampatnam in Guntur district, Machilipatnam in Krishna district and at Uppada in East Godavari district. The estimated contract value is about Rs 1,205.77 crore for major components like break water, quays, dredging reclamation, onshore facilities, buildings, road, water supply, power supply, handling system, mobile equipment, navigational aids and dock facilities to accommodate a total of 5,900 motorised or mechanised fishing and deep-sea vessels. The construction period has been fixed for 24 months.

Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board chief executive officer N.P. Ramakrishna Reddy in a release on Monday stated that their tender documents were uploaded on websites of judicial preview and also on AP Maritime Board for the general public and the interested parties to offer their comments or suggestions within seven working days through the website.

IN BRIEF

WOMAN ENDS
LIFE OVER TIFF
WITH HUSBANDDC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 19

A 19-year-old married woman Yerra Padmavathi hanged herself to a ceiling fan at Hussainpuram in her house, agitated over the fact that her husband had not taken her for shopping at Kakinada. Samalkot Sub-Inspector V.L.K.L.Sumanth said that Padmavathi of Rajahmundry married Venkatesh of Hussainpuram of Samalkot mandal, who is her maternal uncle's son five months back. She is three month old pregnant.

When her husband Venkatesh and his mother wanted to go for shopping at Kakinada, she also told her husband that she would come along with them. But, the husband told her that she should not strain herself due to her pregnancy.

Expressing anger over it, she took the extreme step. The Sub-Inspector said that the parents of the deceased told that their daughter was sensitive and since her childhood was in the habit of injuring herself to threaten them, if she could not get what she wanted.

MAN STABS
WOMAN,
SNATCHES CHAINDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 19

An unidentified man in his mid-thirties robbed a gold chain from a woman after injuring her with a kitchen knife in Gajuwaka, under New Port police station limits.

The police said the man came on a motorcycle in the early hours of Monday and bought a cigarette from a pan shop owned by one Satya Gita. While she was busy setting her shop, the man barged inside the shop and tried to snatch her one and half tola of gold chain. Gita grabbed his neck and raised the alarm. The unidentified man, in a bid to free himself, took a kitchen knife found in the shop and slashed her arm in two places causing injuries. She let him go due to the bleeding, and the man overpowered her and snatched the chain. He fled on a motorcycle. The locals rushed her to a nearby hospital for first aid and informed the police. The crime wing of police began checking the CCTV footage of nearby places. The victim told the police that the man came to her shop twice in the past.

STOLEN TRUCK
RECOVERED,
ONE ARRESTEDDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 19

The city crime police arrested one person and recovered the lorry which he stole from Vijayawada. Deputy commissioner of police (crime) V. Suresh Babu said one J. Anjibabu of Vijayawada lodged a complaint that his truck was stolen on October 17. He told the police that when he was at the transport agent's place in Vijayawada, three people came to him and wanted to book poultry feed load for Anandapuram Visakhapatnam. After negotiations, they had lunch and took away the lorry when Anjibabu went to the toilet. The police after a search found the accused K. Anil Kumar, a resident of Hanuman Junction, Krishna district, in Tagarapavalasa in Visakhapatnam along with the lorry on Monday morning.

AP records 2,918 Covid cases

Out of 71,27,533 samples tested so far, 7,44,532 patients have been discharged

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

Andhra Pradesh has registered the lowest daily Covid-19 positive cases of 2,918, scaling up the overall tally to 7,86,050 cases, apart from 24 deaths during the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 6,453.

State health authorities released their Coronavirus bulletin on Monday reporting that out of 61,330 samples tested during the last 24 hours, 2,918 individuals have tested positive. With this, out of the total of 71,27,533 samples tested so far in the state, 7,44,532 patients have been discharged after recovery, while 35,065 patients are still active with the virus and undergoing treatment.

Among the daily Covid-19 confirmed cases, East Godavari registered the highest 468 patients, followed by 447 in West Godavari, 380 in Chittoor, 333 in Guntur, 308 in Prakasam, 218 in Anantapur, 155 in Kadapa, 143 in Srikakulam, 120 in Visakhapatnam, 119 in Nellore, 117 in Krishna, 66 in Kurnool and 44 in Vizianagaram.

East Godavari continues to top the state by recording 1,10,560 cumulative confirmed Coronavirus cases, followed by 79,578 in West Godavari, 74,035 in Chittoor, 62,687 in Anantapur, 62,681 in Guntur, 58,848 in Kurnool, 58,244 in Nellore, 56,890 in Prakasam, 53,926 in Visakhapatnam, 50,018 in Kadapa, 42,749 in Srikakulam, 38,224 in Vizianagaram, 34,715 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery among Covid-19 patients has been good in East Godavari with 1,03,836 persons recovering, followed by 74,991 recoveries in West Godavari, 68,830 in Chittoor, 60,274 in Anantapur, 58,223 in Guntur, 57,450 in Kurnool, 56,757 in



Policemen not allowed the Kids inside the Kanakadurga temple atop Indrakeeladri for Goddess Kanakadurga in Dasara celebrations due to Covid-19 restrictions in Vijayawada on Monday. — C. NARAYANA RAO

‘State geared up to face second wave of Covid’

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

Deputy Chief Minister and minister for health Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas announced that the state government was fully geared up to face any second wave of Covid-19 in the state.

The Dy CM held a video conference with joint collectors and officials from the health department from Secretariat on Monday to review on prevalence and measures to be taken to curb its spread further in the state.

He said that the Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy was keeping close watch on measures being taken up to

curb the spread of Coronavirus in the state and attributed credit to him for his personal supervision on the infection and the directions being given to control it.

The DyCM appreciated all the personnel from various departments for working hard to contain the spread of the Covid-19 in the state and said that AP carried out more number of Covid-19 tests than other states in the country.

He said the state government was providing all requisite help to the Covid-19 infected patients to get medical care.

On preparedness of the state to face second wave of Covid-19, the Dy CM asked all the people to

continue to maintain all precautionary measures by wearing face masks, maintaining social distancing and washing hands at regular intervals to avoid getting infected with the virus.

Turning his attention on incessant rains affecting several parts in the state, the Dy CM called for steps to contain spread of seasonal fevers among the people and also laid stress for maintenance of sanitation and keeping stocks of medicines available for supply to the people.

He also instructed the officials to conduct medical camps to provide medical and health care to the rain-affected people in the state.

countries.

Among the daily deaths of Coronavirus patients, Chittoor, Guntur,

Krishna and Visakhapatnam registered four deaths each, followed by three in Kadapa, two in East Godavari and one each in Nellore, Prakasam and West Godavari districts. Among cumulative death of Covid-19 infected patients, Chittoor topped with 745 overall deaths, followed by 588 each in East Godavari and Guntur, 556 in Prakasam, 537 in Anantapur, 528 in Krishna, 493 in Visakhapatnam, 482 in West Godavari, 480 in Kurnool, 479 in Nellore, 415 in Kadapa, 336 in Srikakulam and 226 in Vizianagaram.

State health authorities have discharged 4,303 Covid-19 patients after recovery from various hospitals in the state during the last 24 hours.

AP has conducted Coronavirus tests on 1,33,474 samples per one million population, registering a Covid-19 positive rate of 11.03, while Maharashtra tested 65,168 samples with a positive rate of 19.60 and Telangana tested 97,468 samples with a positive rate of 5.80

POLICE FOILS
MURDER PLAN,
ARRESTS 10AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 19

Tirupati urban police on Monday foiled a murder plan, arresting 10 persons, including a minor, and seized weapons from their possession.

The accused were identified as Nara Venugopal, J.M. Anil Kumar, K. Venkata Ramana, T. Kishore, P. Vinod Kumar, T. Venkatesh, N. Prasad, T. Mohan Krishna, K. Rajesh and the minor.

Superintendent of police A. Ramesh Reddy told mediapersons here on Monday that following double murders involving two rival gangs from Giripuram area in the city in December 2019 and September 2020, one of the gangs hatched a plan to eliminate one Dasari Mallikarjuna. He is the accused number two in the murder case of rowdy sheeter Pasupuleti Murali.

Revenge killings in the temple city's Giripuram area started in the year 2017, when Murali along with his friends murdered another rowdy sheeter, Sake Bhargav, at Parasala Street on December 2, 2017. To avenge Bhargav's death, his friends, including Raghavan Dinesh and Dasari Mallikarjun, along with others, murdered the primary accused, Murali, near Korlagunta on December 21, 2019.

To avenge Murali's death, his brother's son, Pasupuleti Vinay, and four of his friends, hacked Raghavan Dinesh to death near his house on September 21, 2020.

Subsequently, Vinay, who is currently behind the bars, hatched a conspiracy to kill Dasari Mallikarjun and asked his friend, Nara Venugopal, to execute the plan to eliminate him.

AP trying to cut
down rentals of
liquor outletsSAMPAT G. SAMRITAN I
DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 19

The funds-starved AP government is cutting down monthly rentals on liquor retail outlets by negotiating with building owners to save money.

The state has 2,934 government-run retail liquor outlets. The government in a hurry to establish government-run liquor outlets earlier had hired the buildings for a period of one year and fixed monthly rentals at as high as ₹3 lakh each in metros like Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and other places in the state.

A good number of liquor shops that were in private hands were converted into government outlets while some buildings were taken free of cost.

As the prices of top brands of liquor and beer rose and additional taxes were imposed, the dip in sales is causing a huge revenue loss to the state exchequer.

While liquor sales used to be ₹54 crore a day on average earlier, it has come down to ₹44 crore per day.

This has forced the state government to lower the rentals on hired buildings to run liquor outlets so that the burden of paying hefty rentals will be eased.

District-level committees, headed by the joint collector, had fixed the monthly rentals for hired premises to run retail liquor outlets earlier.

The task to renegotiate with building owners to reduce the rentals has been entrusted to the same committees, which are to take into consideration the prevailing rentals for private buildings.

Sources say the authorities are facing stiff resistance from a section of building owners on lowering the rentals. Some owners say that the annual

LIQUOR DATA

■ Sale proceeds of IML and Beer in AP

■ April-Sept. 2019-20 April-Sept. 20-21

■ IML: 166 lakh cases	■ Beer: 159.36 lakh cases
66.17 lakh cases	16.93 lakh cases

■ Value: ₹10,272 crore ₹7,758 crore

Note: Liquor retail outlets were closed for nearly two months from March 23 to May 4 due to the lockdown.

agreement plan specifies a hike in the rental by five per cent but the authorities are asking them to cut it down. They are asking the authorities from AP State Beverages Corporation Limited (APSBCL) to vacate their premises so that they can rent them out at higher rates.

APSBCL managing director D. Vasudeva Reddy said, "We are making efforts to cut down monthly rentals for buildings accommodating our retail liquor outlets as the rentals fixed earlier were a bit high. We are expecting to reduce rentals by 10 per cent on an average. Some owners are asking us to vacate the premises and we are looking for alternate buildings."

APSBCL authorities maintain that as the state government is losing revenue due to smuggling of liquor from neighbouring states like Telangana. The state government is contemplating to address the issue by reducing the price of premium brands to ensure that they are just a little higher than those available in neighbouring states.

8 HELD AND 52 KGS GANJA SEIZED

Kadapa: The Rajampet Police held eight accused and seized 52 kg of Ganja worth more than ₹1 crore. The district superintendent

of police Karur Karunapathi Nagendra Kumar Anburajan on Monday and revealed the details.

TD SLAMS YSRC
LEADERS FOR
OBJECTIONABLE
LANGUAGEDC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, OCT. 19

TD district unit president and MLC, Beeda Ravichandra, found fault with the YSRC Congress district convener, Kakani Govardhan Reddy, and his followers for using objectionable language against TD leaders, especially party senior leader and former minister, Somireddy Chandra-mohan Reddy.

Speaking to mediapersons at the TD office here on Monday, along with former mayor of Nellore and TD Nellore parliament segment in-charge, A.K. Abdul Aziz, Ravichandra spoke of charges levelled by YSRC leaders against Chandra-mohan Reddy over irregularities in the construction of an ash pond at Genco power plant near Krishnapatnam. "The ash pond work in Genco first phase were allotted to the Tatas during the YSR regime," said Ravichandra.

Lord Malayappa rides
Kalpavruksha VahanamDC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, OCT. 19

On the fourth day of Srivari Navaratri Brahmotsavams, Lord Malayappa enthralled the devotees on the Kalpavruksha Vahanam in Rajamannar alankaram. Given the Covid-19 restrictions, the processional idols of Lord Malayappa and his two divine consorts were mounted atop the golden Kalpavruksha vahanam placed at the Kalyana Mandapam inside the Srivari temple in Tirumala on Monday.

According to Hindu mythology, the Kalpavruksha Vahanam is embedded with divine Kalpavruksha, Kamadhenu and Chintamani, known for granting boons to fulfil the devotees' worldly desires. Srimad Bhagavatam says that all those who took shelter under Kalpavruksha became prosperous and legends also say that the tree of boons (Kalpavriksha) surfaced during the



Lord Malayappa enthralled the devotees on the Kalpavruksha Vahanam in Tirumala on Monday.

churning of 'Ksheera Sagaram' (milky ocean). Later in the night, Lord Venkateshwara blessed devotees on

Sarva Bhoopala Vahanam. This vahanam seva signifies that Venkateswara Swamy is the Lord of Lords.

HELPING HAND

Collector initiated the trust to assist farmers in transport

Kisan Trust to assist Anantapur farmers

HOSKOTE
NAGABHUSHANAM | DC
ANANTAPUR, OCT. 19

Kisan Rail Trust, an exclusive service-oriented trust to assist farmers from the drought-hit Anantapur district is on wheels. The Trust is planning to pay transport fares for farmers to Delhi to avoid burden on them and to get attractive prices in the Delhi market.

The Railways introduced the second Kisan train and the first in South India to operate from Anantapur to Delhi market. Earlier, the train operated twice from

Anantapur and third scheduled to run on October 20 from Anantapur Railway station and carry fruits and vegetables from Anantapur and Chittoor districts.

While Railways fixed ₹5,136 on each tonne of produce, the Anantapur MP Talari Rangaiah initiated to convince the Centre to reduce transport charges to 50 per cent.

Transport charges were fixed at ₹2,568 for each tonne, but the district administration noticed the farmers were unable to bear even 50 per cent towards transport charges.

The collector Gandham Chandrudu initiated the Kisan Train Trust to assist farmers. About ₹15 lakh will be procured for the Trust, which will be collected as donations from 50 persons, including public representatives and organisations.

Tadipathri MLA K. Pedda Reddy has donated ₹1 lakh, while two MPs Talari Rangaiah and Gorantla Madhav donated ₹30,000 to the Trust.

Briefing over the concept, the collector said that the Trust would spend total transportation charges

about ₹7 lakh for 12 wagons for each trip. The farmers can repay the charges to the Trust after selling the produces at Delhi market, the collector said and hoped that the farmers could sell the produces in the Delhi market to get more attractive prices.

Meanwhile, groundnut will also be transported to the Delhi market through Kisan train, and 276 tonnes of produce including groundnut and other horticulture produce. This time farmers from Chittoor district will also avail the Kisan train. Also, 161

tonnes of tomato, 21 tonnes of sweet potato, 13.5 tonnes of watermelon, 12.2 tonnes of papaya, 10 tonnes of pomegranate, 12 tonnes of lemon and 5 tonnes of groundnut will be transported. For the first time, Kadiri is sending bold peanuts to Delhi.

Earlier, only products from Anantapur district were moved to the Delhi market, this time 46 tonnes of tomato products are being transported from Chittoor district in two wagons. A total of 161 tonnes of tomatoes will be moved from Anantapur.

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SHORT TAKES

POLICE OFFICER
SHOT DEAD IN
ANANTNAGDC CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR, OCT. 19

A police official was shot dead by suspected militants in southern Anantnag district on late Monday evening following which the security forces launched a massive operation in the area to capture the assailants dead or alive.

The police sources here said that inspector Muhammad Ashraf was targeted by the gunmen in Anantnag's Kenalwan area while he was returning home from a local mosque where he had gone to offer evening prayers.

"He was rushed to a nearby hospital in critical condition. However, the doctors pronounced him dead on arrival," a police official said over the phone from Anantnag.

The J&K police's counterinsurgency Special Operations Group along with Central armed police forces quickly cordoned the area off and started searches "to get the assailants dead or alive," the sources said.

Earlier during the day on Monday, one suspected militant was killed in a gunfight with the security forces in neighbouring Shopian district's Melhura village.

CACHE OF
EXPLOSIVES
UNEARTHEDAKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO |
DC
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 19

A joint team of Border Security Force and District Voluntary Force of Odisha police on Sunday night unearthed a Maoist dump and seized huge cache of explosives from Koraput-Malkangiri bordering area.

Based on the Intelligence report about movement of around 20 armed cadres of banned CPI (Maoist), a joint operation was launched by the BSF Ankadeli and Koraput DVF. However, the ultras managed to flee the spot, said Koraput superintendent of police Mukesh Bhamoo.

During the search, the team recovered an explosive dump.

Soon after, a Bomb Detection and Disposal team was called in and the area was cordoned off. Later, a huge cache of explosives and incriminating items dumped by the Maoists with an intention to target security forces were seized, the SP added.

The seized materials include 18 pieces of slurry and emulsion explosives, 500 pieces of gelatin, three camera flashes and 1,200 grams splinters.

SDMA TO TAKE
CALL ON NANDED
GURUDWARAPARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 19

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Maharashtra's State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) to take a call by Tuesday on whether to permit Nanded gurudwara to hold its annual procession of the Guru Granth Sahib at 5 am, with limited gathering, in the town.

A bench of Justice L. Nageswara Rao, Justice Hemant Gupta and Justice Ajay Rastog in a special hearing on a plea by the Gurdwara Sachkhand management board seeking to be permitted to hold the customary annual procession on the death anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh - the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, who breathed his last in the Gurdwara there.

Starting Monday, the top court is on a week-long Dussehra holiday.

The top court was moved by the Nanded Sikh Gurudwara Sachkhand Shri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib Board - that manages historic Nanded Gurudwara. The court asked the gurdwara management to approach the secretary, SDMA with the request to hold an annual procession and if not satisfied with its response, then approach the Bombay High Court.

The court directed the SDMA to hear the Gurdwara management's plea on Tuesday and take the decision depending on the prevailing Covid scenario.

Maharashtra government informed the court that the gurdwara management board had sought the permission to conduct the Dussehra, Takht Isnan, Deepmala and Gurta Gaddi events as per the three centuries-old custom being observed by the gurdwara.

FM: Punjab govt consulting
experts on farm laws issue

Oppn slams Punjab govt for not tabling Bill against farm laws on Day 1

Chandigarh, Oct. 19: The opposition on Monday slammed the Punjab government for not tabling a Bill to counter the Centre's new farm laws on the first day of a special Assembly session, which also saw a dharna in the House by AAP MLAs.

The Aam Aadmi Party MLAs sat in the Well of the House till late evening demanding copies of the Bill which the state's Congress government is now expected to introduce on Tuesday.

Earlier, Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal said the state government is consulting constitutional experts on the issue and copies of various Bills to be tabled during the two-day session will be given to the Opposition parties by the evening.

Even after the adjournment of the session for the day on Monday afternoon, AAP legislators continued their dharna, demanding copies of the Bill to counter the legislation enacted at the Centre.

Leader of Opposition and AAP leader Harpal Cheema said they will continue the protest till they get copies of this and other Bills to be tabled during the session.

AAP will support the legislation against the farm laws but the government should supply us with its copies. We haven't got copies of other Bills as well. How can our legislators discuss and debate important issues, Cheema said.

The Shiromani Akali Dal



Punjab Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh along with other members pays homage to farmers who have lost their lives during the ongoing agitation over new farm laws, on the first day of a special session of the state Assembly in Chandigarh on Monday.

● **THE TWO-DAY** special assembly session began with obituary references with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh leading the House in paying homage to the farmers who lost their lives during the ongoing agitation against the farm laws.

said the Bill should have been introduced on Monday.

A delegation of the party met Speaker Rana K.P. Singh in the evening and objected to not getting copies of the Bills to be tabled in the assembly.

The SAD leaders termed it a "murder of democracy".

Earlier reacting to it, Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal said they are consulting constitutional experts over the issue and copies of various Bills to be tabled during the session will be given to the opposition parties by the evening.

The two-day special assembly session began with obituary references with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh leading the House in paying homage to the farmers who lost their lives during the

ongoing agitation against the farm laws.

Punjab MLA Navjot Singh Sidhu attended the assembly session for the first time since his resignation from the state Cabinet last year.

SAD MLAs rode tractors to reach the Vidhan Sabha in protest against the farm laws. They tore copies of the Centre's farm laws.

AAP MLAs staged a protest outside the assembly complex wearing black capes. They tore and burnt copies of the farm laws.

The House was adjourned for an hour by Speaker Rana K.P. Singh

after the assembly took up obituary references. The House reassembled for nearly 15 minutes before being adjourned till Tuesday.

As it reassembled, Harpal Cheema said the special session was called to counter new farm laws but the members "have not been given copies of the Bills".

"Will we get copies of the Bills after the session is over," he asked. SAD member Gurpratap Singh Wadala said it seems the state government "does not have clarity" over the issue. — PTI

HC TO EXAMINE
POLICE CASE
IN TRP SCAMDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 19

The Bombay high court on Monday sought investigation papers pertaining to Television Rating Points (TRP) case wherein Arnab Goswami, a television news anchor and editor-in-chief of *Republic TV* is being called for questioning.

"The FIR is not an encyclopedia. We would like to peruse the investigation papers and see what probe has been done from today till the next date of hearing," the court said.

A division bench of justices S.S. Shinde and M.S. Karnik was hearing a petition filed by ARG Outlier Media Pvt Ltd, which owns Republic TV, and Goswami seeking to quash the FIR lodged on October 6. The petition has also sought a direction to transfer the case to CBI to ensure a fair and transparent investigation.

senior counsel Harish Salve, who appeared for Mr Goswami and for the company, sought protection from arrest for Mr Goswami. Kapil Sibal, appearing for Maharashtra government and police, said since Mr Goswami has not been named as accused in the case as of now, there cannot be any order granting him protection. Mr Sibal said till now police have issued summons to eight and questioned them.

Abdullah grilled by ED for 7 hours;
Oppn calls it BJP's political vendettaYUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 19

Former chief minister and National Conference (NC) president, Farooq Abdullah, was on Monday questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here in connection with an alleged multi-crore scam in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

The ED's summoning Mr. Abdullah to its Srinagar office prompted the NC and other opposition parties to link the move with their forming an alliance last week to fight for the restoration of the erstwhile state's special status.

The NC accused the BJP government at the Centre of using official agencies to bully its president "after failing to fight him politically".

People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader and former chief minister, Mehbooba Mufti, termed it the Modi government's "political vendetta". She tweeted, "ED's sudden summon to Farooq Sahab displays the extent of GOIs nervousness about mainstream parties in J&K fighting as one unit. Also reeks of political vendetta & won't in the least blunt our collective resolve to fight for our rights." (sic)

Mr. Abdullah's son and NC vice-president, Omar Abdullah, also reacted sharply to the ED's summoning his father. He wrote on the micro-blogging site, "This is nothing



National Conference president Farooq Abdullah leaves the Enforcement Directorate office in Srinagar on Monday. — PTI

less than political vendetta coming days after the formation of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration. To set the record straight, no raids are being conducted at Dr Sahib's residence."

Farooq Abdullah, 82, was called by the Srinagar wing of the ED to its office here early Monday where he was 'interrogated' for seven hours over his alleged role in misappropriation of ₹113.66 crore (including bank interest) received by J&KCA from the Board of Control for

Cricket in India (BCCI) between April 2002 and December 2011. It is alleged that instead of utilizing funds on development of infrastructure, these were swindled by some of its members including former treasurer Ahsan Mirza to live a lavish lifestyle.

On emerging from the ED office, Mr. Abdullah told reporters "Let the ED do its job and I will do my own". Reiterating that he had nothing to do with the alleged scam, he said, "I'm quite clear. I will always

face them. My fate will be decided by the court when they put the case into the court. I couldn't have lunch today. There was no time."

Though Mr. Abdullah on being asked whether he was summoned by the ED because of the formation of 'Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration' retorted by saying "Don't bring Gupkar declaration into this," the amalgam in a statement issued here later during the day termed the move as part of "vindictive politics practiced by the Central government to kill dissent and disagreement across the country and in present case to silence the genuine demands for reversal of unilateral and unconstitutional decisions of August 5, 2019 and restoration of the 4th August 2019 (constitutional position) of August 4, 2019."

A statement issued by the alliance here sought to remind the Central government that "such tactics are not to dampen the will of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh to have the constitutional status restored."

It alleged that the Central government is "unnerved by the unity amongst the people across all the regions and communities to pursue the goals of the Gupkar Declaration and support extended to it by political parties and civil society groups at the national level and is resorting to the game of witch-hunt and suppression."

Bid to defuse
tension between
Assam, MizoramMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, OCT. 19

The situation on Assam-Mizoram inter-state border in Southern Assam continued to be tense even as union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla reviewed the situation on Monday and tried to pacify the situation that started with charges of transgression of state border territory by each other.

Security sources, however, said that situation is now under control in the area, which is in Kolasib district of Mizoram and Cachar district of Assam.

The violence erupted on Saturday after people living on both sides of the border clashed over a Covid-19 testing centre set up by Mizoram within territory claimed by Assam to sample Mizoram-bound trucks and other people without the permission of the Assam authority.

According to locals, some young men from the Mizoram side of the border came to Lailapur and attacked truck drivers and villagers and burnt more than 15 small shops and houses which was retaliated by locals on Assam side.

Police said that five-six people including one Nizamuddin Lahskar were injured in the violence. Security sources in Mizoram claimed that at least eight youths from their state were also injured in the clash.

Pointing out that Assam Director General of Border Mukesh Agarwal was camping on the bor-

der, sources said that both the sides, in a video conference meeting with union home secretary on Monday, have agreed to allow the movement of vehicles which were stranded at the border in Vairengte since Saturday.

The chief secretaries of the two states were also present in the meeting. Admitting that territorial dispute between the two states is yet to be resolved, security sources said that Assam government claims its territory basing the map of the survey of India but its counterpart in Mizoram refuses to accept the map and stakes claim on areas under traditional *jhum cultivation* as its territory.

Earlier Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office and the Union Home Ministry about the situation.

He also spoke to Mizoram chief minister Zoramthanga over phone and stressed on joint efforts to address the border issues and settling disputes amicably, the Assam government said in a statement.

Tejashwi woos
Chirag Paswan
ahead of pollsNAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 19

The RJD which is keen on expanding its voters' base in Bihar is reportedly trying to woo Chirag Paswan of the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) ahead of assembly elections.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Monday expressed sympathy for Paswan who recently defied the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and pulled out of the NDA in Bihar.

"Nitish Kumar's attitude towards Chirag Paswan was not right. In my view, he was unfair to him. Chirag Paswan needs his father more than anything right now but, sadly, he is not among us anymore," Tejashwi Yadav said.

His statement has come at a time when the entire NDA in Bihar including the BJP has been calling LJP "a vote katwa" party for fielding candidates against the JD(U) and two smaller alliance partners.

Chirag, who recently lost his father Ram Vilas Paswan, is upset over being ignored by the Bihar CM. While talking to reporters earlier this week he had said that when the body of his father was flown from Delhi to Patna, Chief Minister cold-shouldered him at the airport.

"While other senior leaders paid their tributes to my father, Nitish Kumar who was also present at the airport ignored

me repeatedly. Even when I went to him and touched his feet he didn't respond," Chirag Paswan said.

The LJP has announced 42 candidates against the JD(U) and two other NDA partners — HAM and VIP in the first phase of polls. He is likely to field around 100 more candidates on seats where JD(U) is contesting.

He had recently created a stir in Bihar politics by giving tickets to several sitting BJP MLAs after their seats went to the JD(U). The LJP had earlier decided not to field any candidates against the BJP during the entire polls.

Sources said that Chirag is banking on LJP's traditional Dalit vote bank created by his father. Experts also feel that Ram Vilas Paswan's death ahead of Bihar polls will cast a shadow on the results.

Aware of the LJP's political combination, Tejashwi Yadav is looking forward to benefiting on several key seats if he manages to convince Chirag Paswan ahead of Bihar polls.

Reacting on Tejashwi Yadav's statement Hindustani Awam Morcha spokesperson Danish Rizwan called LJP "a B team of RJD" in Bihar. He said, "It seems that Chirag Paswan is raising questions on Prime Minister Narendra Modi by defying the leadership of Nitish Kumar".



Congress Bankipur candidate and Shatrughan Sinha's son, Luv Sinha, during door-to-door election campaign ahead of Bihar assembly polls, in Patna on Monday. — PTI

REAL | DRAMA

The actor was under pressure to withdraw from the biopic

Vijay quits Muralidharan biopic 800

ANUPAMA SUBRAMAN-
IAN | DC
CHENNAI, OCT. 19

In a sudden turn of events, Sri Lankan spin wizard Muttiah Muralidharan requested actor Vijay Sethupathi to opt out of his biopic titled *800* and the star responded by acknowledging the former cricketer's request with a tweet, "Vanakkam, Nandri," which could be a hint that he was opting out of the film.

Vijay Sethupathi was not available for comment but his official publicist confirmed that the star is no longer associated with the biopic *800* titled after his collection of 800 Test wickets. The Tamil film star had been under tremendous pressure to withdraw from the biopic.

As soon as it became official that Vijay Sethupathi would be playing on screen the Sri Lankan Tamil Muralidharan when a first look poster

was released, the actor has been facing protests from political parties, fans and netizens with several film personalities, including his mentor Seenu Ramasamy, requesting him to avoid acting in the Sri Lankan's biopic.

Hashtags 'Shame on Vijay Sethupathi', 'Boycott 800' were trending on the internet objecting to VSP portraying the cricketer who was seen as supporting the Sri Lankan government in its three-

decade civil war against Eelam Tamils. The protests did not die down despite a three-page statement from Muralidharan explaining his stand as well as a press release from the film makers Dar Motion Pictures who said *800* was only a sports biography movie and it does not make any political statement.

Vijay, who had seemed firm initially about his decision to do the biopic, may have had to change

his mind. Muralidharan, in his statement, said - "I don't like a celebrated actor like Vijay and his career getting affected because of acting in this film. I came to know that Vijay Sethupathi is getting a lot of pressure to quit the film. I don't want him to face any hurdles. So, I am asking him to opt out of this project."

However, Murali expressed the hope that the filmmakers would continue with the biopic plans.

IN BRIEF

Japan, Vietnam up defence ties

Hanoi: Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, in his first overseas summit since taking office last month, agreed with his Vietnamese counterpart to step up defence and security cooperation in the face of China's expanding influence in the region. In talks in Hanoi on Monday, Suga and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc set a basic agreement allowing Japan to export defence equipment and technology to Vietnam. Japan has been pursuing such agreements in recent years to bolster ties with Southeast Asia and sustain its own defence industry. Suga says his four-day trip to Vietnam and later Indonesia is key to pursuing the "free and open Indo-Pacific" vision for multilateral economic and security cooperation to counter China's growing power and protect sea lanes in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

Suspended terms for Golden Dawn

Athens: A prosecutor on Monday recommended that all former lawmakers of Greece's extreme right Golden Dawn party who have been convicted and sentenced to prison for leading or participating in a criminal organisation should be allowed to remain free until their appeal has been heard. Prosecutor Adamantia Economou argued that none of the former lawmakers was a flight risk or at risk of re-offending while they remain out of jail, and said most had a clean criminal record prior to this. A final decision on whether the sentences will be suspended pending appeal is to be made by the panel of judges trying the case following summations by defence lawyers, and is expected either Monday night or Tuesday morning. The lengthy sentencing procedure caps a marathon, politically charged five-year trial that involved 68 defendants.

Last ETA boss sorry for deaths

Paris: The last known chief of ETA, the now-extinct Basque separatist militant group, goes on trial Monday in Paris for terrorism charges that he deems "absurd" because of his role in ending a conflict that claimed hundreds of lives and terrorised Spain for half a century. Josu Urrutikoetxea led ETA during one of its bloodiest periods, when its victims included children bombed to death while sleeping in a Zaragoza police compound, where a monument to their stolen lives now stands. In a rare interview after 17 years on the run, he offered an apology, advised other separatist movements against resorting to violence and painted himself as a changed man. That's a preposterous claim to those who lost loved ones to ETA's violence, which caused around 850 deaths and thousands of injuries and hijacked the Basque and Spanish political debate for decades.

THAI CENSOR ON STUDENT STIR COVERAGE

Bangkok, Oct. 19: Thai authorities worked Monday to stem a growing tide of protests calling for the prime minister to resign by threatening to censor news coverage, raiding a publishing house and attempting to block the Telegram messaging app used by demonstrators. The efforts by PM Prayuth Chan-ocha's government to drain the student-led protests of support and the ability to organise comes as they have grown in the capital and spread around the country, despite an emergency decree, which bans public gatherings of more than four people in Bangkok, outlaws news said to affect national security and gives authorities broad power to detain people. The mostly young protesters have gathered en masse across Bangkok the past six days to push their demands, which also include a controversial call for reform of the monarchy. The protesters charge that Prayuth, an army commander who led a 2014 coup, was returned to power unfairly in last year's general election because laws had been changed to favour a pro-military party. The protesters say a constitution written and passed under military rule is undemocratic. But their more recent demand for checks and balances on the monarchy has deeply angered conservative Thais.

Confirmed Coronavirus cases across world surpass 40 mn

Experts: Only tip of the iceberg when it comes to impact of pandemic

London, Oct. 19: The number of confirmed Covid-19 cases across the planet has surpassed 40 million, but experts say that is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the true impact of the pandemic that has upended life and work around the world. The milestone was hit Monday morning, according to Johns Hopkins University, which collates reports from around the world. The actual worldwide tally of Covid-19 cases is likely to be far higher, as testing has been variable, many people have had no symptoms and some governments have concealed the true number of cases.

To date, more than 1.1 million confirmed virus deaths have been reported, although experts also believe that number is an undercount. The US, India and Brazil are reporting

by far the highest numbers of cases — 8.1 million, 7.5 million and 5.2 million respectively — although the global increase in recent weeks has been driven by a surge in Europe, which has seen over 240,000 confirmed virus deaths in the pandemic so far. Last week, the World Health Organisation said Europe had a reported a record weekly high of nearly 700,000 cases and said the region was responsible for about a third of cases globally.

Britain, France, Russia and Spain account for about half of all new cases in the region, and countries like Belgium and the Czech Republic are facing more intense outbreaks now than they did in the spring. WHO said the new measures being taken across Europe are "absolutely essential" in stopping Covid-19 from over-



A medical staff member takes a sample from the mouth of a student at a newly-opened Covid-19 testing centre for students at the KULeuven University, in Leuven, on Monday.

whelming its hospitals. Those include new requirements on mask-wearing in Italy and Switzerland, closing schools in Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic, closing restaurants and bars in Belgium, implementing a 9 p.m. curfew in France and having targeted limited lockdowns in parts of the UK.

The agency said several European cities could soon see their intensive care units overwhelmed and warned that governments and citizens should take all necessary measures to slow the spread of the virus, including bolstering testing and contact tracing, wearing face masks and following social dis-

tancing measures. WHO has previously estimated about 1 in 10 of the world's population — about 780 million people — have been infected with Covid-19, more than 20 times the official number of cases.

That suggests the vast majority of the world's population is still susceptible to the virus. Some researchers have argued that allowing Covid-19 to spread in populations that are not obviously vulnerable will help build up herd immunity and is a more realistic way to stop the pandemic instead of the restrictive lockdowns that have proved economically devastating. But WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has warned against the belief that herd immunity might be a viable strategy to pursue, saying this kind of protection needs to be achieved by vaccination. — AP

Trump inciting domestic terror: Michigan Gov.

Detroit, Oct. 19: Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Sunday that President Donald Trump is inciting "domestic terrorism" following "lock her up" chants at his rally in the state the night before.

Whitmer told *NBC's* "Meet the Press" that the rhetoric is "incredibly disturbing" a little more than a week after authorities announced they had thwarted an alleged plot to kidnap the Democratic governor. "The president is at it again and inspiring and incentivising and inciting this kind of domestic terrorism," Whitmer said.

"It is wrong. It's got to end. It is dangerous, not just for me and my family, but for public servants everywhere who are doing their jobs and trying to protect their fellow Americans. People of good will on both sides of the aisle need to step up and call this out and bring the heat down."

At a rally in Muskegon Saturday evening, Trump urged supporters to push Whitmer to reopen the state following Covid-19 restrictions. When the crowd started chanting "lock her up" Trump added, "Lock 'em all up." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, speaking on ABC's "This Week," said Trump's statements were "irresponsible" and accused him of injecting fear tactics. — AP

Biden not good for India: Donald Trump Jr New York, Oct. 19: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden is not good for India as he could be soft on China, US President Donald Trump's son said at an event to celebrate the "success" of his book that talks about graft allegations against the Bidens.

Forty-two-year-old Donald Trump Jr is leading the re-election campaign of his 74-year-old father. The presidential elections in the US are slated to be held on November 3. "We have to understand the threat of China and no one knows that probably better than Indian-Americans," Trump Jr. told a select group of supporters from the community at the event in Long Island, New York. In his book "Liberal Privilege," he has documented allegations of corruption against 77-year-old Joe Biden's family, particularly against



Donald Trump

DON, BIDEN GO ON THE OFFENCE IN STATES

Las Vegas, Oct. 19: President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden went on offense Sunday, with each campaigning in states they are trying to flip during the Nov. 3 election that is just over two weeks away.

Trump began his day in Nevada, making a rare visit to church before an evening rally in Carson City. Once considered a battleground, Nevada hasn't swung for a Republican presidential contender since 2004.

While seated in the front row at the nondenominational International Church of Las Vegas, Trump received blessings from the church's pastors, with Denise Goulet telling attendees that God told her Trump is the apple of his eye and would secure a second term. "At 4:30, the Lord said to me, 'I am going to give your president a second win,'" she said, telling Trump, "you will be the president again."

Trump offered short remarks, saying "I love going to churches" and that it was "a great honour" to attend the service. The president also said that "we have a group on the other side that doesn't agree with us," and he urged people to "get out there on Nov. 3 or sooner" to vote. — AP

his son Hunter Biden.

"When you look at our opponents in this race... you think the Chinese gave Hunter Biden \$1.5 billion ... because he was a great businessman, or because they knew the Bidens could be bought, and therefore soft on China," he said. Trump Jr was referring to the latest allegations of corruption against the Biden family. — PTI

Not surprised Don got Covid: Fauci

Washington, Oct. 19: America's top infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci says he was "absolutely not" surprised when Donald Trump contracted Covid-19 after seeing the president surrounded by several people not wearing face masks and flouting best public health practices against the deadly pandemic.

Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases appeared to be referring to the White House Rose Garden event on September 26 where Trump announced Judge Amy Coney Barrett was his pick to replace Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Supreme Court. At least 12 people have tested positive for Covid-19 after

attending the function.

Fauci said during an interview on *CBS' "60 Minutes"* that was aired on Sunday, "I was worried that he was going to get sick when I saw him in a completely precarious situation of crowded — no separation between people, and almost nobody wearing a mask."

"When I saw that on TV, I said, 'Oh my goodness. Nothing good can come out of that, that's got to be a problem,'" he said.

"And then sure enough, it turned out to be a superspreader event." His remarks came as Americans face another surge in the Covid-19 pandemic ahead of the November 3 US presidential election. — PTI

Chile church set ablaze



The dome of the church of Asuncion falls down burning in flames after being set on fire by demonstrators on the commemoration of the first anniversary of the social uprising in Chile, in Santiago, on Monday, as the country prepares for a landmark referendum.

Israel, Bahrain establish relations

Jerusalem, Oct. 19: Israel and Bahrain on Sunday agreed to establish formal diplomatic relations, making the small Gulf country the fourth Arab state to normalise ties with Israel.

The US-brokered agreement capped a one-day visit by a high-level delegation of American and Israeli officials to Bahrain. Bahrain joined the United Arab Emirates at a festive White House ceremony last month marking the "Abraham Accords," a pair of US-brokered diplomatic pacts with Israel.

While the UAE's deal

with Israel formally established ties, the agreement with Bahrain was less detailed and included a mutual pledge to follow suit. Sunday's visit appeared to complete that task, clearing the way for the countries to open embassies and exchange ambassadors in the coming months. "It was indeed an historic visit, to start opening relations between both countries, to have fruitful bilateral relations in both fields," said Bahrain's foreign minister, Abdulatif al-Zayani, at the signing ceremony. — AP

First Emirati flight lands near Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv, Oct. 19: The first commercial passenger flight to Israel by a carrier from the United Arab Emirates landed near Tel Aviv on Monday, further cementing a normalisation deal between the two countries.

Etihaad Airways Flight No. 9607 landed at Israel's Ben-Gurion international airport just after 7 am.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner departed for Abu Dhabi later Monday with an Israeli travel and tourism delegation on board, according to an Etihaad statement. Etihaad said it plans regular passenger flights between the countries in the future and was launching a dedicated Hebrew website. — AP

Imran incapable, clueless: Oppn

Karachi, Oct. 19: Prime Minister Imran Khan is "incapable and clueless", and his government is worse than a dictatorship, Pakistan's opposition leaders have said at the second rally of an alliance formed to oust the premier. The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an alliance of 11 opposition parties formed on September 20, has launched a three-phased anti-gov-

ernment movement under an "action plan" to remove the Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. Under the plan a number of rallies public meetings and demonstrations will be held across the country, before a "decisive long march" to Islamabad in January next year. The first of these rallies was held on Friday in Gujranwala near Lahore. "This incapable and clue-

less prime minister will have to go home," Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said on Sunday at the Bagh-e-Jinnah, which was packed with people including supporters and workers of the alliance's members. History has proved that the biggest dictators could not survive and "what standing does this puppet have?", Zardari said targeting Prime

Minister Khan and added that "this is not a new fight but this will be a decisive fight".

The rally here also marked the 13th anniversary of the twin blasts in Karsaz that targeted the homecoming procession of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in 2007. The blast left around 200 people dead and several injured. — PTI

GUINNESS | FEAT

Naseej 1, the painting, is made out of seven connected cotton cloths

Saudi woman makes largest coffee painting

Dubai, Oct. 19: A Saudi Arabian artist has entered her name in the Guinness Book of World Records by drawing the world's largest coffee painting using expired granules, becoming the first woman from the kingdom to achieve the feat. Ohud Abdullah Almaliki's coffee painting illustrates seven renowned figures of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

She drew two giant pic-

tures of founding fathers, King Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman and Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan of Saudi Arabia and the UAE respectively. Almaliki used approximately 4.5 kgs of expired coffee powder. She painted all the figures in hues of brown mixing the coffee powder with water. "It took me 45 days of continuous work to complete under the watchful eyes of two witnesses, video recording

and drone footage. My aim is to remind the world of the centuries-old entente between the two nations," Almaliki said.

Called "Naseej 1", the painting is spread over 220.968 square metres, 15.84 metres long and 13.95 metres wide. It is made out of seven connected cotton cloths; each measuring 15.84 metres long x 2 metres wide.

"Normally, only one kind of coffee is used in such

paintings, but I have used four different shades of brown coffee. I used several rollers and paint brushes of different sizes to finish this project. A drone footage of the painting was shown in "Mokhatat Ar-Riyad" neighbourhood in Jeddah with the artist behind the painting with her father," she said.

Women of Saudi Arabia took part in previous Guinness World Records attempts, but this is the

first time a Saudi woman has achieved the feat on her own. In 2015, the largest human awareness ribbon consisted of 8,264 participants and was achieved by the women of Saudi Arabia. As a student in the Vth year of College of Law at King AbdulAziz University in Jeddah, Almaliki features weekly on popular TV channels across the Middle East and North Africa region. — PTI

It took me 45 days of continuous work to complete under the watchful eyes of two witnesses, video recording and drone footage. My aim is to remind the world of the centuries-old entente between the two nations.

OHUD ABDULLAH ALMALIKI, Painter

DECCAN Chronicle

20 OCTOBER 2020

Cut back on festivities, Covid-19 threat is real

It's normal for the people to expect scientists to analyse data and provide a conclusive and independent opinion while taking the statements of the politician with a pinch of salt. But it looks like the report of the expert panel, appointed by the department of science and technology, which says India has gone past the peak with respect to the spread of the coronavirus, is comforting but comes with too many ifs and buts. On the other hand, Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has been consistent and unequivocal in all his communications, insisting that the forthcoming festival season is going to be a game changer for the worse and cautioning people against being lackadaisical in their approach to the pandemic.

Dr Vardhan was persuasive enough to cite the example of Kerala and the way the state's containment strategy went completely awry after its annual festival Onam in late August to drive home the point that lapses in the coming season would prove to be too costly. The state, which reported almost zero new Covid-19 cases in the first week of May saw the numbers rise, albeit nominally, after the Union government decided to open interstate and international traffic. But the number grew rapidly after Onam: the state's share in the total caseload shot up from 2.9 per cent until September to 6.4 per cent in the second half of the month to almost 10 per cent now. The state's total active cases of 96,000 contribute almost 10 per cent to the total cases in India at present. It is a fact that large congregations of people who threw caution to the winds undid all Kerala had done in the initial phases to stop the spread of the pandemic. A section of experts also blames the series of agitations the opposition had launched against the state government during the same period for the sudden spurt of cases.

The Union government had announced two weeks ago it was launching Jan Andolan, a massive awareness campaign about the need to observe the critical points that have proved to be effective against the virus: hand hygiene, social distancing and wearing of mask. But we are yet to find the government taking it up seriously and make the message reach the nook and cranny of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the best communicator India has today, but the nation is yet to hear him talk about this campaign with the force it warrants and the frequency it calls for. Instead, it looks like the government is now getting into preparing the protocols for the distribution of the evasive vaccine when it arrives.

The need of the hour, and the priority of the government, should be to prepare the nation to get past the festive season without an uncontrolled escalation in the number of Covid-19 patients, and the only way to do is to get into a massive campaign; vaccine protocol can at best be a parallel exercise. It pays to be mindful of the wolf at the door instead of counting the pie in the sky.

Thrills & spills in Super Overs

A historic second Super Over bowled to break a tie in T20 and the succeeding Super Over in the IPL match between Kings XI Punjab and Mumbai Indians illustrated how the quest for a result can be fair. There's logic to the demands of a winner being spotted on the day in sport, which in a way is like war minus the shooting. It's a pity that the World Cup final, in which England and New Zealand tied in the 50-overs a side match and tied again in the Super Over, was not decided in this sensible and extended tie-breaker as in IPL rules. How ridiculous that England were declared the winners because they had scored more boundaries in their innings.

The drama, as a microcosm of life played out in such sudden death situations, enhances the thrills and spills of condensed cricket. The question of what makes winners stand apart from the chokers will, perhaps, never be satisfactorily answered. The fact that the defending champions Mumbai Indians have lost two games in Super Overs adds to the mystique of what makes winners different. Is it just calm nerves controlling sporting skills or the smile of lady luck or both? Be that as it may, the IPL season, which the corona virus seemed to have blighted, is now the harbinger of fine entertainment from the Arabian desert.

The T20 format might not have been thought of as a medium in which fast bowling would shine so lustroously in terms of speeds achieved in the air as measured by radar guns. The T20 of 2020 appears to be the glorious exception as Anrich Nortje of South Africa cracked the record kept from IPL speed guns in sending down the white cricket ball at 156.2 kmph, only to be reverse scooped for a boundary by Jos Buttler. Quality UAE cricket grounds with good run-ups are inspiring settings in which Nortje and other fast bowlers have sparked with sheer pace achieved from the poetry of their bowling actions and Nortje came back with an incutter at 155 kmph to bowl Buttler and win the day. That's entertainment!

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Subhani



Delineate & demarcate LAC to end China mess



Akash Deep Anand

Tuesday, October 20, marks 58 years to the day the Chinese launched their synchronised and coordinated attack in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, then known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) on October 20, 1962. It is pertinent to note the choice of a Saturday as a mark of Chinese planning and cunning; the Indian decision-making apparatus would be enjoying a weekend break, though the concept of a five-day week was to come much later. In NEFA, their chosen theatre of operations, the Chinese successfully eliminated all military opposition by the time they declared a unilateral ceasefire on November 20, 1962. The Chinese attack in Ladakh overran the small standalone posts in Galwan, Pangong Tso and Chip Chap River areas. The Indian troops here gave a valiant account of themselves but were heavily outnumbered and out-gunned by better-prepared Chinese.

This area is again active 58 years later as the outstanding matter of settling the borders between the two nations hasn't been resolved. Unlike the India-Pakistan Line of Control (LoC), in J&K and Ladakh, the 1962 war led to the concept of a Line of Actual Control (LAC) along the Sino-Indian frontier. There is no demarcation in both situations. In the LoC's case troops on both sides are generally within range of small and medium arms, in an eyeball to eyeball deployment, except in certain gaps where physical deployment is not possible. Incidentally, these are the gaps used for infiltration from across the border. In the LAC's case, troops have been separated by far greater distances except in a few locations like Nathu La. As long as troops maintain considerable distances, the chance of clash-

es are minimal unless one side chooses to press a claim line by moving forward going by their assessment or comprehension of the LAC. It is because of such an action of staking their claim over Galwan Valley by the Chinese that the June 15 clash took place, resulting in casualties on both sides, an unspecified number of Chinese and 20 of ours, with Col. Santosh Babu, 16 Bihar's CO, and 19 soldiers killed in action.

With the LAC not being delineated (specifically described and agreed) and demarcated (marked with pillars, fences), the alignment is open to interpretation by troops and their commanders on the ground. Further clashes thus cannot be ruled out. Since the Chinese have been obdurate in disengagement by not pulling back, let's examine the factors behind China's behaviour:

India's border infrastructure development, particularly the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie (DSDBO) road opposite Aksai Chin through which runs the Chinese G-219 Highway connecting Sinkiang and Tibet, both restive provinces.

Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) lies 8 km from Karakoram Pass, through which passes the Karakoram Highway linking Sinkiang with Pakistan. It is 9 km north-west of the LAC in Aksai Chin.

The highway is important for the One Belt One Road (OBOR) project initiated by Xi Jinping with massive financial and political commitment. Indian infrastructure developments in the area are considered a potential threat to G-219 and the OBOR project.

India is raising objections to the OBOR project in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Shaksam Valley (ceded to China by Pakistan) and the

Did the present Union government lull itself into the belief that our actions to ramp up border infrastructure would not attract a belligerent response?

Gilgit-Baltistan area, which are claimed as part of J&K.

Chinese objections to the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of the erstwhile state of J&K into the UTs of J&K and Ladakh which is claimed by China as one of "five fingers" of Tibet, the others being Nepal, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

Development of Indian maritime infrastructure in the Indian Ocean region, where China intends to extend its reach and influence.

India aligning its strategy with the United States, which is engaged in a trade war with China over tariffs, the 5G infrastructure of Chinese IT giant Huawei, Covid-19, theft of intellectual property and American technology, to name a few.

China has been hit hard by the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, which originated at Wuhan in Hubei province. The consequent suspension in exports has led to a loss of earnings and reduced consumption in China. There are reports of food shortages and large-scale migration into the urban centres, leading to social tensions.

The Chinese exchequer is simultaneously burdened with the expenditure on OBOR.

A comparison with 1962 and China's then leadership under Mao Zedong is in order. Communist China's 2nd Five-Year Plan 1958-63 undertook the "Great Leap Forward", an overambitious project to boost agricultural and industrial growth. It is beyond our scope here to detail the specifics of that debacle.

It's sufficient to say that overambitious unachievable targets led to a famine which caused an unspecified number of deaths: around 18 million to 45 million. Other purges like the Cultural Revolution were to cause many more deaths; some estimates put the total number of Chinese deaths due to Mao and his policies at 80 million. That such a tyrant died peacefully in his own bed is a mark of how much control the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its undisputed leader has over China's public. However, even dictators like Mao have detractors, thus they too need distractions. One of the reasons why Mao chose the opportune moment of a US-Soviet nuclear standoff over Cuba to divert the attention of detractors by ordering his PLA (People's Liberation Army) to launch the 1962 attack against India.

One also has to look at the role played by the then Indian leadership, and its principal players like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, V.K. Krishna Menon, Generals P.N. Thapar and B.M. Kaul through their amateurish "Forward Policy" of establishing small standalone posts along the frontier in the territorial claim line, assuming against all evidence and intelligence that the Chinese would not launch an offensive.

Starting in the 1980s, India has taken steps with China to ensure tranquility along the disputed frontier. Did the present government lull itself into the belief that our actions to ramp up border infrastructure would not attract a belligerent response? Did Narendra Modi end up imitating the blunder of Pandit Nehru? Did he assume his personal rapport with Xi Jinping after his back-to-back summits at Wuhan and Mamallapuram had cemented such bonds that Mr Xi would simply acquiesce with our actions on an unsettled frontier that would raise the hackles of China's strategic hawks as well as his own detractors?

The writer is a retired colonel with 37 years' experience in the Indian Army infantry, including stints in Poonch-Rajouri and Ladakh

LETTERS

BRAVE EFFORT

I am not surprised with what the people of Birindipada have done (Villagers build timber bridge over river, DC, Oct. 19). There may be thousands of villages across India which do not have basic transport and communication facilities for decades. Even though it was a great initiative by villagers, it is shame on governments.

P. Govardhana Rao
Kankipadu, Krishna district

DEFINING MOMENT

The three months ahead seem to be the defining moment for India in its fight against Coronavirus. The encouraging news is that the number of active cases and deaths being reported daily are gradually decreasing. Experts feel that India has crossed the peak and if the trend continues, the epidemic will end in February. But the real challenge lies in making people compliant with simple precautionary measures. The festive season couple with winter can change the course of virus spread.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao
Vizianagaram

SHEDDING HUBRIS

Patralekha Chatterjee has made an outstanding revelation on GDP growth of India compared to other smaller nations (*India must learn from others, shed its hubris, DC, Oct. 19*). The gender employment ratio, infant mortality and economic status coupled with per capita income indicate their seriousness about all inclusive development of people. We gained the reputation as a rapist country. A country of our size cannot be confident about even a single medal in Olympics.

D.S.P. Rao
Kakinada

Pak given MIG jets by Indonesia

JAKARTA, OCT. 19 Indonesia gave Pakistan eight MIG-19 jet fighters during the Indo-Pakistan war over Kashmir in 1965, informed Air Force sources her today.

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle They said the planes were sent as a gift under

a secret agreement between the late President Sukarno and former Pakistani President Ayub Khan. The disclosure came on the heels of a recent newspaper report that the Indonesian Air Force had swapped six Russian made MIG-19 planes for six super constellations from Pakistan.

Aakar Patel



Complex problems require many minds. Leadership is important but mostly in terms of directionality. The solutions need to be produced by those implementing, not the person directing. If this is reversed, progress will not to be made and generally what results is retardation.

For solutions to be produced below the level of leadership, it is necessary that there be some devolution of authority and power. Such is not the case in India in these present times. The leadership of this large and complex nation is centralised in a way that it has never been in our history. There are some parallels with Indira Gandhi, true, but the 1970s was altogether another world.

Some of the most important positions in the Union Cabinet are filled by those who have never won an election. The finance minister, external affairs minister, railways and commerce and industry minister are none of them elected. The previous finance minister was also not elected. They owe their position not to their personal political popularity but to the patronage of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They cannot defy him, and they will always

do what he says. That is why they have, in fact, been chosen and placed there.

The moment they defy or question, they will be replaced by someone who will keep their mouth shut but keep their job. There is no devolution of authority and none of accountability.

When things begin to go wrong in such a place, the leader cannot be blamed or even named. It will be assumed that he is right and the solution lies not in correcting his behaviour but in something else.

A few weeks ago there was this headline in the online publication The Print: "Modi govt plans media blitz for 'image correction' to boost India rank on global lists". It reported that the government was trying to improve India's ranking on some 30 global indices by "building a massive publicity campaign" which was a "planned perception-overhaul exercise".

These indices are those which monitor religious, economic, political, media freedoms, the rule of law, innovation, terrorism and other things. Either data is compiled or global experts are asked for their perceptions and then countries given a score or rating.

Many of these are compiled by bodies

One reason for Bangladesh overtaking India is that that the Bangladeshi leadership handled the Covid-19 hit to their economy better. The other reason is that in the past six years, Bangladesh has been growing much faster than India. It would have overtaken us anyway.

that are multilateral, such as the World Bank or the United Nations. It is not clear how India will get its poor ratings improved through a media campaign when it comes to such bodies or when it comes to hard data.

For instance, India is ranked 142 on the World Press Freedom Index, falling from 140 in 2019 and 138 in 2018. The main reason for its fall is the violence against journalists and the number of Internet shutdowns in Kashmir. These are objective things that are measurable. They cannot be corrected by publicity campaigns. This year India has introduced a new media policy in Kashmir that has more or less throttled all freedom of the media in that state.

The government's response in the instance of the media index was to set up its own "Index Monitoring Cell" which would have journalists Rajat Gupta (of *Aap ki Adalat* fame) and P. Sainath. Not much has been heard from this cell since and it will not affect the global rating. India's ranking in press freedom is not going to improve globally next year either and spending money on marketing an image that is removed from reality is neither wise nor will it be effective.

India's numbers on Covid-19 are self-declared. These are government numbers.

They can and they will be compared to how India is doing versus the rest of the world and particularly the rest of South Asia with which an honest comparison can be made. On infections and fatalities, our performance is below the rest. A media blitz will not correct the perception that India has been the least competent at addressing the issue because the perception is based on reality.

This week has come news that in the current financial year, Bangladesh will overtake India in terms of per capita income. Meaning that the average Bangladeshi's income will be more

than the average Indian's. Even to those who are referred to as Modi haters, this was shocking. It was not expected because India was far ahead of Bangladesh in terms of per capita income in 2014.

One reason for Bangladesh overtaking India is that that the Bangladeshi leadership handled the Covid-19 hit to their economy better. The other reason is that in the past six years, Bangladesh has been growing much faster than India. It would have overtaken us anyway in time. The Covid-19 fall just made it sooner. It has been a long slide that has been not been in the public realm because the leader does not acknowledge it and the minions cannot speak.

It seems like we were talking about competing with China and the United States only a few years ago. Now we must first compete with Bangladesh. This is not what we had been promised. How will this be corrected by a media blitz? It will not. But it is what the great man has ordered, and so it will be done. The slide will continue, but the noise about "*acheche din*" will also continue.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,431.60	1.12
Nifty 50	11,873.00	0.94
S&P 500*	3,476.78	-0.20
Dollar (₹)	73.36	0.02
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.29	0.44
Euro (₹)	86.08	-0.20
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,682 ▲135	0.27
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.91	-0.02
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.940	0.006
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.769	0.025

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Sykes India opens its third facility in Hyderabad

Sykes India, a leading digital marketing and customer service global outsourcer, has opened its third centre of excellence in Hyderabad. This 33,000 sq. ft. facility is the company's third in Hyderabad and fifth in the country. It employs around 1,000 in Hyderabad and 200 in Bengaluru. It has hired an additional 300 people, which will work from the new facility at NSL SEZ, Uppal in Hyderabad.

Malabar Gold offers 'one India one Gold rate'



Malabar Gold & Diamonds has launched 'One India One Gold Rate', an initiative that offers uniform gold rate across all states in the country for 100 per cent BIS hallmarked. While the international gold prices are transparent and uniform custom duty and taxes are applied across the globe, in India, there exists a disparity across states in the rates of gold, though gold is sourced from the designated banks.

Nuvoco Vistas bets on individual home builders

Nuvoco Vistas, a leading building materials company, has launched a water-and-cracks-resistant concrete to address the dearth of premium quality concrete in the Individual Home Builders segment. The concrete — Concrete Permadure — improves the durability of the structure by minimising micro cracks and water seepage, said Prashant Jha, chief, ready-mix business at Nuvoco Vistas.

DMart converts 2 stores into fulfilment centres

Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates supermarket chain D-Mart, has closed two of its retail stores in Mumbai and converted them into fulfilment centres to cater to its growing e-commerce business in the city. The company opened six new D-Mart stores during the July-September quarter this fiscal taking its store count to 220 with total retail business area of 8.2 million square feet.



FinMin asks eight PSUs to buyback Centre's shares

■ Windfall from state firms to reduce widening fiscal deficit

AFTAB AHMED & NIDHI VERMA NEW DELHI, OCT. 19

India has asked at least eight state-run companies to consider share buybacks in the fiscal year that runs through March 2021, two government officials said, as New Delhi scours for ways of raising funds to rein in its fiscal deficit.

The firms asked include miner Coal India, power utility NTPC, minerals producer NMDC and Engineers India Ltd, said one of the sources, who sought anonymity as the discussions are private. "Buyback is an important tool in our strategy and it helps in building market price," added the second official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

India is unlikely to be anywhere near its fiscal deficit target of 3.5 per cent of GDP for 2020-21 as coronavirus curbs hit tax collections and delayed efforts to privatise energy firm Bharat Petroleum Corp and flag carrier Air India.

In February, the government had set itself a target of raising more than \$27 billion from privatisations and sale of minority stakes in state-owned companies this fiscal year.

However, some companies, particularly in the oil sector, may not be able to do buybacks, the sources warned, as the government's stake is just sufficient to ensure its position as a majority holder.

Centre bets on PSUs to kick-start capital spend

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 19

With central PSUs spending only 32 per cent of its capex target for the fiscal, the finance ministry has directed state-run firms to spend 75 per cent of their capital expenditure by the end of December.

While reviewing their performance, the ministry stressed on more coordinated efforts at the levels of secretary of concerned ministries and chairpersons and managing directors of CPSEs to achieve capital expenditure targets.

The government finds that the better performance of CPSEs can help the economy in a big way to recover from the impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

The central PSUs have a capital expenditure target of ₹1,15,934 crore for the fiscal 2020-21. Till the first

half of the year, they have only achieved 32 per cent or ₹37,423 crore of this target. This is 13 per cent lower than the capital expenditure made in the first half of last fiscal.

In H1 FY20, CPSEs had spent ₹43,097 crore even when the total target was ₹1,11,672 crore. However, by the end of the year, they had achieved 104 per cent of the capex target.

The government, however, has claimed that CPSUs have cleared ₹13,400 crore of pending payments to MSMEs in the past five months. Out of this, payments worth ₹3,700 crore have been made in September only.

Though it is mandatory for all CPSEs and companies with turnover of more than ₹500 crore to join the TReDS platform started by Reserve Bank of India, many companies are yet to join it or trans-

act on it. The MSME ministry has now written to the top management of over 2,800 corporates by name to make payment of pending dues of MSMEs in this month itself.

Last month, the ministry had written to top 500 corporates about the pending payments of MSMEs.

According to reports, MSMEs have around ₹5 lakh crore of pending dues from PSUs, government agencies and private enterprises.

The MSME Development Act, 2006, mandates companies to make the payment to MSMEs within 45 days. If the cash flows of MSMEs improve, they can make use of the festival season when there is opportunity to earn by supplying goods and services. Some of the MSMEs look for such a period for their sustenance of the whole year.

But for those with sufficient funds and capital expenditure below target for this fiscal year, the government could seek approval from the cabinet to prune its stake to less than 51 per cent in individual firms without giving up control, the official said. — Reuters

Centre must borrow ₹2.3tr for GST: Kerala

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 19

Having agreed to borrow money to fund shortfall in GST collections on behalf of states, the Central government should negotiate with the states on how much should be borrowed, said Kerala finance minister Thomas Issac.

He wants the entire shortfall of ₹2.35 lakh crore (₹2.35 trillion) to be provided to the states this year itself. "Having come the half-way through for an amicable settlement on the issue of who should borrow, the Centre should take initiative to settle the remaining issue: How much to borrow?" he said in a tweet. Last week, the Centre had agreed to borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore on behalf of the states, ending an impasse with the states.

Talking to Financial Chronicle, Issac said the Centre has to negotiate

● IF YOU can borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore, why can't it be higher? We should be getting the full ₹2.35 lakh crore this year. We are facing an economic recession now and not tomorrow, said Kerala finance minister Thomas Issac

with the states as to what is the requirement. Considering the current economic recession, he said, the states should be provided the entire shortfall of ₹2.35 lakh crore.

The Centre in August had estimated that the GST shortfall for FY21 would be around ₹2.35 lakh crore. Of the ₹2.35 lakh crore, Centre has agreed to borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore. Out of the remaining ₹1.25 lakh crore, ₹50,000-60,000 crore will come from the current year's compensation cess. The remaining amount

will be paid only in 2023 from the compensation cess, he said.

"If you can borrow ₹1.1 lakh crore, why can't it be higher? We should be getting the full ₹2.35 lakh crore this year. We are facing an economic recession now and not tomorrow. I need to spend today. If for some reason, the Centre cannot give it, it is a negotiable point," he said.

Issac said he was not bothered about increase in the fiscal deficit of states. "I am not bothered about that. I think, in a recession the fiscal deficit can go much higher. Look at the developed countries, what is their fiscal deficit," he said.

"Further, I don't believe in this number game. Nothing is sacrosanct — this 3 per cent, 5 per cent or 10 per cent. It is the macro economic situation that determines fiscal deficit," the Kerala minister added.

Kalyan Jewellers gets Sebi approval for ₹1,750-cr IPO

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 19

Kerala-based Kalyan Jewellers has received market regulator Sebi's approval to float ₹1,750-crore initial public offer (IPO) just two months after filing a draft red-herring prospectus.

Kalyan Jewellers has 137 retail stores spread across India and the Middle East. Besides over 100 stores across 21 states in India,

as on June 30, 2020, Kalyan Jewellers has 30 showrooms in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries spread across the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Oman.

The IPO comprises the issue of fresh equity shares aggregating up to ₹1,000 crore and an offer for sale worth ₹750 crore, according to the DRHP.

Kalyan Jewellers promoter T.S. Kalyanaraman proposes to offload shares

worth up to ₹250 crore, while Highdell Investment would sell shares aggregating up to ₹500 crore through the OFS route.

The proceeds from the fresh issue of shares would be utilised for working capital requirements and general corporate purpose. Axis Capital, Citigroup Global Markets India, ICICI Securities and SBI Capital Markets are merchant bankers.

Bank recap must not be postponed, says Viral Acharya

Mumbai, Oct. 19: India is neglecting bank recapitalisation as it focuses on debt moratoriums and interest waivers for borrowers amid the Covid-19 pandemic, a former central bank official said on Monday.

Indian banks are saddled with over \$120 billion in bad debt, and in severely stressed conditions the bad-loan ratio could nearly double by March, according to Reserve Bank of India projections.

Restoring banks' capital is critical for aiding a meaningful recovery, but there has been little focus on the matter, former RBI deputy governor Viral Acharya said.

"This lack of focus is tantamount to kicking the can down the road and jettisoning financial stability for short-term gains," said Acharya, who recently wrote a book titled the "Quest for Restoring Financial Stability in India".

"This repeated mistake has prevented India from recovering well from adverse shocks," Acharya said. His comments came weeks after India offered to waive the compounded interest

● INDIAN BANKS are saddled with over \$120 billion in bad debt, and in severely stressed conditions the bad-loan ratio could nearly double by March, according to Reserve Bank of India projections.

component on all loans up to 20 million rupees following a legal challenge to the terms of a six-month moratorium.

Designing moratoria and forgiveness like farm-loan waivers that favour borrowers excessively in the short term has been detrimental to a sound recovery of credit growth in the medium term, Acharya said. "If the government doesn't wish to recapitalise banks in a timely manner, then it must ensure that the contours of debt moratoria and forgiveness package are not so generous that banks won't be in a position to lend well during the recovery phase, which is likely around the corner," Acharya said.

"It would be good to learn from the past mistakes and start the work of repairing bank balance sheets." — Reuters

Protests against Nokia's job cuts



A man throws a wooden pallet into a fire as Nokia's employees gather in front of their factory to protest against job cuts in Lannion, western France, on Monday. The Finnish telecom group Nokia announced in June 2020 a plan to cut around 1,200 jobs from its operations in France.

Maruti rolls out Swift's limited edition

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 19

Maruti Suzuki, India's biggest car maker, on Monday launched Swift Limited Edition, ahead of the festive season to boost sales in Asia's third biggest economy.

It is priced between ₹5.19 lakh and ₹8.02 lakh at Delhi showroom, which is ₹24,990 more than regular models.

While it comes a few cosmetic tweaks here and there, the Maruti Suzuki Swift limited edition offers a bit bolder and



more dynamic look. The limited-edition hatchback follows an all-black dominant theme to make it look a bit sporty.

The hatchback sports new visual additions like

gloss black body kit, aerodynamic spoiler, body side moulding, door visor, all-black garnish on grill, tail lamp and fog lamp.

Now in its third generation, the Maruti Suzuki

Job losses put thousands on verge of eviction in US

New York/Chicago, Oct. 19: On September 1, US health officials announced they would suspend evictions across the United States to help stem further spread of the novel coronavirus.

That was three days too late for Latrise Bean. About 72 hours before the declaration by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Bean, 35, was ordered evicted from her Milwaukee apartment. She'd lived there for three years despite the sagging ceilings, smell of urine in

the hallways and homeless squatters in the basement — because it was all she could afford.

Bean, whose hours as a fraud specialist at a software company had been cut due to the pandemic, tried to find a new place. But with the eviction on her record, landlord after landlord rejected her. She is now sharing an air mattress with her five-year-old daughter, in a temporary unit in a neighborhood even worse than the one she left behind.

"I feel so unlucky," said Bean. "I have really been

through it."

It has been a nightmare year for many of America's renters. The local, state and federal eviction bans that gave them temporary protection in the spring began to lapse in early summer — ensnaring renters like Bean in the gap. September's reprieve by the CDC, which protected many, but not all, renters will expire in January.

At that point, an estimated \$32 billion in back rent will come due, with up to 8 million tenants facing eviction filings, according

● JANUARY IS going to be a mess. Nobody can get a new place because they have an eviction case pending against them — and they don't have any money anyway, says Nick Toman, a Milwaukee Legal Aid lawyer.

to a tracking tool developed by the global advisory firm Stout Risius and Ross. The nonprofit group advocates for tenants in eviction court to secure lawyers.

In a typical year, 3.6 million people face eviction cases, according to the Princeton University Eviction Lab, a national housing research centre.

Landlords, most of whom are mom-and-pop operators with mortgages to pay, say they, too, are under unprecedented financial strain, as many move into the eighth month of nonpayment.

Many owners are "not generating sufficient revenue," said Bob Pinnegar, CEO of the National Apartment Association. "This is not a high-profit-

margin business."

"Only 9 cents of every dollar return to the owner or investor as profit," he added.

Unless Congress and the Trump administration move past their deadlock over the contours of a new Covid-19 relief package and include financial relief for tenants and landlords, January will bring a surge in displacement and homelessness "unlike anything we have ever seen," said John Pollock, a Public Justice Center attorney and coordinator of the National

Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel.

More than 60,000 evictions have been filed since the pandemic started in the 17 cities tracked by the Princeton Lab.

Health experts say evictions may contribute to a second-wave Covid-19 crisis, as the newly homeless are forced into shelters or tight quarters with friends and relatives, potentially exposing them to infection. The danger is particularly acute in the winter, when colder weather pushes people indoors. — Reuters

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