

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | 10 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

	Max: 34°C
	Min: 24°C
	RH: 58%
	Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Rain likely. Max/Min
temp. 34/24 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+97,760)	(+1,126)
44,61,603	75,050
	covid19india.org
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+2,479)	(+10)
TS: 1,47,642	916
(+10,418)	(+74)
AP: 5,27,512	4,634

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

	2,78,98,860
	DEATHS
	9,04,710

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

IN BRIEF

Kaloji award for Chandramouli

Warangal: The Telangana government has chosen noted Telugu writer, poet and academician, Prof. Rama Chandramouli, for the Kaloji Puraskaram. The 73-year-old writer wrote about 30 novels, among others.

■ Full report on Page 3



BUSINESS | 11

India set to exceed \$163b borrowing target



SPORTS | 12

Ronaldo second to score 100 international goals



TABLOID

Trial by media is questionable

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Vol. 83 No. 252 Established 1938 | 20 PAGES | ₹6.00

Landmark Bills aim to digitalise revenue dept

Task force to probe hefty hospital bills

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

The state government on Wednesday introduced four bills in the Assembly, paving way for digitisation of revenue records and land transactions to simplify the registration process.

While introducing the Telangana Rights in Land and Pattadar Passbooks Bill, 2020, and the Telangana Abolition of the Posts of Village Revenue Officers Bill, 2020, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said citizens in the state can soon transfer both agricultural and non-agricultural properties at click of a button through the upcoming Dharani portal, rather than running from one government office to another.

Municipal administration minister K. T. Rama Rao introduced the Telangana Municipal Laws Amendment Bill, 2020 and panchayat raj minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao introduced the Telangana Panchayat Raj Amendment Bill, 2020.

All four bills are aimed at ushering revolutionary reforms in the land administration in the state.

■ Page 4: CM says land will be surveyed again

BHATTI HITS OUT AT TRS MIS-STEP

BALU PULIPAKA | DC

HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

The state government has failed on every front with respect to controlling and combating Covid-19, the Congress said.

Congress leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that continued missteps by the government, including the opening of liquor shops, allowing Covid-19 positive individ-

uals to stay at home instead of placing them in institutional quarantine, allowed the disease to spread among the rest of family and the public.

The government's reluctance to take suggestions from opposition parties and experts have led to the current Covid-19 situation in the state.

■ Page 4: Doctors shortage in districts, says Bhatti

Indians take over new peaks, situation tense

Chinese lose tactical advantage at north bank of Pangong also

PAWAN BALI | DC

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

In the latest move, the Indian Army reportedly occupied heights on the north bank of Pangong Tso which overlook Chinese positions on the ridge-lines in the Finger 4 area. This means that the Indian Army now has tactical advantage on both, north and south banks of the Pangong Tso.

Mountain warfare is all about dominating the heights, and since they have come under the Indian Army's control, there are reports that China has started building up its forces on the north bank of Pangong Tso and is trying to come closer to the Indian position at Finger 4.

The whole Pangong Tso area in the Ladakh sector is on edge with expectation of some kind of action from the Chinese Army to regain lost ground on the south of the lake where India had in a pre-emptive move occupied two dozen strategic heights.

What has added to the tension is the fact that now all the action in the Pangong Tso area is being

Indians deeply entrenched on strategic heights

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC

HYDERABAD SEPT. 9

Positioned at a vantage point, well-equipped soldiers of the Indian Army are operating from trenches with overhead protection at heights they took control of more than 10 days ago, with ample time for them to consolidate their positions.

The options before the People's Liberation Army to regain control of those heights are limited — either an air strike or send their infantry up which could come with huge costs. To take on one platoon of the Indian Army sitting pretty on those heights, they would need 10 of their platoons.

■ Full report on Page 7

Jaishankar to tell China good ties are key to peace

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to tell his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the sidelines of SCO foreign ministers meeting that peace on the borders is closely linked to the development of bilateral ties between the two Asian giants and that China must de-escalate by disengaging its troops to restore the April status quo in the Ladakh sector. Reports from Beijing cited the Chinese foreign ministry as saying there would be a Russia-India-China trilateral foreign ministers' luncheon meeting in Moscow on Thursday.

■ Full report on Page 7

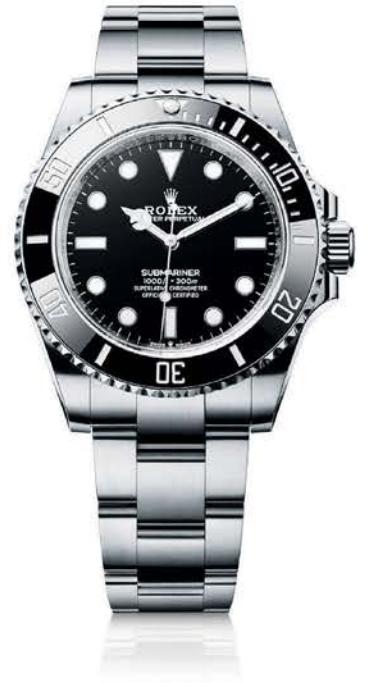
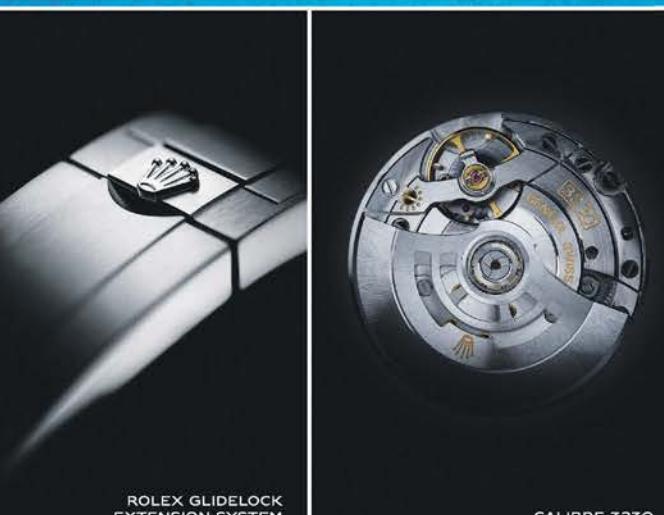
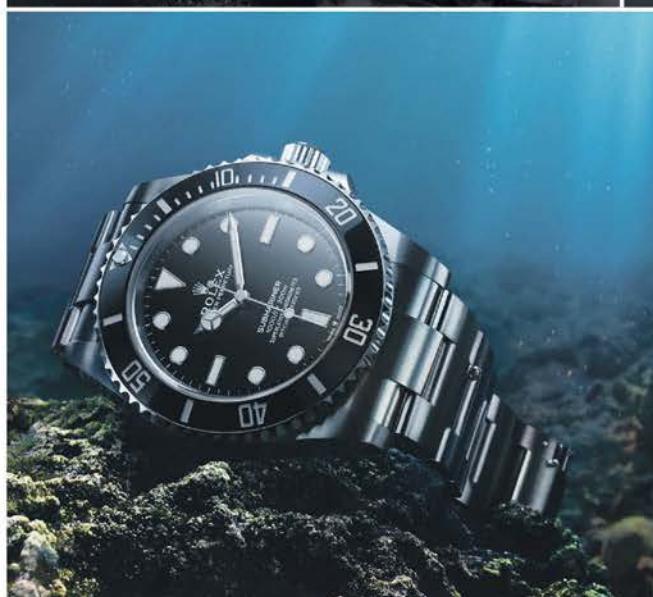
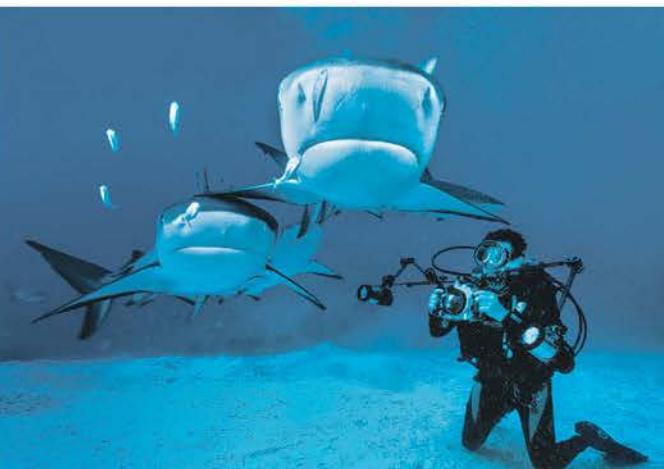
controlled directly by the commanders in Beijing and it's no longer in the hands of local PLA officers.

To put pressure on India, China had also brought forward its 15-20 tanks near Spanggur Gap, a mountain pass on the LAC, between China and

India. India too has deployed its battle tanks. In its Moldo garrison, China has now deployed 5,000-7,000 soldiers and India also has a similar number of soldiers in the area. Chinese troops are on a daily basis trying to threaten Indians positions. India has built

defences and put barbed wire around its positions and has warned Chinese that crossing these wires will attract strong reaction from the Indian Army.

In May, the Chinese had crossed the LAC on the north bank of Pangong Tso and occupied eight km between Finger 4 and 8.



THE NEW GENERATION SUBMARINER

Built for divers in 1953, the Submariner soon set the standard, making it the ultimate watch for underwater exploration and reliability, the iconic design transcended its original purpose. While remaining true to its diving heritage, the Submariner also became the watch of choice on land, and the perfect companion to mark the memorable moments in the lives of its wearers. Now, with a new 41 mm case and a next generation movement, the story of the Submariner continues.

#Perpetual

ROLEX


IN BRIEF

Orthodox church leader no more

Hyderabad: Rev. K.I. Philip Ramban, 86, passed away on September 7 at Puthupady in Kozhikode district of Kerala. He was the founder director of St Gregorios Balagram at Yacharam, and has served as director of several institutions of the Orthodox Church at Itarsi, Orissa, Uttarkashi, Kayamkulam, and Pune. The Orthodox church leader was endowed with the title of Ramban (monk).

Rev Philip Ramban who devoted his entire life for the uplift of the poor, had a deep connection with united AP. He entered the state to take up cyclone relief work in the 1970s and 1980s. From then on, AP was an important place from where his social activities for the uplift of the poor started. During the relief work he was struck by the helpless situation of children, especially children of leprosy patients. In 1985, determined to do something about it, a young Rev Fr Philip, set out to work at Yacharam, a hamlet about 50 km from Hyderabad. He told the leprosy affected parents about his plan and they agreed to let the children have a better life. Thus was born the Yacharam Balabhavan and today, children from the Balagaram have become engineers, and a few are studying abroad. A recipient of several awards from the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Rev Philip Ramban was honoured by the Indian

Orthodox Church with the title of 'Malankara Missionary Jyothi' for his work in transforming many lives.

TS Lawcet, PGLCET application date

Hyderabad: The last date for registration and submission of online applications of TS Lawcet and PGLCET 2020 were extended with a late fee of ₹4,000 upto September 20. The convener said that the decision was taken after requests from many candidates to enable registration of application forms by those candidates who already made payment of fees and also to give a last chance to the candidates to apply for the exams.

HC: No industries in residential zone

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court on Wednesday directed the GHMC not to allow industries in the Residential Zone and not to allow construction of houses in industrial areas. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and B. Vijay Reddy was dealing with a batch of PILs and petitions regarding pollution in the Shastripuram area of Ranga Reddy district. GHMC commissioner Lokesh Kumar appeared before the court through a video conference and explained that the civic body had pressed vigilance teams into the areas to find out if any pollution-generating industries were put up in the Shastripuram area.

DESPERATE MOVE

Docs say officers not appreciating their work, blaming them for rise in cases

NARENDER PULLOR | DC NIZAMABAD/KAMAREDDY, SEPT. 9

Unable to bear tremendous work pressure due to rising Covid-19 cases, the heads of medical and health institutions decided to quit their official posts. Government General Hospital (GGH), Nizamabad superintendent Dr M. Nageshwar Rao had already resigned from his post. Similarly, district medical and health officers (DM&HO) of Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts also offered to quit their posts.

There are 8,265 Covid-19 cases in Nizamabad district and 7,000 cases in Kamareddy district have been reported so far. For the last one month, Coronavirus positive cases are rapidly increasing in both the districts. On Tuesday alone, there were 433 positive cases in

COVID-19 CASES FOR LAST WEEK

	NIZAMABAD DISTRICT	KAMAREDDY DISTRICT
02.09.2020	97	62
03.09.2020	85	85
04.09.2020	93	60
05.09.2020	95	86
06.09.2020	94	46
07.09.2020	102	76
08.09.2020	101	94

Kamareddy district and 101 cases in Nizamabad district. Around 125 persons in Nizamabad district and 52 persons in Kamareddy district succumbed.

In this context, the doctors, especially those who are in administrative posts are facing pressure from higher-ups and others.

Reportedly, higher-ups blamed the district officials for the spike in Covid-19 cases and mishandling of

the situation. "We are not expecting appreciation from higher officials, at least they should understand the ground realities during the Coronavirus pandemic," a doctor said.

Kamareddy DM&HO Dr P. Chandrasekhar urged director health and family welfare to relieve him from the post citing health problems. Dr Chandrasekhar joined duties after a week-long leave.

TS records 2,479 cases, 10 more die

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Telangana recorded another 2,479 new Covid-19 cases even as 10 more people lost their lives from the disease in the state, according to the State Health Department. It said with these latest numbers, the total Covid-19 cases so far reached 1,47,642 while the number of deaths from the disease rose to 916, as on Tuesday evening.

As per the Covid-19 bulletin released on Wednesday morning for the 24-hour period between Monday and Tuesday evenings, Telangana had 31,654 active cases of

Covid-19. The number of people to have recovered from the disease so far was 1,15,072.

As has been the case from the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19 in the state, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area continued to have the most cases with 322 new Coronavirus infections being reported. The neighbouring Ranga Reddy and Medchal-Malkajgiri districts too registered cases nearing 200 each, at 188 and 183 respectively. While Warangal Urban district recorded 124 cases, Karimangar recorded 120 cases, Nalgonda 108, Nizamabad 101.

CM'S CHILDHOOD FRIEND DIES DUE TO CORONAVIRUS

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC WARANGAL, SEPT. 9

Kaleshwara Muktheeswara Swamy Devasthanam chairman Bommera Venkatesham (66) died due to Covid-19 on Wednesday. A two-time chairman of the temple located in Mahadevpur mandal of Jayashankar Bhupalpally district, Venkatesham, was undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at a private hospital in Hyderabad since a week. He breathed his last during the wee hours of Wednesday. Venkatesham was a childhood friend of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao.

New morning routine



Women cycle across the Durgam Cheruvu Cable bridge which is all set to be opened for the public on September 15. People are using the bridge in the meantime to refresh themselves by jogging, cycling and skateboarding in the mornings. — R. PAVAN

Accept mental health problem: Experts

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

On World Suicide Prevention Day, observed on September 10, mental health specialists state that identifying and accepting mental health problems are important and will help to deal with the stigma and reach out for help.

In India, patients who come with panic attacks, anxiety, sadness and other symptoms often report to their physicians with pain in the chest and stomach, acidity, migraine and other physical problems. While physical problems are ruled out in diagnostic reports, doctors often find that their problems are of the mind rather than the body.

To ease them, many of them are given mild anti-depressants. Dr Preeti Swaroop, president of the Hyderabad psychiatric society says, "This practice is because the patient is not willing to go to a mental health specialist as they cannot accept it. Many of them do not go to their treating doctor and switch when they are told that they have a problem which will require psychiatric intervention. In mild cases, these drugs bring relief and millions of such patients benefit. Due to this reason, there has not been a hue and cry raised.

But in moderate and severe cases, proper evaluation is required before giving these medicines. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors are given after counselling the patient and family members. They are told that these drugs take four to six weeks to work on the patient and during that time someone has to be with them always. Apart

1.39 lakh

In 2019, India has recorded 1.39 lakh suicides according to the National Crime Records Bureau.

Suicide in young adults in India in 2019 was 93,061 which is more when compared to 2018 that recorded 89,407

NCRB data states that suicide due to mental illness is high when compared to other causes like family problems, love affairs, drug abuse and alcohol addiction.

Males are found to suffer more than females.

Overall suicide numbers have risen by 3.4 per cent in one year.

3 short films throw light on suicide prevention

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Three short films focusing on mental health issues and suicide prevention, made by Anita Peter, the initiator of 'I-Pledge Awareness for Change' facilitating changes with social relevance, are set to be released on Thursday, coinciding with the World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10.

According to Anita, there were several taboos surrounding the issue of mental health. The films, to be released on YouTube on Thursday, are based on her book 'To win your battles STAY ALIVE', she said, adding that she had in the past

suffered from depression but managed to overcome it. The question that needs to be addressed is what needs to be done for a person who is undergoing depression and creating an awareness on the subject and educating people that seeking medical help under such conditions is not a taboo.

At the same time, the stressors which can further aggravate the behaviour of the person must not be around.

With many cases of depression leading to suicide, the treatment of depression is very important. Ushasree Tipirneni, director of Roshni Trust, a non-government organisation with a helpline for those suffering mental health problems explains,

The films, she said, throw light on the need for mental health awareness and the urgency for everyone to come together to eradicate the social stigma and taboos that surround mental health issues.

People who suffer from such conditions, should not be typecast and the focus should be on how to make such persons feel better, on getting a second chance. Society, she said at times engages in character assassination of either the victims or those associated with them, adding to the fear and social stigma. There is an urgent need to eradicate typecasting based on criteria's like age, gender, profession and social strata.

"Depression is an invisible enemy. It is a complex problem and does not have a single line of treatment."

There are multiple options where for mild treatment, therapy works, mild going to moderate requires medicines and severe requires high end drugs and also institutionalisation. These make many people uncomfortable. A large

FLO LAUNCHES 'SAY NO TO SUICIDE' VIDEO CHALLENGE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

The FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) and Roshni, and NGO on Wednesday announced the launch of a 'Say NO to Suicide' video challenge urging people to post their videos on social media platforms with the message 'Reach out...There's always someone'.

The campaign, launched to coincide with the World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, will be a year-long effort and is aimed at everyone working together towards preventing suicides, the two organisations said in a press release. They said that every 40 seconds, someone, somewhere, takes their own life which is precious and irreplaceable.

Number of people are not willing to accept mental health problems. With the affluent class suffering from a 'group of stressors,' mental health now being talked about openly but it is still only the tip of the iceberg state experts.

OGH docs go on strike for bigger space

Surgeons unhappy sharing space in post-operative ward

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

With a major space crunch in Osmania General Hospital (OGH) due to the closure of the heritage building, postgraduates of general medicine do not have space for operations and post-operative wards.

They were offered space in the cardio-thoracic and plastic surgery wards but they are not happy. There are 120 postgraduate doctors who have struck work and are unhappy that there is no space for them in the other buildings of Osmania General Hospital.

it with other surgical departments.

Dr B. Nagendra, superintendent of OGH, says, "I am talking to them and their head of the department explaining that as and when space is available, the issues will be sorted out. We are looking into it and we will resolve it soon."

Presently, elective surgeries are carried out in the department but the patients are in different wards which is making post-operative care difficult.

Wakf board CEO Khasim Covid +ve

ATHER MOIN | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Chief Executive Officer Wakf Board Mohammed Khasim has tested positive for Covid-19. He has gone into home isolation and is undergoing treatment there.

According to sources, in view of the Assembly Session, Covid test has been made compulsory for those attending the Assembly Session.

The presence of the CEO is essential to brief the government about matters related to wakf during the session to provide instant information.

positive and asymptomatic. He will be home quarantined for two weeks and work from home.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
0/0 THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Karimnagar, Telangana
RFP for Development, Operation & Maintenance
Municipal Corporation Karimnagar intends to RFP for Development, Operation & Maintenance of Pay & Use Public Toilets in Miryalaga Division of Nalgonda Circle. Note: The detailed information of tender can be obtained on our website: https://karimnagarcorporation.telangana.gov.in. Description: (1) Bid document download start date 11-09-2020, 01:00 PM (2) Last date for submission: 20-09-2020, 04:00 PM. Sd/- Commissioner Municipal Corporation Karimnagar
DPR No.879-PPCL-Agency/ADVT/1/2020-21, Dt:09-09-2020

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LTD.
Tender Notice
Tender Notice No. 01/2020-21. Sealed tenders invited for E/s to 23KW load cat-VII to Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential School in Peddavara Section of Miryalaga Division of Nalgonda Circle. Note: The detailed information of tender can be obtained on web site of TSSPDCL. https://www.tssouthernpower.com
R.O. No.878-PPCL-Agency/ADVT/1/2020-21, Dt:09-09-2020
Sd/- Divisional Engineer Electrical, TSSPDCL, Miryalaga

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
The Deputy Chief Engineer (Const-II), Northern Railway, Chandigarh for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work:-

Mod of tender	E-Tender with (Two Packet System)
Tender Notice No.	347-W/Const-II/CDG/2/2020-21 Dated: 08.09.2020
Full Name of Work	Construction of limited height subways/Road Under Bridges by Box Pushing technique in lieu of Level Crossing No. C-133, C-144, 154-C, 157-C, 160-C & 168-Special and other miscellaneous & allied works on limited height subways/Road Under Bridges on Ambala-Ludhiana section.
Approximate Cost	₹2272.56 Lakh
Earnest Money Amount (to be deposited Online)	₹12,86,300.00
Issue of Tender Notice Start of availability of tender document at www.reps.gov.in	11.09.2020
Site visit:	The prospective bidders may contact Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction-II) Northern Railway, Chandigarh (Mobile No. 8146633877) for further details
Last date of receipt of queries at e-mail address	dycc2ed@gmail.com Contract person Sh. Williamji Singh (Mobile No. 8146633877)
Pre-bid Conference will held online at 11:00 hrs.	25.09.2020
Link will be uploaded on IREPS website	
Railway's response to queries latest by	03.10.2020
Start of Availability of tender for offering/quoting Rates	09.10.2020
End of Availability of tender Documents at	23.10.2020 upto 11:30 hours
Date and time of opening of tender	(Immediately after close of uploading of tender). In case of two packet system, Financial bids of the eligible tenderers would be opened subsequently on the date & time to be notified later on.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1974/20
WESTERN RAILWAY
NOTICE FOR INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR PROVIDING INTEGRATED LOGISTICS SOLUTION IN MUMBAI SUBURBAN AREA FOR MOVEMENT OF PARCELS
Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai Central, Western Railway invites interested parties to express their interest for providing Integrated Suburban Logistic Solution for pickup and delivery of parcels in Mumbai Suburban area. Mumbai Central Division, Western Railway will facilitate storage, movement and distribution of the parcel across the Mumbai suburban network to start with. The Division will provide state of art covered warehousing floor area of 6000 Square meters area in Virar Car Shed and will induce EUM rates of 6 coaches each for the purpose of transporting parcels from and to the aforesaid rail side warehouse on a timetable frequency and operate both fast & slow parcel services, as per mutually agreed terms and conditions. The Division will also provide space at prominent stations at convenient locations for distribution and collection of packages from and to end customers. This will ensure quick and seamless delivery of packages/parcel to the end customer by passing overstressed city traffic. Interested parties shall communicate their views on the revenue model and other associated issues on email id - bcrtdcm@gmail.com and contact on 900449950 and 9004499000. A meeting for the same would be held on 21.09.2020 at 15:00 hours through a VC link, which would be sent as a reply to the email received.

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ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana till 3.33 am (Friday)

Tithi: Bhadrapada Bahula Ashtami till 1.34 pm

Star: Rohini till 6.32 am;

7.35 pm to 9.18 pm

Durmuhurat: 10.11 am to 11 am; 3.04 pm to 3.53 pm

Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm

HIJRI CALENDAR

Muharram 21, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajr: 5.03 am

Zohar: 12.23 pm

Asar: 4.34 pm

Magrib: 6.28 pm

Isha: 7.37 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.22 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.03 AM

MOONSET TODAY 12.28 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 11.53 PM

COUNTER POINT



No breaking news?
Go and provoke
Kangana!

IN BRIEF

Unicef innovation challenge in schools

Hyderabad: The Telangana government has launched the online application for students to register and take part in the state-wide School Innovation challenge by UNICEF, for Classes VI-X studying in government and social welfare schools. The education commissioner said that the poster launch has already led to a tremendous response in terms of schools registering across the state. The challenge that looks at nurturing innovation among the students from Classes VI to X will be panned out from September to December 2020.

TS KALOJI AWARD FOR PROF RAMA CHANDRAMOULI

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT 9

The Telangana government has chosen noted Telugu writer, poet and academician, Prof. Rama Chandramouli, for the Kaloji Puraskaram.

The 73-year-old writer has made tremendous contributions to various genres of modern Telugu literature earning the respect of readers and critics alike. He is a multi-faceted creative genius who has to his credit about 30 novels, more than 350 short stories, 14 collections of poetry, four plays, a few critical works, a personality development book, some volumes of essays and 64 books in all.

Scholars have frequently noted that whatever he has created a literary work, it bore the stamp of his exceptional style and contained his own voice. Many of his writings have been rendered into English by well-known translators and launched on international forums. His writings have also been extensively translated into other Indian languages and they have enthralled lovers of literature at many national literary forums.

In recognition for his contribution to literature he has been conferred the 'Telugu University Poetry Award - 2007', 'Swarna Nandi Award - 2011,' and most recently, on June 10, 2019, he was selected by an international jury for the famous International Lifetime Achievement Award 'NaijNaamam Literary Prize - 2019' as one of the four Indians among 60 winners spread across the world.

Apart from the above, he has won all the poetry awards instituted in honour of famous Telugu poets.

He has been a Professor of Mechanical Engineering for about 48 years.



Parents wary of return to school

Worried over children carrying the virus home, risking lives of elderly people

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

The Union health ministry's announcement allowing schools to re-open, resuming the face-to-face method of teaching-learning from September 21 has received mixed responses from parents in the city.

The ministry of health and family welfare on Tuesday issued social distancing guidelines, including the use of face

masks, maintaining six feet distance between students, following respiratory etiquette, installation of Aarogya Setu application 'wherever feasible' and prohibition of spitting while allowing students of Class 9 to 12 to voluntarily attend school physically.

However, parents are wary of sending their children to school at least until November or December this year.

Several parents

● **PARENTS ARE** wary of sending their children to school at least until November or December this year.

● **THEY EXPRESSED** concern over rising cases in the state and country

expressed concern over the rising cases in the state and country, saying if students go to school, even with all the precautions, there is a high

chance that they will carry the virus back home and risk the lives of the elderly. They also cited instances of improper implementation of guidelines in the recently held competitive exams.

Some parents, especially of students from Classes 11 and 12, said that if the schools can convince them of the establishment of all safety measures, they might consider sending them to school.

Birender Suthar, a par-

ent of a student in Class 12 in Glendale Academy said, "I think schools can open with proper precautions, and I will be willing to send my child to hold competitive exams."

The Hyderabad schools' parents' association (HSPA) raised pertinent questions over the readiness of the schools in the city.

They said, "Most schools are not spacious enough to allow or maintain social distancing

norms (six feet distance), making it unavoidable to catch the infection. Commuting will also pose a threat as long-distance travelling may require use of packed shared autos and buses which too may be dangerous to use."

They also raised questions on how the state government plans to handle the situation if positive cases emerge out of school re-opening or if either staff or students fall sick.

Online / Classroom Course for CAT '20/21
2125+ T.I.M.E. students into the IIMs in CAT 2019 & counting...
*Results validated by VSMB and Associates on 24/08/2020
Celebration Offer
₹ 5000/- OFF
on CAT 2020 course fee
₹ 4000/- OFF
on CAT 2021 course fee
Hurry! Offer valid till 13th Sept. only
Join the proven leader in CAT training
T.I.M.E. Call: 40088300 / 9121177880
Triumph Institute of Management Education Pvt. Ltd. Enroll @ www.tiime.in/enroll

PEDESTRIANS, BIKE RIDERS PRONE TO MISHAPS: POLICE

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Pedestrians and two-wheeler drivers are most vulnerable among road users, say officials of Cyberabad Traffic Police.

Between August 31 and September 6, a total of 14 people lost their lives and 77 were injured in road accidents in their limits. As it turns out, pedestrians and two-wheeler riders suffered the most.

There were 14 fatalities and 51 accidents that left victims injured. There were eight accidents involving two-wheelers resulting in the loss of eight lives. Similarly, there were four accidents involving pedestrians which resulted in four deaths.

Three two-wheeler riders lost their lives and were not wearing helmets, while two helmet-less pillion riders who also lost their lives.

In a report released on Wednesday, officials of the department said that 48 accidents took place because the motorists were driving over the prescribed speed-limit. Another reason is the number of cases where rash driving was involved.

There were seven accidents because of wrong-side driving. In one instance, an accident occurred because the driver was sleepy and another when an animal was crossing the road.

CRIMINAL CASE ON EIGERBUCK CEO FOR CHEATING PNB

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

A criminal case has been registered against the CEO of a company for submitting tampered property documents to a bank and obtaining a loan of ₹5.90 crore. The fraud came to light when the CEO failed to repay the loan.

The Central Crime Station, Hyderabad, arrested the accused, 37-year-old Gunti Suman, CEO and director of Eigerbuck Private Limited and booked him under multiple counts for cheating the Punjab National Bank by producing tampered land documents and taking the loan. Police said the land mortgaged to the bank was originally owned by Raheemuddin, who was the pattadar of a 10,540 square yard plot in Lingoijuda village in Saroornagar mandal.



Parents of students who accompanied their children to write Eamcet exam on Wednesday had a tough time waiting outside the centres without observing physical distancing norms under the hot sun at Alwal in Hyderabad as they had no other option.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Eamcet centres continue to violate distancing rules

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Like the JEE (main), social distancing and other safety norms were thrown out of the window yet again on the first day of the TS-EAMCET 2020 for engineering candidates on Wednesday.

Outside the iON Digital Zone, Old Alwal, scenes were miserable as parents who accompanied their children to write the exam crowded outside the exam centre even as tempera-

tures rose. The safety arrangements were such that students were forced to enter and exit the exam centre through the entrance of the adjoining eatery.

Inside the exam centre, students who wished to remain anonymous told *Deccan Chronicle* that no seat gap between students was maintained and no measures were taken after the exam for students to exit the exam centre while maintaining physical distance.

There were also complaints that invigilators were not wearing masks properly even as they went from student to student for signatures on the attendance sheet.

Several students on Twitter said that they are

complained that no masks or gloves were provided outside the centre and some candidates didn't even wear masks because they thought they would be provided with one.

There were also complaints that invigilators were not wearing masks properly even as they went from student to student for signatures on the attendance sheet.

Several students on Twitter said that they are

wary of what will happen in the next few days of the exam.

Some even raised concerns about the upcoming NEET examination on September 13 that will see 55800 students appearing for the exam in Telangana at 112 centres, whereas in Andhra Pradesh, 61,892 students will take the exam at 151 centres.

Telangana Eamcet candidates say that if this situation persists, more students will be exposed to the virus.

Top cop tells auto drivers to aid tourism

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Hospitality is the primary factor in showcasing a city's identity and its cultural richness, and helps bolster its tourism value.

In order to achieve this, the local transport mode plays a key role while for ensuring safety of tourists. This can be

achieved significantly by auto-rickshaw drivers with their behaviour and safe driving as true-blue flag-bearers of 'My Auto is Safe' initiative launched by Hyderabad Traffic Police. These points were highlighted by city traffic additional CP Anil Kumar, during a meeting with all Auto Unions of Hyderabad here on Wednesday. Anil Kumar

urged auto unions to make Hyderabad as the best city for tourism and strive to uphold its image, which, in turn, increases their business.

He urged the unions to prepare 'Conduct Rules' for auto drivers and caution all of them against criminal activities. He urged them to share any information with the police with regard to safe-

ty and security aspects and help prevent crimes.

He wanted auto-owners to verify the credentials of drivers who take them on rental basis.

He presented "My Auto is Safe" initiation. Close to one lakh autos are registered in the city. He showed experiences of passengers, the officials keeping a tab on drivers who misbehave.

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SHORT TAKES
School bus cleaner
get RI of girl abuse

Hyderabad: The cleaner of a school bus has been sentenced to two-year rigorous imprisonment on Wednesday for outraging the modesty of a minor. U. Sathyanarayana, a resident of Laxmi Nagar Colony in Kothapet, was working as cleaner of a bus that used to pick up and drop students from their homes. On April 2 last year after the school, Sathyanarayana took the girl to the cellar of the school and outraged her modesty, Chaitanya police officials said.

BHATTI: DOCTORS SHORTAGE IN DISTRICTS

From Page 1

Taking part in a discussion on Covid-19 situation in the state in the legislative assembly on Wednesday, Vikramarka also accused the state government and the Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekhar Rao, of practically shutting down the opposition, including the Congress from contributing to the cause of fighting Covid-19 in the state.

"As the CLP, we six Congress members sought an official appointment with the Chief Minister to present our views and suggestions. Instead of meeting with us, the government placed all of us under house arrest," he said.

From the day one, the Congress made it clear that it will stand with the government on any effort to contain and combat the disease, said Vikramarka.

"We supported the government on all its decisions, including joining in clapping of our hands to drive corona away. When asked to switch off the lights at home and light lamps, we did," he said.

The Congress' only aim was to join forces with the government in combating the disease and assist the government in any way possible.

Holding the government's feet to the fire over the inadequate measures put in place to fight the disease, Vikramarka, based on his extensive tour of the districts, said that many posts of doctors and paramedical staff in government hospitals were vacant.

"Former MLA Sunnam Rajaiah died from Covid-19 because there was no one to care for him at the hospital in Khamman," Vikramarka said. In 23 districts of the state, against the sanctioned strength of 8,771 doctors and paramedical staff, there are 4,210 vacancies, Vikramarka pointed out, urging the government to fill these positions.

He also said the government must release ₹100 crore for each district, so local administrations can equip themselves and effectively combat the spread of Covid-19.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby informed that my client, NS Core care Pvt. Ltd., has entered in to an agreement of sale for the purchase of Ushamallipudi Cardiac Centre Hyderabad, along with Land totally measuring 11 Acres and built up area of 2,30,000 Sq. Feet, Thereon, located at Survey No. 222, Gajularamaram, Outbulapur Mandal, Hyderabad, Telangana-500 055 from its owners, Dr.Rathan V. Mullapudi, Dr. Nalinimallapudi and Mrs. JyotiMullapudi.

If any third party has a claim over the said Cardiac Center, they may contact +91 8333 079 999 within 14 days from the date of this notice.

Sd/-
BODDEPALI SIMCHALAM AND ASSOCIATE ADVOCATES
Off. & Res. : Plot No. 1-32-9,
Kanajiguda, Near Indiranagar,
Tirumalgherry, Secunderabad-
15. Cell No. 9397858168
Mail: chalam.usha@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The person mentioned in the schedule below having handed over their vehicles to Sundaram Motors Bangalore for repairs, the particulars of which are mentioned therein, have not taken deliveries in spite of registered notice (Acknowledgement due) to them. They have not paid the repair charges/garage rent.

Sundaram Motors, No 107 Kasturba Road, Bangalore 560001 is constrained to issue public notice intimating that the vehicles will be disposed off by us if no response is received within 7 days from today by respective parties.

Name & address with particulars of the vehicle

1) Ms. Baba Theatres and Hotels Pvt. Ltd., No. 3-4-1043/21, Barkatpura, Hyderabad - 500027
Car Model: E250D
Regn No: AP-09-M-7080
Contact Person:
M.S. Ravikumar, Sundaram Motors, 107, Kasturba Road, Bangalore 560001
Ph: 9845082248

HC seeks clarity on masjid

Petitioner contended mosque in Secretariat was demolished intentionally

**VUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9**

Telangana High Court on Wednesday sought explanation from the State government whether the proposed new construction of masjid in the Secretariat will be at the same place or it was planned at a different location in the premises. The court also wanted to know if it was in any other location and whether the government was following provisions of Wakf Act, which stipulated certain land acquisition procedures while taking masjid or Wakf property.

The division bench, comprising Chief Justice Ragavendra Singh Chauhan and

Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy, was hearing three separate pleas by M. Zakeer Hussain Javid, Md. Afzal Uddin Dakhani, and Khaja Aizazuddin, all advocates with a common plea-directing the Telangana government to construct the two mosques in the Secretariat premises. Syed Yasir Mamoon, counsel for a petitioner, contended that the mosque was demolished intentionally.

"Though, the Chief Minister announced that a moderate and spacious mosque will be built in the Secretariat premises, there is no clarity as to whether the mosque will be constructed on the same place where it had stood. The earlier one was spread over 647 Sq. Yds whereas

the government undertaking before the Court says that it would be constructed on a 1,500 Sq. feet land and Sec. 51 of Wakf Act, 1995 clearly says that Wakf property cannot be transferred and accordingly, the mosque cannot be built at any other place," he added.

The counsel further made redundant certain arguments before the Court saying that the rights of minorities are being deprived and they were targeted by the government and further said that if the court will not interfere in this issue, the faith on judiciary would be lost.

Responding to the contentions of the counsel, Chief Justice Chauhan asked "Whether there is any pre-requisite in Is-

lam, that mosque should be at a particular place or it should be at the same place, if there was a need to remove it. If we have full faith in God, He accepts our prayers even if it is an open space or a desert."

The CJ said "However, apart from submitting an undertaking before the Court by the government, the Chief Minister has been assuring to build a more spacious mosque. Why don't you target the government?"

The Court directed the Advocate General BS Prasad to file a detailed counter affidavit, replying to all the contentions raised by the counsel and observed "as per the Islamic customs, if the land was dedicated to Allah or God, the land sh-

ould not be used for any other purpose and if the government wants that particular land, suitable land should be allocated for a new one and you cannot deviate from the procedure established".

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CM: Land will be surveyed again

From Page 1

SALIENT FEATURES OF BILL

Linking the introduction of the historic revenue reforms to his struggle during the statehood agitation emotionally, KCR said that he felt the same momentous joy and immense satisfaction as he felt when Telangana statehood was achieved.

- The government will replace Revenue Courts with Revenue Tribunals to deal land disputes under the New Law.
- There are 16,137 cases pending before Tahsildar, RDO and Joint Collector Courts across the state and the government will set up 16 tribunals to deal with these cases and dispose of them within the prescribed time limit.

- This will enable the goals of ease of doing business and greater transparency and accountability in the department.
- To protect the lands belonging to the State Government or Central Government
- To increase transfer in Revenue and to evolve good practices to end corruption in revenue administration to provide accountable and responsive revenue

KThis is an historic day in my life. The good deeds done in the previous birth are reaping fruits in this life and have given this opportunity to introduce an historical Bill which turns the fortunes of Telangana and its people." — KCR

KCR lashes out at private hospitals

From page 1

He appreciated Congress leader Malla Bhatti Vikramarka for suggesting the setting up the taskforce headed by senior IAS officers to monitor the charges collected by the private hospitals from Covid-19 patients.

"Sensing the danger from corporate hospitals exploiting Covid-19 patients, we tried our best not to allow them to offer Covid-19 treatment.

Participating in the short discussion, BJP MLA T. Raja Singh demanded the construction of Osmania hospital and the MIM floor leader requested the CM not to demolish the Osmania hospital building.

While suggesting that the Centre increase the budget for medical infrastructure, Rao told the House that the state government is also mulling over increasing the medical and health budget considerably to be ready to tackle any medical emergency like Covid-19 in the future.

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SHORT TAKES

**AP RECORDS
10,418 CASES,
74 DEATHS**

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 9

Andhra Pradesh has registered 10,418 new Covid-19 cases increasing its overall tally to 5,27,512 and with 74 deaths the toll has touched 4,634 in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities released the latest bulletin here on Wednesday reporting that out of 71,692 samples tested, 10,418 individuals have been found positive to Coronavirus.

Out of 43,08,762 samples tested so far in the state, 4,25,607 patients have been discharged after recovery while 97,271 patients are undergoing treatment in various hospitals.

KISAN RAIL HEADS OFF TO DELHI

DC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR/
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 9

Chief Minister, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, along with union agriculture minister, Narendra Singh Tomar, flagged off the Kisan rail train from Anantapur to New Delhi on Wednesday fulfilling the long-awaited dream of horticultural farmers of the Rayalaseema region.

Requesting railway officials to reduce the fares as they are slightly on the higher side, Jagan asked them to provide a good remunerative price for the farmers.

This is south India's first (and second in the country as a whole) train to operate between Anantapur-New Delhi's Azadpur market. The Kisan train with 322 tonnes of horticultural produce — 80 metric tonnes of banana, 202 metric tonnes of tomatoes, 22 metric tonnes of sweet oranges, 5 metric tonnes of papayas, 10 metric tonnes of muskmelons — filled in 14 wagons was departed for New Delhi.

AP GOVT STILL RELIES ON PVT OUTSOURCING

V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, SEPT. 9

In utter disregard to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's vision to eliminate middlemen in recruitment of outsourcing personnel, several state government departments are recruiting outsourced employees through private agencies. Even a year since the one-of-its-kind Andhra Pradesh Corporation for Outsourced Services (APCOS) had come up a majority of government departments are not enrolled with APCOS and continue to maintain their outsourced employees through private agencies. Though the government constituted an APCOS governing body with senior IAS officers covering all the line departments, several government departments are ignoring APCOS guidelines.

However, departments like Endowments, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, Municipal Administration have not deputed their existing outsourced employees to APCOS. A large number of private outsourced employees are working in various temples of the Endowment Department. Meanwhile, AP Eastern Power Distribution and Southern Power Distribution Companies, AP Transmission Company have directed circle-level authorities to recruit about 1,000 shift operator posts through private agencies.

Addl collector held for taking bribe in land deal

ACB seize incriminating documents from his house

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Officials of the Anti-Corruption Bureau on Wednesday arrested Medak district's additional collector Gaddam Nagesh and four others for demanding and accepting a bribe of ₹1.12 crore for granting no-objective certificate with respect to a land transaction.

According to the ACB, the others who have been held in this case are the Narsapur revenue divisional officer B. Aruna Reddy, Chilpiched Tahsildar Abdul Sattar, a junior assistant in the district's survey and land records department Mohd. Waseem Ahmed.

Also arrested was Kola Jeevan Goud, who was operating as the additional collector's benami.



The house of Nagesh Gaddam, additional collector of Medak, which was raided by ACB on Wednesday.



Gaddam Nagesh

According to ACB officials, the arrests followed an investigation prompted by a complaint filed by K. Linga Murthy

on August 22 who said that he sought an NOC from the district authorities for buying 112.21 acres in Chippalaturthi village of Narsapur this February.

KCR, Akbar spar over Covid-19 crisis in state

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

There was a war of words in the State Legislative Assembly on Wednesday between AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao over handling of the Covid-19 crisis in Telangana.

Owaisi went on to accuse the CM of not letting him speak so that he could voice his concerns and walked out of the House. The Chief Minister hit out at the AIMIM leader for his comments against the state government on tackling of Coronavirus cases.

Earlier, Owaisi had remarked that he had not seen the state government making any achievement in tackling the COVID-19. To this, the CM said he was not ready to accept Owaisi's "attempt to project the scene as a failure of the

government." The issue came to the fore when health minister Etala Rajender was briefing the House on the spread of Covid-19 in the state and its efforts to contain the pandemic.

Owaisi, while appreciating frontline responders like sanitation staff, technicians, burial ground workers, health workers and doctors, raised objection that the note given by the health minister had mentioned no such appreciation.

The AIMIM leader said there was no mention of the amount spent to tackle the situation and the impact of the pandemic on the state's economy, its finances, society and livelihoods of people. Expressing anguish, he alleged that the government was not serious about the matter.

Responding to AIMIM leader's statement, the Chief Minister said, "We will give all the information about the Mahabharata. But we will not accept attempts to project the issue as a failure of the government." If he (Owaisi) wants all of these details, we will send it to him, the CM said. He pointed out that Telangana is first in the country to give incentives to health workers and gram panchayat staff. The Chief Minister accused Owaisi of play to the gallery, instead of discussing the issue.

When Akbaruddin went on to suggest that there should be a plan to deal with the issue if there is a second wave of infections and spoke about oxygen beds in hospitals, Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy asked the AIMIM leader to conclude. At this, Owaisi got angry and walked out of the House, saying people of the state are watching what all is happening.

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DECCAN Chronicle

10 SEPTEMBER 2020

India, China leaders must defuse Ladakh row swiftly

The escalation of the already tense stand-off at the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh by Chinese troops earlier this week, with the People's Liberation Army trying hard, unsuccessfully, to dislodge Indian soldiers from the commanding heights at Mukhpuri (at over 18,000 ft), on the ridgeline north of Rezang La, led to the first shots fired at the LAC in 45 years. While there are claims and counter-claims on who fired the first shot, it seems clear that Chinese forces — armed with machetes, spears, clubs and automatic weapons — tried to intimidate the Indians into retreating with a show of force and firing in the air, but backed off when the Indian Army didn't budge, using loudspeakers and floodlights and firing in the air to stop the Chinese advancing. No clash took place, and there were no casualties, but if more such encounters occur, the two sides may end up shooting at each other, and from that it's just one step to a full-fledged war. While senior officers of the two armies are talking to each other, the two governments must actively step in now. External affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is in Moscow to attend a foreign ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and he will meet China's foreign minister Wang Yi in a face-to-face encounter, the first between since the stand-off began in early May. Mr Wang Yi is not only foreign minister, but also a state councillor (which ranks higher in Beijing's hierarchy) and special representative on the boundary issue and is well versed in its nuts and bolts. He is also due to talk to India's special representative, NSA Ajit Doval, in the coming days.

There is a long history, over decades, of the Chinese side intruding across the LAC, but after a brief period the PLA troops usually withdraw. The current stand-off is unusual, even in contrast to Doklam in 2017, in its duration (now in its fifth month) and because the Chinese are showing no sign of withdrawing from the areas they occupied, such as from Finger 4 to Finger 8 and in Chusul (where Monday night's firing took place) and go back to their pre-April 2020 positions. This is what India has been consistently demanding. The Indian Army's pre-emptive move to occupy two dozen strategic heights on Pangong Tso's southern banks late last month — giving Indian soldiers the tactical advantage as they can keep a close watch on PLA movements — is said to have rattled the Chinese, and some of their renewed aggressiveness is attributed to this. With winter just two months away, India could use its control of these heights to negotiate with China from a position of strength and push for a swift return to the status quo.

While the Ladakh situation is critical, it's not the only place China is intruding into Indian territory. Transgressions by the PLA are reported across the 4,056-km LAC, in Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, which the Chinese call "Southern Tibet". China's aim is clearly to keep the Indian Army on edge across the long frontier.

Unless there is a swift breakthrough at Mr Jaishankar's Moscow talks, it may be time to involve the top leadership. China has consistently held, as has India, that bilateral negotiations are the only way forward. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping should start talking before it is too late.

A bizarre potboiler

The bizarre events that followed the tragic death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput have reached a curious point with the arrest of his friend Rhea Chakraborty by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on charges of "procuring drugs for him and for managing finance for drug procurement with him". The charge is based on the discovery of 59 grams of curated marijuana from the possession of two drug peddlers whom the agency alleges have links to Sushant Singh. It has admitted it found no "drug" on Rhea. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), as ordered by the Supreme Court, has started investigation into the death, which the victim's father himself had said was a suicide. The agency has in the past proved deaths, marked as suicides, to be murders after investigation, but this would perhaps be the first case in which it would be investigating a suicide. One cannot lose sight of the incredible amount of energy being spent on and the hard politicking being involved in the case. Three Central government agencies — the CBI, the Enforcement Directorate and the NCB — have their attention focused on the case. Remember, the Bihar government had lost no time demanding a CBI investigation saying the actor hailed from Bihar. Now the state, which goes to polls in a couple of months, reverberates with the slogan "Justice for Sushant" as if it has no other issues to grapple with.

All this happens at a time when the world has started taking a liberal view of drugs such as marijuana; some countries have either legalised or been contemplating legalising its use and instead chase more harmful synthetic drugs that permanently damage lives. One may only hope that the central agencies have set professional targets in this case and are not playing a role in a drama to divert public attention from real problems the country is faced with and to which the government seems to have no solution.

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Sanju Verma

Worst over, healthy auto sales signal bounceback

India's GDP decline of 23.9 per cent for the June 2020 quarter has generated heated debate. A stringent lockdown necessitated by the worst global pandemic in 102 years was enforced with the idea of saving lives. Thanks to the lockdown, India's track record turned out superior to other nations', with a fatality rate below two per cent. In fact, every major global economy contracted sharply in the June quarter.

While the United States reported a staggering 32.9 per cent annualised crash in GDP growth, the comparable fall was 42.9 per cent for Singapore, a decline of 38.7 per cent for Canada, a 12.1 per cent fall for Eurozone, a 10.1 per cent drop for Germany, a steep contraction of 20.4 per cent for the United Kingdom and a massive plunge of 27.8 per cent in the case of Japan. In India's case, we had a bright spot, with the agriculture sector growing by a healthy 3.4 per cent in that quarter.

Another fact that deserves attention is the GDP data pertaining to the March 2020 quarter. Much before the global pandemic struck, while India's GDP grew at only 3.1 per cent, we were the only large economy to report posi-

tive growth in the March quarter, with agriculture growing by a solid 5.9 per cent. Other economies like the US contracted by 4.8 per cent; Germany by 2.2 per cent, Eurozone by 3.8 per cent and China actually saw a steep GDP fall of 6.8 per cent in March quarter. Global rating giant S&P says India will have a V-shaped recovery, with a projected GDP growth of 8.5 per cent for 2021-22, far higher than its international peers.

Thanks to stellar reforms in the last six years by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India became the fifth largest economy in the world, after surpassing the United Kingdom in February 2020, after becoming the sixth largest overtaking France in 2019. The media has been screaming itself hoarse about India's biggest GDP drop in 40 years but it failed to inform its audience that, on the positive side, India's policy repute at four per cent is the lowest in 58 years. The coal sector was denationalised and coal mining was privatised for the first time in 2019-2020 after 47 years. Banking consolidation by merging 10 public sector banks into four, starting April 2020, has happened for the first time in 51 years.

The country's foreign exchange reserves swelled to a record high of \$538.191 billion. The best part is short-term trade credit at just 18.2 per cent of overall external debt. Again, over 66 per cent of the aforesaid accretion in forex reserves in the past one year is accounted for by stable and high quality FDI and not fickle FII flows.

Is the worst over? The answer is a decisive "yes". Take the GST revenues for August, for instance, which stood at ₹36,449 crore. Despite the lockdown, this was 88 per cent of the GST collected in the same month last year. Overall, 48.3 million e-way bills were generated in July, almost back to pre-Covid levels of 55.3 million bills, in January 2020.

Again, Indian Railways Freight loading for August 2020, at 94.33 million tonnes, was 3.31 million tonnes higher compared to August 2019. CBDT has, so far, issued refunds of over ₹88,652 crore to more than 24,64 lakh taxpayers from April 1, 2020, onwards. The Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) stood at 52 in August, up from 46 in July. Amounts sanctioned under the emergency credit line guarantee scheme (ECLGS) by public sector banks increased to ₹76,044.44 crores, as of August 18, 2020. Similarly, private

banks sanctioned loans to the tune of ₹74,715.02 crores, under ECLGS, pointing at a swift uplift in the economy.

More importantly, let Modi say-sayers not forget that 20 billion dollars is what India attracted in investments and pledges from 15 companies in just three months from April to July 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. This US \$20bn is a massive vote of confidence for Modinomics, by some of the world's largest and richest corporations like Google, Facebook, Walmart, Samsung, Apple, Saudi Arabia's PIF, SGS, Axtria, and so on. Taiwanese company, Pegatron, is the fourth Apple supplier to decide to set up a base in India, after Foxconn, Wistron and Compal Electronics have pledged billions.

Suffice to say that India is not alone in this misfortune. Every global behemoth has been adversely impacted by Covid. But unlike others, India has a vibrant rural economy, accounting for over 50 per cent of our workforce. News has it that Australia is facing its worst recession in 30 years. China's food shops are running out of supplies and the US might end the year with a 4.2 per cent drop in consumption. In sharp contrast, India is doing a far better job

Subhani



NEP: Ambitious targets set for education sector



Amitabha Bhattacharya

The National Education Policy 2020 in 65 pages, distilled from its 500-page draft version and modified via extensive feedback and comments from all stakeholders, including schools, colleges, universities, state governments and the public, has aroused a great deal of interest. While a few commentators criticised it for inadequacies and some politicians went vocal over the language issues, the document has broadly been accepted as timely and progressive. It is a continuation of earlier policies, especially NEP (1986/1992), but also marks some significant departures from the past.

To appreciate NEP 2020's defining characteristics, one must remember it primarily reflects the nation's intent to shape the contours of this sector in the medium-to-long term, the implementation of which, based on carefully designed action plans, will depend upon mobilisation of the needed resources and the political will at all levels. Besides, this substantial number of our children have still been performing poorly, as measured by their learning outcome, remains a moot question. This and the remedial measures needed are addressed squarely in this document.

Second, based on the evidence of neuroscience that 83 per cent of a child's cumulative brain development occurs before the age of six years, pre-school education or school-preparedness for three years under Early Childhood Care and Education, facilitated by "play and discovery-based learning", has been proposed. In addition to the current coverage of 6-14 years under the existing law, three years of preschool and four years of secondary education, making integrated schooling from 3-18 years, will be the new norm. Achieving a GER of 100 per cent for this entire spectrum by 2030, and a GER of 50 per cent for higher (including vocational) education by 2035, has been targeted.

A document like this should be valued for the way continuation of validated ideas is seamlessly integrated with bold new ones. While earlier policies and recommendations of various commissions had indeed stressed upon inclusion and equitable access to education, need for flexibility in devising the cur-

riculum, reduction of academic load for schoolchildren, moving away from rote learning, putting teachers at the heart of the education system, universalisation of basic education, enhancement of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at every level, increasing public expenditure on education to six per cent of our GDP and the like, NEP 2020 should be characterised by the following factors.

First, it stresses on numeracy as much on literacy, urging the attainment of universal foundational literacy and numeracy of all children on a mission mode. In today's world, mathematical skills are as important as linguistic and other skills. Despite many attempts made so far, why a substantial number of our children have still been performing poorly, as measured by their learning outcome, remains a moot question. This and the remedial measures needed are addressed squarely in this document.

Second, based on the evidence of neuroscience that 83 per cent of a child's cumulative brain development occurs before the age of six years, pre-school education or school-preparedness for three years under Early Childhood Care and Education, facilitated by "play and discovery-based learning", has been proposed. In addition to the current coverage of 6-14 years under the existing law, three years of preschool and four years of secondary education, making integrated schooling from 3-18 years, will be the new norm.

Achieving a GER of 100 per cent for this entire spectrum by 2030, and a GER of 50 per cent for higher (including vocational) education by 2035, has been targeted. Ambitious, but not unachievable.

Thirdly, NEP seeks to restore the importance of the arts, humanities and social sciences in our education system. In our engagement with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), as these areas offer higher employment opportunities, we have accorded lesser value and importance to non-STEM disciplines. Institutions focusing only on engineering, medicine or legal studies have inherent limitations, and this model often militates against the idea of a university. Introducing flexibility in course design, allowing much greater choice to students for selecting subjects as per their aptitude and preferences, offering different entry and exit options, and stressing on the crucial need for multi-disciplinaryity in education are among the measures suggested.

Fourth, the quality of research in most of our universities, especially in science, has been declining. NEP addresses this question and suggests how conditions conducive to high quality research in universities and colleges can be created. The idea to set up a National Research Foundation with adequate resources is a major step in this direction.

Fifth, recognising the power of the languages, a major emphasis has been laid on language learning. Children between 2-8 years are known to pick up languages swiftly, and the advantage of multi-lingualism in their cognitive development cannot be exaggerated. Equally important is the need to ensure that children are encouraged, in the initial years, to learn subjects through their mother tongue. To see this move as anti-English or pro-Hindi shows a clear bias and shows an inadequate understanding of the purpose of the new policy.

Finally, a slew of structural changes has been suggested without which the envisaged reforms can-

The writer is a retired IAS officer from the Andhra Pradesh cadre, who has also worked with UNDP and with the private sector

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LETTERS

BHARAT RATNA TO PV

Abstaining from the resolution to confer Bharat Ratna on PV speaks about Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi's vengeance and anger towards the governments at the state and the Centre (*Shabbir makes fun of MIM, DC, Sept. 9*). It hardly makes any difference if he is absent. The government can move on with its routine business.

Raju V.L.
Hyderabad

RHEA ARRESTED

Narcotic Control Bureau's performance was flawless. Still further efforts must be put in to get at the truth.

Chandra Kantha Awasthi
Hyderabad

SUPERB CARTOON

Hats off to cartoonist Subhani for the Counterpoint cartoon (DC, Sept. 9). The politician suggesting that his photo be replaced with Sushant Singh Rajput in the campaign posters was simply superb.

Khaizar Hussain
Hyderabad

EDUCATION BACK SEAT

The government at the Centre and state are least bothered about education and troubles of private college/school teachers. The unpaid arrears getting accumulated and suicide bid by young faculty of ARR Mahavir College, etc., stand testimony to the fact. The UGC and AICTE never contemplated to improve matters.

Sundarganesh
Hyderabad

Email your letters to info@deccanmail.com, editor@deccanmail.com. You can also send them to Editor, Deccan Chronicle, 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad-500 003.

52 Indians aboard hijacked plane

BOMBAY, Sept. 9
Fifty two Indians were among the 101 passengers on board the London-bound BOAC VC-10 jet airliner when it left here this morning and hijacked while on flight from Bahrain to Beirut.

According to Santa Cruz airport sources, 50 of the passengers were bound for Dubai — the two scheduled stops made by the airliner 11 for Beirut and the remaining 14 for London. There was also a Bombay-based Indian stewardess among the crew of 10, commanded by Captain Cyril Goulborn, of Worcester, Surrey.

in dealing with the Wuhan virus. At his US-India Strategic Partnership Forum address, Mr Modi said, "We are future-proofing India in every way, enabling New India to take off." Well, Mr Modi's words have found resonance. India's Hero Motocorp, the world's largest two-wheeler company that derives over 65 per cent sales from rural areas, for example, reported a YoY rise in overall tractor sales in July 2020. Maruti Suzuki saw a 21.3 per cent growth in car sales in August, while Tata Motors saw a splendid 154 per cent growth in auto sales. Indeed, since auto sales are a lead indicator, India's September quarter GDP should see a sharp bounceback, aided by government spending, which is moving ahead in full throttle, undeterred by the pandemic.

The writer is an economist, chief spokesperson for BJP Mumbai and bestselling author of *Truth & Dare — The Modi Dynamic*



SHORT TAKES
BANDED KRAIT SNAKE RESCUED IN ODISHA

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BARIPADA, SEPT. 9

A huge banded krait (Rana) snake was rescued from a villager's garden in Mayurbhanj district on Wednesday. The snake was more than eight-foot long and estimated to be more than 15 years old. Initially, one Purna Chandra Mohapatra of Badakaranji village of Mayurbhanj district spotted the banded krait on the wood barricades of his garden.

He informed the forest personnel immediately about the snake.

Later, snake catcher Krishna Chandra Gochhayat reached Purna Chandra's house. He rescued the snake from the garden barricade and released it into Similipal forest.

RHEA MOVES COURT TO SEEK BAIL FOR 2ND TIME

SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, SEPT. 9

Actress Rhea Chakraborty, arrested by the NCB in a drugs case linked to her boyfriend and actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death, on Wednesday moved a bail plea before a special NDPS court in Mumbai. This is her second attempt to seek release after a magistrate court on Tuesday refused to grant her bail.

The actress has filed this plea through her lawyer Satish Maneshinde in which she claimed to be "innocent".

It is also claimed that during her custody, she was coerced into making a self-incriminating confession, which she retracted later on September 8.

According to her bail plea, she is entitled for bail because "no drugs or psychotropic substance has been seized from the present applicant and the allegations, if any, would pertain to small quantities" and hence section 27A is not applicable. Therefore, there would be no bar on granting her bail. As a result, the offence, if any, is bailable in nature and "the applicant ought to be enlarged on bail forthwith," read her bail plea.

It also said that perusal of remand applications of all the accused, who have been arrested, makes it evident that there is nothing on record that suggests involvement of the present applicant in any way.

2 STUDENTS CHARGED WITH UAPA GET BAIL

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 9

Two students who were arrested for their alleged links with Maoists and charged with Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), were granted conditional bail by a NIA special court in Kochi after 10 months in custody.

Alan Shuaib and Thaha Fasal are students of journalism and law respectively and former members of CPM's local branch committee. They were arrested from Kozhikode on November 2, for alleged links with Maoists.

The bail has been granted on the personal surety bond of ₹1 lakh each filed by Alan and Thaha's parents. In their bail plea, the duo had contended that no evidence has been produced by investigating agencies yet to prove their connection with Maoists and they have been lodged in the jail for more than 10 months now.

Alan and Thaha were arrested for allegedly possessing and distributing brochures favouring Maoists. The two students were expelled from the CPI(M) earlier this year.

The LDF government in Kerala had drawn flak for slapping UAPA against the students. The UAPA sections were charged at a time when the CPM at the Centre had opposed the draconian law within and outside Parliament.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's statement describing the students as Maoists had sparked off a controversy in the state. The use of UAPA had surprised many in the Left circles.

After the LDF came to power in 2016, there was a big debate on UAPA cases registered during the previous Congress-led UDF government's tenure. The CPI(M) had made its opinion clear that UAPA should be used only to curb terror activities.



Indian troops leave limited options for PLA looking for Galwan-type clashes

The PLA is said to have sent in their martial arts specialists to carry out a mass attack

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 9

Positioned at a vantage point, armed and well-equipped soldiers of the Indian Army are operating from trenches with overhead protection at heights they took control of more than 10 days ago, with ample time for the soldiers to consolidate their positions.

The options before the People's Liberation Army to regain control of those heights are limited — either an air strike or send their infantry up which could come with huge costs.

To take on one platoon of the Indian Army sitting pretty on those heights which gives them a natural advantage over the enemy, they would need 10 of their platoons.

Limited options before a frustrated PLA to regain control of the strategic heights on the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso is what led them to line up their soldiers to attempt and carry out another Galwan valley-type clash at Mukhpuri, one of the highest peaks in Chushul on Tuesday.

The PLA is said to have sent in their martial arts specialists carrying Guandao (a nearly six-foot long wooden or metal pole atop which a sharp blade is mounted) and other blunt weapons to carry out a mass attack. But with the Indian Army threatening to open fire, the Chinese troops were forced to retreat.

"The group of about 50 PLA soldiers had come with an intention to scare the Indian army and inflict casualties by using blunt weapons, similar to Galwan valley clashes. We captured the heights more than 10 days ago and we used this time to consolidate our positions at the heights. We do not intend to be drawn into close quarter combat with PLA anymore. We are positioned to open fire straightaway, firing warning shots first. A clear message was sent to them yesterday though they were looking for trouble," highly placed sources told Deccan Chronicle.

The PLA has limited options before them. One option is pounding the Indian positions, flattening the defence and regaining control of the heights. With a prepared



An IAF fighter jet flies in the Ladakh region amid the prolonged India-China stand off, in Leh on Wednesday. — PTI

INDIA, RUSSIA DISCUSS BORDER STAND-OFF

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had a bilateral meeting and "excellent talks" with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on Wednesday evening in which the "international situation" was discussed including possibly the current Sino-Indian military tensions in the

Ladakh sector.

The meeting was held ahead of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) foreign ministers' meeting and also significantly ahead of EAM Jaishankar's bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Thursday.

The Russian, Indian and Chinese foreign ministers are also expected to have a luncheon meeting together on Thursday.

Russia is India's time-tested friend and also has close ties with China due to which it has emerged as a key player to nudge both Asian giants towards a solution.

● **ANOTHER ATTACK** and counter-attack between Indian and Chinese troops appears imminent.

● **LIMITED OPTIONS** before PLA to regain heights as it is exposed and unstable.

Indian army, that seems unlikely. The other option is to send their infantry who will have to climb up the mountains and launch an attack. But given the huge force required to take

on Indian troops positioned on mountain tops, that seems equally unlikely. Sources said that the Indian troops do not need to engage in close quarter combat.

RIC foreign ministers meeting likely today

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

At a bilateral meeting on Thursday on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) foreign ministers meeting in Moscow, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to clearly tell his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that peace on the borders is closely linked to development of bilateral ties between the two Asian giants and that China must de-escalate by disengaging its troops to restore the April status quo in the Ladakh sector.

This comes even as news agency reports from Beijing cited the Chinese Foreign Ministry as saying there would be a Russia-India-China (RIC) trilateral foreign ministers' luncheon meeting in the Russian capital on Thursday which is being seen by observers as an effort by a worried Russia to encourage and persuade both Asian neighbours to reach a compromise and avoid a devastating war in the Ladakh sector.

The RIC is an already-existing trilateral format and the luncheon meeting will obviously be hosted by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov which will give the Indian and Chinese foreign ministers another opportunity to interact apart from their own bilateral meetings.

Jaishankar had made it clear last week that "what happens at the border will impact the (Sino-Indian) relationship".

Blaming China for the situation of the last four months in the Ladakh sector that was a "direct result" of the Chinese side trying to unilaterally change the status quo at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), India had also last week clearly said the "way

ahead" was "negotiations" through both military and diplomatic channels. New Delhi added it is "firmly committed" to "peaceful dialogue" and called on China to "sincerely engage" India in order to restore peace and tranquillity at the LAC.

New Delhi also made it clear that Beijing "should not take any provocative action or escalate matters", which comes after the latest round of Chinese military provocations at Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh both on the night of August 29 and on August 31.

The EAM, meanwhile, began his bilateral meetings on Wednesday in the Russian Capital by holding talks with his Kyrgyz and later Tajik counterparts.

The SCO is an eight-member predominantly Central Asian Grouping that comprises China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

Both India and Pakistan became SCO members in 2017.

Jaishankar tweeted, "A fruitful meeting with FM Chingiz Aidarbekov of Kyrgyz Republic on SCO sidelines. Thanked him for the support in facilitating return of Indian nationals."

He said that he would be vacating his government accommodation in Srinagar before the end of October.

The letter says that after the renovation of an adjacent house, the premises in entirely were used by Abdullah as chief minister's official residence from October 2010 onwards but he continued to stay there even after demitting the office of chief minister in January 2015 "as the rules allowed me to retain an accommodation in Srinagar or Jammu (twin capitals of J&K) and I chose to retain an accommodation in Srinagar."

The letter further says that there has been a change in the entitlement of former chief ministers of J&K some months ago, "I now find myself in unauthorised occupation of this accommodation, as no attempt has been made to regularise the allotment to me on security or other grounds."

Abdullah says that this was a situation which was unacceptable to him as "I have never held on to any government property I was not entitled to and I have no intention to start now."

He informed the officer that he has begun the search for a "suitable alternate accommodation" but the process is taking longer because of the "constraints caused by Covid-19".

● **ABDULLAH RELEASED** a letter on his Twitter handle that he had written on July 31 to the administrative secretary of J&K's estates department saying that he would vacate his government accommodation in Srinagar in 8-10 weeks time.



Omar Abdullah

ABDULLAH TO VACATE GOVT BUNGALOW

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, SEPT. 9

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah has gone on house hunting after he decided to voluntarily vacate the government accommodation provided to him about 18 years ago. This comes against the backdrop of the change in rules of entitlement in the Union Territory.

Sources close to Abdullah said that he is looking for an abode which will suit his budget and, more importantly, is located in an area in Srinagar where his security and privacy concerns are satisfied.

Abdullah, 50, who is vice president of National Conference (NC), J&K's main opposition party, on Wednesday released a letter on his Twitter handle that he had written on July 31 to the administrative secretary of J&K's estates department saying that he would be vacating his government accommodation in Srinagar in eight to ten weeks time.

"The point to note is that contrary to stories planted in the media last year, I received no notice to vacate and have chosen to do so of my own accord," Abdullah said in a tweet.

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Drug addicts kill 14-yr-old for ₹100

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 9

Drug addicts in Odisha capital Bhubaneswar allegedly killed a 14-year-old boy for meagre ₹100 that he was carrying with him to buy grocery and vegetables.

However, the accused forcibly took away the boy from the shop to a desolate place and asked him to give them the money. As the boy did not concede to their demand, they attacked him with an axe, causing serious bleeding.

The deceased was identified as Ashwini Padhi, a native of Bharatpur under Khandagiri police limits. The Khandagiri police took four of the attackers into custody on Wednesday after the locals took to streets protesting against the accused," said the wailing parents of the deceased.

According to the par-

ents of the deceased, who eke out their living by selling gupchups in the local market, they had sent the boy to a nearby grocery shop to buy some essential items.

However, the accused forcibly took away the boy from the shop to a desolate place and asked him to give them the money. As the boy did not concede to their demand, they attacked him with an axe, causing serious bleeding.

"Having been informed about the incident, we went to the spot and rescued him in a critical condition. He had sustained grievous injuries all over his body. He died last night. We demand strong action against the accused," said the wailing parents of the deceased.

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SHORT TAKES

HC TO RESCUE OF ALT NEWS CO-FOUNDER

New Delhi, Sept. 9: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the police not to take any coercive steps against fact-check website Alt News co-founder Mohd Zubair in case of allegedly threatening, torturing a minor girl on social media.

Justice Yogesh Khanna sought response of the police and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), on whose complaint a case was lodged, on the journalist's plea seeking quashing of the FIR against him.

The Delhi Police has registered an FIR against Zubair on August 9 for the offences under the Information Technology Act for allegedly threatening and torturing a girl child on Twitter on a complaint received from the NCPCR.

The NCPCR complaint referred to the photo of a girl and her father shared by Zubair on Twitter during an online spat with the minor's father.

The high court also directed Twitter India to cooperate with the police in the investigation of the matter.

The accused approached the high court seeking quashing of the FIR against him. He also sought a copy of the FIR saying the cyber cell refused to provide him the document.

Delhi government standing counsel (criminal) Rahul Mehra, representing the state and DCP of police, said though he has no instructions from the department about the matter but as an officer of the court he has no objection in supplying the copy of the FIR to the accused as he has a right to know the allegations against him.

The high court asked the police to provide him the copy of FIR so that he can respond to the allegations.

MOILY DEMANDS BHARAT RATNA FOR MANMOHAN

Bengaluru, Sept. 9: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh deserves to get Bharat Ratna award, along with P.V Narasimha Rao, veteran Congress leader M. Veerappa Moily advocated on Wednesday.

The Telangana Assembly on Tuesday passed a resolution urging the Centre to confer the country's highest civilian honour on Rao posthumously on the occasion of his ongoing birth centenary celebrations.

Moily, a former Union Minister, said Rao richly deserves the award but added that Singh's contribution on the economic front was equally important.

"When he (Rao) took over (as PM), the (country's) economy was in a shambles and the country was in a bad shape. He (Rao) along with Manmohan Singh saw to it that the economy recovered," he said.

"This credit should go to both Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh. It's more appropriate that both of them are awarded Bharat Ratna," the former Karnataka Chief Minister said.

Moily recalled that Singh had served as the Finance Minister in Rao's Cabinet.

4 MAOISTS KILLED IN ENCOUNTER IN ODISHA

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 9

As many as four Maoists were killed in an encounter with police at Bhandarangi Sarki forest on Kalahandi-Kandhamal border on Wednesday, officials said.

While some Maoists managed to give the security personnel a slip, a jawan of the Special Operation Group (SOG) personnel has reportedly sustained injuries in the operation.

Kalahandi superintendent of police B. Gangadhar informed that on the basis of an intelligence input, two composite teams of SOG and District Voluntary Force launched an operation along Kalahandi-Kandhamal border. "An exchange of fire took place on Wednesday at around 11.00 am. In this operation, four Maoists were killed and unfortunately, one SOG Jawan got injured," Gangadhar stated.

Till last reports came in, the operation was still on.

More teams of SOG, DVF and Central Reserve Police Force were sent to the area for combing and search operations.



Actress Kangana Ranaut arrives at Mohali International Airport before she left for Mumbai, in Chandigarh on Wednesday.

SC stays Maratha reservations

PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the implementation of Maratha reservation in jobs and education in Maharashtra and referred it to a larger bench to examine the constitutional validity of the Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Act (SEBC) that provided for 16% reservation for Marathas both in jobs and educational institutions.

Referring the matter to a constitution bench, a bench comprising Justice L. Nageswara Rao, Justice Hemant S. Ravindra Bhat said that there would be no reservation in jobs and educational institutions for Marathas in 2020-2021.

However, initially the matter would travel to the 5-judge bench which in turn may decide to refer it to the 11-judge bench. Under court practices, a three-judge bench can't directly refer the matter to the 11-judge bench.

However, the stand taken by the Maharashtra government and other appellants was resisted by other parties opposing Maratha reservation contending that the petitions challenging Bombay High Court judgment be decided by three-judge bench.

However, court left untouched the admissions already made on the basis of Maratha reservation in post-graduate courses for the reservation.

The three-judge bench order said that the matter be placed before Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde who will constitute a larger bench.

The matter had reached the top court in a batch of petitions challenging June 27, 2019, Bombay High Court judgment upholding Maratha reservation. However, the High Court trimmed the 16% reservation to 12% in education and 13% in jobs.

The hearing spread over couple of days witnessed Maharashtra government urging the three-judge bench to refer the 50% cap on reservation ruled by the top court in Indira Sawhney case way back in 1992 to a larger bench which means referring the matter to 11-judge bench as Indira Sawhney was decided by 9-judge bench.

It was contended that after the Constitution's 103rd amendment providing

10% reservation for economically weaker sections, the 50% ceiling fixed by the top court in the Indira Sawhney case has already been breached in many states.

The validity of the 10% reservation for economically weaker sections has already been referred to a Constitution bench.

However, initially the matter would travel to the 5-judge bench which in turn may decide to refer it to the 11-judge bench. Under court practices, a three-judge bench can't directly refer the matter to the 11-judge bench.

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However, court left untouched the admissions already made on the basis of Maratha reservation in post-graduate courses for the reservation.

If it is held that Marathas are not socially and educationally backward, then the question of breaching the 50% ceiling would not arise and consequently there would be no need to refer it to a larger bench.

In the case of the then UPA government extending OBC reservation to Jats in 9 states in 2014, the Supreme Court while quashing the March 4, 2014 notification had said, "We can't agree that politically organised Jats are backward class so as to be entitled to OBC reservation."

"Inclusion of politically organised class such as Jats ... can't be affirmed," the court had said in its March 17, 2015, judgment.

"Caste alone can't be the basis for reservation. We have to move towards contemporary criteria," court had said citing the inclusion of transgender as backwards.

Kangana tells Uddhav his 'arrogance will crumble'

HC stays demolition work by BMC at Kangana's Mumbai bungalow

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, SEPT. 9

The Shiv Sena-ruled Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Wednesday demolished the illegal alterations in Kangana Ranaut's office, evoking a sharp response from the Bollywood actress who termed the action as Babur demolishing the Ram Mandir.

The demolition notice was issued by the BMC on Tuesday under section 351 of the MM Act citing illegal constructions at her Pali Hill office in Bandra. The civic body had given 24 hours to Kangana to respond to the notice and carried out the demolition work by Wednesday afternoon.

Soon after the demolition work began, Kangana tweeted comparing the BMC officials to Babur army and said that history will repeat itself and she will reconstruct her 'Ram Temple'.

She also shared videos of her partially demolished office with the caption "#DeathofDemocracy."

She tweeted, "I am never wrong and my enemies prove again and again this is why my Mumbai is PoK now."

Kangana later unleashed a series of tweets targeting Shiv Sena chief and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

"Come Uddhav Thackeray and Karan Johar Gang. You broke my work place, come now break my house then break my face and body. I want the world to see clearly what you anyway do underhand, whether I live or die I will expose you regardless," said Ranaut.

In another tweet, the *Manikarnika* actress wrote, "My office was suddenly declared illegal in last 24 hours, they have destroyed everything inside including furniture and lights and now I am getting threats they will

come to my house and break it as well, I am glad my judgement of movie mafia's favourite world's best CM was right."

Kangana also released a video message, in which she said, "Uddhav Thackeray, *tujhe kya lagta hai?* (what do you think?) My home was demolished today, your arrogance will crumble tomorrow. Thus is the wheel of time, it keeps changing."

The actress landed in Mumbai from her home state Himachal Pradesh in the afternoon, amid protest by Shiv Sena workers at the airport over her remarks on Mumbai police.

On her arrival, she was taken to her residence in Khar in tight security.

Kangana has courted controversy with her recent comments about the Mumbai police and comparing Mumbai with Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Later, the Bombay high court stayed the demolition process initiated by the BMC for illegal construction at Ranaut's bungalow and sought to know how the civic body entered the property when the owner was not present.

The HC was hearing a petition filed by Ranaut in the morning, challenging the notice issued by the BMC for illegal construction at Ranaut's bungalow.

The petition also sought a stay on the demolition process. A division bench of Justices S.J. Kathawala and R.I. Chagla sought to know from the BMC how it entered the premises, and directed it to file an affidavit in response to the plea. The court posted the matter for hearing on Thursday.

The BMC on Wednesday undertook demolition of the illegal alterations at the bungalow of Ranaut in suburban Bandra. Ranaut approached the high court through her

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, SEPT. 9

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alleged that Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut's office was demolished on Wednesday owing to her dissent against the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

After the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) razed illegal alterations at the Bandra bungalow of Ranaut, BJP leader and former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said the state of Chhattrapati Shivaji Maharaj has not seen such a "timid and anti-democracy" government till now.

The Shiv Sena, which is heading the MVA government, and the actress have engaged in a war of words after the latter likened Mumbai to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Ranaut had said she feared Mumbai police more than the movie mafias.

On Wednesday, the BMC team reached the Kangana's bungalow at Pali Hill in Bandra with bulldozers and excavators and demolished alterations carried out in the premises.

"The way a remark (Pakistan occupied Kashmir) which insults Maharashtra or Mumbai Police cannot be defended, similarly the government's such action

● WITHOUT TAKING Ranaut's name, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said "undue importance" was given to those making such statements. "We will have to see what influence such statements have on the people at large," he said.

(demolition) too cannot be defended. Maharashtra is being defamed due to such actions in the country," Mr. Fadnavis said in a video message.

He said the razed structure stood at the spot for quite some time, but no action was taken earlier. "The action was taken only after the actress made the remarks," the former chief minister said.

"Such action taken out of the sentiment of revenge does not suit Maharashtra and its rulers. In a way, there is a government-sponsored terror in Maharashtra," Mr. Fadnavis charged.

Meanwhile, without taking Ranaut's name, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said "undue importance" was given to those making such statements. "We will have to see what influence such statements have on the people at large. In my opinion, people do not take seriously (such statements)," said the NCP chief.

On Wednesday, the BMC team reached the Kangana's bungalow at Pali Hill in Bandra with bulldozers and excavators and demolished alterations carried out in the premises.

The BMC on Tuesday filed a 'caveat' in a local

advocate Rizwan Siddiqui, challenging the stop-work notice issued on Tuesday and seeking a stay on the demolition process.

The plea argued that Ranaut was not given sufficient time to respond to the notice and the demolition process was initiated in a hurried manner with

ulterior motives. The plea further said the notice issued by the BMC was bad in law and arbitrary and that the actor had taken all necessary approvals from the corporation before construction.

The BMC on Tuesday filed a 'caveat' in a local

HIMACHAL CM CONDEMNS BMC DEMOLITION

Shimla, Sept. 9: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur condemned the demolition of Kangana Ranaut's Mumbai bungalow by the civic body on Wednesday, saying she "is a daughter of the state and she should get a 'proper atmosphere' to work."

Speaking on a point of order raised by Independent MLA from Dehra, Hoshyar Singh, in the Assembly, the Chief Minister said the demolition at Ranaut's office is a matter of concern.

A notice had been served to the Bollywood actor but the demolition happened without completing the process, Thakur said. "We condemn this move."

"Kangana is a daughter of Himachal Pradesh and she has brought laurels not only to the state but to the entire country," he said in the Assembly, adding she should get proper atmosphere to work in her field.

Congress MLA R.L. Thakur said the matter is sub-judge, so making any comment in the Assembly on it is not proper.

court, saying it should be heard first if Ranaut challenges a stop-work notice issued to her. Before the demolition work on Wednesday, the BMC posted a second notice outside her bungalow, informing her of the action being taken by the civic body, an official said.

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DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

In a major strategic move, India on Wednesday held its first trilateral dialogue with France and Australia at a top officials' level in which "the focus of the dialogue was on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region" and tackling "economic and geostrategic challenges" as well.

The three countries decided to "synergise their respective strengths to ensure a peaceful, secure, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific Region" and also "agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis".

The move is significant, given the Chinese military assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and domestic responses to Covid-19. Cooperation on Marine Global Commons and potential areas for practical cooperation at the trilateral and regional level were also discussed, including through regional organisations such as ASEAN, IORA and the Indian Ocean Commission. The three countries also had an exchange on the priorities, challenges and trends in regional and global multilateral institutions, including the best ways to strengthen and reform multilateralism.

The MEA added, "The outcome oriented meeting was held with the objective of building on the strong bilateral relations that the three countries share with each other and synergising their respective strengths to ensure a peaceful, secure, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific Region. The three sides agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis."

FIGHTING | COVID Overall toll inches closer to 74,000; Recovery rate is 77%

Delhi records fresh wave of high cases

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI / RAIPUR, SEPT. 9

India on Wednesday recorded 89,706 fresh cases of coronavirus pushing the country's overall tally to 43.70 lakh. In a single day, 1,115 deaths took place taking overall fatalities due to the virus to 73,890.

Apart from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu that continue to register high cases, the national capital Delhi, where

Covid-19 cases had come down substantially last month, has now started witnessing a fresh wave of high cases.

Delhi on Wednesday recorded 4,039 cases, which was the highest single-day spike in the city so far taking its tally over 2 lakh and toll to 4,638.

Union health ministry officials said India has progressively maintained a low Case Fatality Rate which was 1.7% on Wednesday, compared to 3.28%.

With this, the total number of recoveries has touched almost 34 lakh taking the Recovery Rate to 77.77%.

"The aim is to achieve a national CFR of less than 1%. There are 17 states/UTs that are even today reporting mortality figures lower than 1%," officials said.

The health ministry said that in the last 24 hours, India has scaled a new high of recoveries as the total number of recovered patients in a single day surged to a record 74,894.

IN BRIEF

Another Belarus activist detained

Kyiv: Belarusian authorities on Wednesday detained one of the last leading members of an opposition council who remained free, moving methodically to end a month of protests against authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko. Lawyer Maxim Znak, a member of the Coordination Council created by the opposition to facilitate talks with the country's leader of 26 years on a transition of power, was taken out of the council's office by unidentified people in ski masks, his associate Gleb German said. He said Znak only had time to text message "masks" before they took the phone away from him.

Israel, UAE to ink deal next week

Washington: Israel and the United Arab Emirates will sign their historic deal normalising relations at a White House ceremony on Sept. 15, officials said. Senior delegations from the two countries will be led by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the brother of Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince. US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the ceremony would either be on the South Lawn, the Rose Garden or inside depending on weather. Late Tuesday, Netanyahu tweeted he "was proud to leave for Washington next week at the invitation of President Trump and to participate in the historic ceremony at the to sign the deal with the UAE."

Pak mine collapse toll rises to 22

Peshawar: At least 22 people have been killed and dozens were battling for their lives after six units of the famed marble mines in Pakistan's Ziarat Ghar mountain collapsed, causing large boulders to fall on them. The mines collapsed on Monday night, instantly killing 12 miners, the Geo News reported. The death toll rose after 10 more succumbed to injuries at the District Mohmand Hospital. Majority of the deceased include labourers and few others who had gathered at the foothill in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Safi town near the Afghanistan border, about 85 km from provincial capital Peshawar. Mohmand District Police Officer Mohmand Tariq Habib told Geo News that people are still buried under the rubble.

NAWAZ IS PO, ZARDARI INDICTED

SHAFQAT ALI | DC
ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 9

Former Pakistan president Asif Ali Zardari was indicted in the Toshakhana reference on Wednesday, while former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was declared a proclaimed offender. An Islamabad accountability court heard the Toshakhana reference on Wednesday. Former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani was also indicted.

Mr Zardari and Mr Gilani have denied the charges. The judge, Asghar Ali of court number three, ordered a copy of the indictment to be given to the suspects. Taking to the rostrum, Mr Gilani said these kinds of matters should go to the Public Accounts Committee, not the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The cabinet division had sent the summary to give the cars from the Toshakhana, he argued. "The summary landed on my desk after a whole process but the bureaucrats who sent it to me haven't been declared suspects."

In 3 big states, Biden looks to rebuild Dems' Blue Wall

Lansing (US), Sept. 9: In 2016, Donald Trump tore down Democrats' "blue wall," winning the White House with surprise victories in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. This year, Joe Biden is trying to rebuild. The Democratic nominee's first pandemic-era campaign trips beyond his home in Delaware are taking him to all three states, an indication of how closely Biden's electoral prospects are tied to his ability to flip those political battlegrounds. Last week, Biden trav-

Kabul bomb targets VP, kills 10 civilians

10 shops were smoldering after the explosion, windows of dozens of homes shattered

Kabul, Sept. 9: A bombing in the Afghan capital targeted the convoy of the country's first vice president, killing 10 people and wounding at least 31, including several of the vice president's bodyguards, the Interior Ministry said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack and the Taliban quickly denied they were behind the bombing. First Vice President Amrullah Saleh suffered minor burns in the blast.

The bomb was hidden in a cart by the roadside and detonated as his convoy passed by. Saleh, who is also Afghanistan's former intelligence chief, said in his first television appearance immediately after the attack that he was fine and had sustained only slight burns. He appeared in the TV footage with bandages on one hand.

"Me and my younger son who was also with me are fine," Saleh said. "I have slight burns on my face and hand from the wave of the blast. I don't have exact details right now, but I apologise to those who suffered casualties and those who lost their property in the attack."

His spokesman, Razwan Murad, called the attack a "vicious terrorist attempt" on Saleh's life. The roads in the vicinity of the bombing were closed off. The blast ignited a fire that set ablaze a number of the shops. The explosion left behind a scene of destruction — at least 10 shops were smoldering in the aftermath of the explosion that had also shattered windows of dozens of nearby homes, some with doors hanging off their hinges. —AP

10 people killed and at least 31, including several of the vice president's bodyguards, injured

31 wounded were taken to different hospitals for treatment.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack and the Taliban quickly denied they were behind the bombing

The bomb was hidden in a cart by the roadside and detonated as convoy of First Vice President Amrullah Saleh passed by



Afghan security personnel and municipality workers clean the site of an explosion in Kabul, on Wednesday. Spokesman for Afghanistan's Interior Ministry said the bombing that targeted the convoy of the country's first vice president on Wednesday morning killed several people and wounded more than a dozen others, including several of the vice president's bodyguards. — AP

MAN CHARGED WITH MURDER OVER STABBINGS

London, Sept 9: A 27-year-old man appeared in a UK court via video-link on Wednesday charged with murder in connection with stabbings that took place in Birmingham city centre in the early hours of Sunday. Zephaniah McLeod has been charged with the murder of Jacob Billington, who was one of eight people stabbed. McLeod is also accused of the attempted murder of the seven other victims of the knife attacks and was remanded in custody by Birmingham Magistrates' Court to appear at Birmingham Crown Court on Thursday, again via video-link.

He spoke only to confirm his personal details during an appearance before two magistrates and was not asked for any pleas. There was no application for bail, West Midlands Police said. The victims of the attempted murder charges were Dimitar Bachvarov, Mige Dolobauskaite, Thomas Glassey, Michael Callaghan, Shane Rowley, Rhys Cummings and Ryan Bowers, the court was told.

Billington, 23, died after being attacked in Irving Street while enjoying a night out with school friends from Liverpool visiting one of their group who is studying in Birmingham. A post-mortem concluded he died as a result of a stab wound to the neck. A 23-year-old man, who was injured, remains in hospital. — PTI

10 dead in Chicago weekend gunfire

Chicago (US), Sept. 9: An eight-year-old girl shot in the back was among 10 people killed in gunfire over the Labour Day weekend in Chicago, police said on Tuesday, marking the latest deadly holiday weekend in the nation's third-largest city.

More than 50 people were shot from Friday until just before Tuesday midnight during a year where vi-

lent crime has soared in Chicago and other big US cities. But the holiday weekend's shooting death and injury counts weren't as high as recent holiday weekends and police noted a preceding two-month decline.

"We're going to continue, obviously looking at addressing violence crime," Police Superintendent David Brown told reporters. "We are seeing... ten-

uous progress. It's fragile, obviously. But we're seeing tenuous progress."

From July to August, murders dropped 45 per cent while shooting incidents dropped 15 per cent in the same time frame, police said. The department attributed the drop to tactics started in July, namely adding more officers to higher crime areas. The department has previ-

ously made similar deployments to crime hotspots, which experts say can temporarily lower crime but can be too aggressive.

Brown has said this time officers are also involved more in community-relations events such as food drives, an effort he hopes can work long term. The July Fourth weekend was particularly bloody with 17 people killed and at last

70 wounded in gun violence. A seven-year-old girl and 14-year-old boy were among those fatally shot.

Killed over the Labour Day weekend was an eight-year-old girl identified by the Cook County medical examiner's office as Dajore Wilson. The child was in the car with two adults on the city's South Side when they stopped at a red light. — AP

UK PM plans law banning large gatherings**Las Vegas Covid +ve children contract inflammatory disease**

London, Sept. 9: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is planning tougher new restrictions on social gatherings of more than six people in England starting next Monday, following a significant rise in the Coronavirus cases.

A law change to be introduced will ban larger groups of friends and family meeting anywhere socially indoors or outdoors, to be enforced through a £100 fine if people fail to comply and doubling on each offence up to a maximum of £3,200.

The rule will not apply to schools, workplaces or Covid-secure weddings, funerals and organised team sports, Downing Street said on Wednesday. "We need to act now to stop the virus spreading. So we are simplifying and strengthening the rules on

daily tallies of confirmed cases of the illness to its daily online Coronavirus response report.

Not all children exhibit the same symptoms, and the district said that while there isn't a known cause, many children with the illness had Covid-19 or had close contact with someone who did. Researchers say the illness can cause inflammation of the multiple internal organs.

The Health District reported 61,543 cases of Covid-19 in and around Las Vegas, an increase of 67 cases since Monday, and a total of 1,206 deaths since March.

Officials say new case rates have decreased in the past two weeks. State health officials reported no new deaths and 137 new confirmed cases of Covid-19 statewide on Tuesday. — AP

from different households outdoors — or two households of any size, indoors or outdoors. But until now the police have had no powers to stop them unless gatherings exceed 30 people.

Under the new law, any group of seven or more people gathering anywhere risks being dispersed by police or fined for non-compliance.

The change applies to people in England of all ages, and to gatherings indoors and outdoors, in private homes, public outdoor spaces, and venues such as pubs and restaurants. The devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland set their own Coronavirus restrictions but largely follow similar patterns as set out for England.

— PTI

social contact — making them easier to understand and for the police to enforce," said Johnson. "It is absolutely critical that

people now abide by these rules and remember the basics — washing your hands, covering your face, keeping space from others,

and getting a test if you have symptoms," he said. Previously, guidance in England allowed gatherings of up to six people

says at press conferences, he has absolutely a chance at getting the Nobel Peace Prize," Tybring-Gjedde, a member of the Norwegian Parliament for the far-right Progress Party, said.

Tybring-Gjedde was also one of two Norwegian lawmakers who nominated Trump for the peace prize in 2018 for his efforts to bring reconciliation between North and South Korea. Any national lawmaker can nominate someone. — AP

Trump nominated for Peace Nobel

Copenhagen, Sept. 9: A far-right Norwegian lawmaker said Wednesday that he has nominated US President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in the Middle East. Christian Tybring-Gjedde, a member of the Norwegian Parliament for the far-right Progress Party, said

Trump should be considered because of his work "for a peace agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Israel which opens up for possible peace in the Middle East."

"No matter how Trump acts at home and what he

US reporter not detained: China**HOMES OF CHINESE REPORTERS RAIDED BY OZ: BEIJING**

Beijing, Sept. 9: Local authorities in China's Inner Mongolia region have denied they used force or detained an American reporter when she was questioned at a police station last week.

The Los Angeles Times said Thursday that one of its reporters was grabbed by the throat and pushed into a cell and held for more than four hours before being forced to leave the area in northern China. "There's no instance of the police using both hands to pinch the neck or being detained in a police cell, nor was there any instance of being detained or expelled," the press office for Hohhot, the provincial capital, said in a written response to questions from The Associated Press.

The statement, dated Tuesday, said the reporter was interviewing a pedestrian and accused her of filming or photographing the person without the interviewee's permission.

It said the reporter chose to go back to Beijing voluntarily. The newspaper's Beijing bureau chief, Alice Su, who is the journalist in question, declined to comment. She was covering protests and class boycotts that had broken out in Inner Mongolia over a move to increase the use of Chinese in schools where Mongolian has been the main language of instruction. Authorities, who have detained more than 20 people, are trying to clamp down on information about the protests, according to a protester and a US-based activist group that advocates for the rights of ethnic Mongolians. — AP

told reporters the president would make an announcement Wednesday but offered no details. There was no immediate response from the US-led coalition to a request from AFP.

The US has already been steadily downsizing its troop levels in Iraq in recent months as Iraqis take over combat and training roles.

"These withdrawals are part of the agreed transition of the US-led coalition,"

year, dozens of rocket attacks have targeted those areas, the US embassy and logistics convoys heading to Iraqi bases, killing at least six military personnel — three Americans, one Briton and two Iraqis. US officials have blamed the violence on hardline factions close to Tehran, which as Washington's longtime foe has repeatedly demanded US troops leave the Middle East.

— AFP

problem that happened across 100 Georgia counties, and election officials didn't catch them in time to keep the second votes from being tallied, Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said.

"No one gets to vote twice. Everyone gets one vote," Raffensperger said. It wasn't imme-

diate clear whether the outcome of any races may have been affected. It follows a suggestion last week by President Donald Trump that people who vote early by mail should show up at their local polling places on Election Day and vote again if their ballots haven't been counted. — AP

to win the Electoral College," said veteran Democratic strategist Joe Trippi.

"It makes tremendous sense to make those three states the base foundation of any strategy to win. If Biden wins all three, it's over." Biden's aides believe his focus on the economy and Trump's handling of the Coronavirus pandemic will resonate among key voters nationwide but particularly in states like Michigan, which took one of the sharpest hits nationally from the pandemic.

The unemployment

rate in the state spiked at 24 per cent in April, according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics. The statewide rate has since recovered to 8.7 per cent, but Michigan has nearly 414,500 fewer jobs than it did when Trump was inaugurated. Trump supporters say that he has fulfilled his promise of creating jobs and was temporarily sidetracked by the pandemic. But the job numbers show that hiring in factories across the Midwest began to stall and then decline in the summer of 2019.

— AP

"If Biden wins any of them — but particular-

ly any two, with some of the other states that are

in play — it's pretty impossible for Trump

IN BRIEF
Quake strikes
New Jersey

New York: A magnitude 3.1 earthquake struck in East Freehold, New Jersey, early Wednesday morning, the US Geological Survey reported. Residents took to social media to express their shock at the rare occurrence. Hundreds of people as far away as Philadelphia and Long Island, New York, contributed to the USGS' "Did You Feel It?" map, reporting only weak or light shaking and no damage. "It would be very surprising for us to see anything more than you know, damaged shelves or picture frames falling off of windows," said Robert Sanders, a geophysicist with the survey. The USGS said the earthquake happened about 2 a.m. and was centered 1.25 miles south, southeast of the centre of East Freehold.

Greece rescues
151 migrants

Athens: Greece's coast guard says a rescue operation was launched overnight after a yacht carrying more than 150 migrants was found in distress in bad weather northeast of the Aegean island of Amorgos. The coast guard said Wednesday a nearby cargo ship picked up 151 people from the yacht during the search and rescue operation Tuesday, in which coast guard and Greek naval vessels also participated. A witness on board the Antigua and Barbuda-flagged cargo ship said they saw one person swimming away from the yacht, but gale force winds in the area were hampering any further search and rescue operations Wednesday morning, the coast guard said.

Probe on if netted shark killed surfer

Canberra: Authorities will investigate whether a dead tiger shark caught in a net off an Australian beach killed a surfer, an official said Wednesday.

Nick Slater, 46, was fatally mauled on Tuesday off popular Greenmount Beach on the Gold Coast tourist strip in a rare attack off a beach protected by shark netting. His death is only the second fatal shark attack at one of Queensland's 85 beaches that have been protected by nets and drum lines since as early as 1962, the state government said. The first was a 21-year-old swimmer who was mauled by more than one bull shark off a netted beach on North Stradbroke Island, north of the Gold Coast, in 2006. Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said a large tiger shark had been found since Slater's death tangled in a net off Greenmount Beach. "Further investigations will be conducted to discover if there is any link between it and the fatal attack," Palaszczuk said. Before nets were put in place, the last fatal shark attack was in 1958.

2K HOMES
WRECKED IN
N. KOREA

Seoul, Sept. 9: A typhoon that struck North Korea wrecked nearly 60 bridges and destroyed or inundated more than 2,000 houses, state media reported Wednesday, with leader Kim Jong Un saying the damage had disrupted central planning for the rest of the year.

Typhoon Maysak brought days of heavy downpours to the country's east coast last week even as the North was still reeling from earlier flooding and typhoon damage, and this week it was followed by Typhoon Haishen.

Maysak "destroyed or inundated" more than 2,000 houses and tens of public buildings in the affected regions, the official KCNA news agency said, while 60 kilometres of roads and 59 bridges collapsed, with over 3,500 metres of railway roadbeds "swept away".

Natural disasters tend to have a greater impact in the North due to its creaking infrastructure, and the country is vulnerable to flooding as many mountains and hills have long been deforested.

The damage obliged the authorities to "change the direction of our struggle after comprehensively considering the year-end tasks that were underway", Kim told a top committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, according to KCNA.

It did not give specific details.



Refugees and migrants run as a fire burns in the Moria refugee camp on the northeastern Aegean island of Lesbos, Greece, on Wednesday. Fire service officials say a large refugee camp on the island has been partially evacuated despite a Covid-19 lockdown after fires broke out at multiple points around the site. — AP

Fire sweeps through Greece refugee camp

Blaze overruns Calif firefighters

Shaver Lake (California), Sept. 9:

More than a dozen California firefighters trying to protect a fire station from flames that broke out at multiple points and were fanned by gale-force winds, gutting much of the camp and surrounding hillside olive groves. Protesters also broke out involving migrants, riot police, and firefighters.

There were no reports of injuries. Aid agencies have long warned of dire living conditions at Moria, where more than 12,000 migrants are living in emergency need of shelter on the island of Lesbos.

In dramatic night-time scenes, migrants at the overcrowded Moria refugee camp fled fires that broke out at multiple points and were fanned by gale-force winds, gutting much of the camp and surrounding hillside olive groves. Protesters also broke out involving migrants, riot police, and firefighters.

They suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, and three were flown to a hospital in Fresno, where one was in critical condition. The injuries came as wind-driven flames of more than two dozen major fires chewed through bone-dry California after

a scorching Labour Day weekend that saw a dramatic air lift of more than 200. Rescue choppers pulled another 164 people from the Sierra National Forest through the morning and were working to rescue 17 others, said Governor Gavin Newsom, who described pilots wearing night-vision goggles to find a place to land.

"It's where training meets the moment, but it always takes the courage, the conviction and the grit of real people doing real work," said Newsom, who called the fires historic. California has already set a record with nearly 2.3 million acres burned this year, and the worst part of the wildfire season is just beginning. The previous acreage record was set just two years ago. — AP

was put under lockdown after a Somali man was found to have been infected with the virus.

Petasas said those who had been living in Moria would not be allowed to leave the island to prevent the potential spread of the Coronavirus. The camp

Greece's interior and migration ministers, along with the head of the country's public health organisation, were heading to Lesbos following an emergency meeting convened Wednesday morning by Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

— AP

BRAZIL WETLAND FIRES THREATEN JAGUAR RESERVE

Rio de Janeiro, Sept. 9:

Fires raging in the Pantanal, the biggest tropical wetlands on Earth, are threatening a nature reserve known as the home to the world's largest jaguar population, Brazilian authorities said Tuesday.

"The military firefighting corps sent two teams of reinforcements today to fight a fire in Encontro das Aguas State Park," the government of the state of Mato Grosso said in a statement.

"They join the 46 men already on the ground fighting the fires on this front." Firefighters and environmental authorities also rescued two women and seven children in the region when their house was nearly engulfed by the flames, the statement said.

The Pantanal, which sits at the southern edge of the Amazon rainforest and stretches from Brazil into Paraguay and Bolivia, has been hit by record fires this year.

There have already been more fires in the Brazilian Pantanal this year — 12,102 — than in all of 2018 and 2019 combined, according to satellite data collected by Brazil's national space agency, INPE.

— AFP

Hummingbird's temp can fall to 3.3C at night to preserve energy



Pretoria, Sept. 9: Hummingbirds have scooped another record: They are not only tiny but can reach body temperatures below that of any non-hibernating mammal and any other bird. The hummingbird is among a number of small creatures, including certain bats, that can enter a state known as daily torpor, a phenomenon where they turn down their metabolism and body temperature to save energy.

Unlike hibernation, this is not a prolonged state. After a night in torpor, the hummingbird's metabolic rate rises again, with its body temperature reaching around 40C. Now researchers studying six species of the bright birds in the Andes, around 3,800

metres above sea level, have found the body temperature of the black metal-tail hummingbird can fall to as low as 3.3C.

Prof Andrew McKechnie, of the University of Pretoria, South Africa, a co-author of the study, said

torpor was vital to hummingbirds' survival, as they would have had to burn large amounts of energy to maintain a body temperature of around 40C during the cold Andean nights.

"They wouldn't be able

to store up enough fat at the end of the day to provide sufficient fuel to last them for the entire night," he said.

McKechnie said with the new study revealing that the body temperatures of hummingbirds could fall to those more characteristic of hibernating animals, it could be that the diminutive creatures were not only able to enter torpor, but to hibernate. "It would be big news if they did," said McKechnie.

Writing in the journal *Biology Letters*, McKechnie and colleagues reported how in Peru in March 2015 they captured 26 hummingbirds of six different species and placed them in tents without food for at least one night, tracking changes. — *The Guardian*

— The Guardian

pared with those caught before 1990. The bodies of commercially valuable sockeye shrank by 2% statewide, and silver salmon grew 3% physically smaller.

One likely factor, the authors say, is climate crisis-driven changes in the

Km-long slick left by burning oil tanker

Joe climate plan will give pass to polluters: Trump

Colombo, Sept. 9: A stricken oil tanker off Sri Lanka that has been on fire since last week has left a kilometre-long (0.6 mile) slick across the Indian Ocean, the country's navy said Wednesday, sparking fears of an environmental disaster. The blaze was finally brought under control on Wednesday but a trail of diesel has been spilled across the sea.

A fire first erupted on board last Thursday and was thought to have been completely doused on Saturday, but reignited a day later. Sri Lanka's navy said there were no flames or smoke Wednesday from the New Diamond vessel, which is carrying 270,000 tonnes of crude oil and 1,700 tonnes of diesel.

The fresh fire was triggered Sunday by strong winds that pushed the crippled tanker about 20 kilometres (12.5 miles) closer to Sri Lanka's eastern shores. A powerful tug boat was used to bring the drifting ship back to a location 68 kilometres (42 miles) from land, the navy said. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) said it had deployed aircraft to spray chemical dispersants on the slick and mitigate the environmental impact.

The ICG also said it provided 2,200 kilos of dry chemical powder to the Sri Lankan air force to drop on the burning tanker on Tuesday as a fire retardant. The blaze had weakened the structure of the Panamanian-registered 330-metre (1,089-feet) tanker and the vessel was slightly leaning to the left, the ICG said. Rescuers said the blaze had not reached the crude oil cargo.

The diesel is thought to have leaked when the ship's fuel storage tanks ruptured and mixed with sea water that was pumped to douse the flames. Sri Lanka's chief prosecutor, Dappula de Livera, told local marine authorities to pursue a claim for damages and order the owners to tow the tanker away from Sri Lankan waters. The vessel first

reported a fire while passing the country's east coast on Thursday after a boiler room explosion killed a Filipino crew member.

In July, Japanese bulk

carrier MV Wakashio crashed into a reef in Mauritius, leaking more than 1,000 tonnes of oil into the island nation's pristine waters. — AFP

Increased warming closing in on agreed upon limit: UN

SHORTER LIFESPAN OF FAST-GROWING TREES WILL ADD TO CLIMATE CRISIS

Washington, Sept. 9: The world is getting closer to passing a temperature limit set by global leaders five years ago and may exceed it in the next decade or so, according to a new United Nations report.

In the next five years, the world has nearly a 1-in-4 chance of experiencing a year that's hot enough to put the global temperature at 2.7 degrees (1.5 degrees Celsius) above pre-industrial times, according to a new science update released Wednesday by the UN, World Meteorological Organisation and other global science groups.

That 1.5 degrees Celsius is the more stringent of two limits set in 2015 by world leaders in the Paris climate change agreement. A 2018 UN science report said a world hotter than that still survives, but chances of dangerous problems increase tremendously. The report comes on the heels of a weekend of weather gone wild around the US: Scorching heat, record California wildfires and two more Atlantic storms that set records for earliest 16th and 17th named storms.

Earlier this year, Death Valley hit 130 degrees (54.4 degrees Celsius) and Siberia hit 100 degrees (38 degrees Celsius). The

heating accelerates. An international team of researchers, publishing their work on Tuesday in the peer-review journal *Nature Communications*, has found that the relationship between faster growth and shorter lifespan appears to hold good across tree species and latitudes.

Roel Brienen, associate professor of geography at the University of Leeds, the lead author of the paper, said: "We started a global analysis and were surprised to find that these trade-offs are incredibly common. It occurred in almost all species we looked at, including tropical trees." Trees growing faster in warmer conditions, and this should act as a natural brake on global heating, as they take up and store more carbon dioxide from the air as they grow.

But the new study casts doubt on this beneficial cycle, finding that the faster trees grow, the sooner they die — and therefore stop storing carbon.

Some fast-growing trees, including conifer species in cold regions, have long been known to show shorter lifespans, but what was not known was the impact of warmer conditions that can spur growth as global

temperatures rise. — *The Guardian*

warming that has already occurred has "increased the odds of extreme events that are unprecedented in our historical experience," Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said. For example, historical global warming has increased the odds of record-setting hot extremes at more than 80 per cent of the globe. — AP

Mystery of shrinking fish: Alaska's salmon getting smaller



Kaltag, Sept. 9: The fishermen and women knew something was off with their catch. "At first, it was just a general comment by everybody: 'The fish, yeah, I didn't get any big ones this year,'" said Richard Burnham, who has commercially harvested salmon for four decades in the interior Alaska village of Kaltag. Now, a new study has borne out those observations on a huge scale.

Unlike hibernation, this is not a prolonged state. After a night in torpor, the hummingbird's metabolic rate rises again, with its body temperature reaching around 40C. Now researchers studying six species of the bright birds in the Andes, around 3,800

metres above sea level, have found the body temperature of the black metal-tail hummingbird can fall to as low as 3.3C.

Prof Andrew McKechnie, of the University of Pretoria, South Africa, a co-author of the study, said

salmon grew 3% physically smaller.

One likely factor, the authors say, is climate crisis-driven changes in the

quality or availability of the fishes' food. A second, constant, albeit weak, dynamic was that all four species were smaller when they were competing with larger numbers of a fifth species of Alaska salmon, the hatchery-raised pink.

Hatcheries release 5 billion salmon across the Pacific Rim each year, and an estimated 15% of the fish in the North Pacific Ocean are pinks raised in hatcheries. Commercial fishermen target the low-value, soft-fleshed pinks in huge numbers, though they are far less-prized as a recreational and subsistence catch, and many anglers consider them a nuisance. Beyond calculating the degree to which salmon have shrunk, the scientists also measured the impact of that change on people and ecosystems, finding a one-quarter decrease in the number of meals supplied by each chinook salmon, and a similar decline in the amount of nutrients that spawning chinooks carry back to rivers from the ocean.

Curry Cunningham, one of the study's co-authors and assistant professor at University of Alaska Fairbanks, said he looks through the lens of the state's commercial fishing industry — *The Guardian*

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	38,193.92
Nifty 50	11,278.00
S&P 500*	3,412.69
Dollar (\$)	73.54
Pound Sterling (\$)	95.28
Euro (\$)	86.61
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	52,149.251
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.10
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	5.989
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.693
As of 9:30 PM IST	0.009

I-T Dept issues refunds worth ₹1.01 L cr in FY21

The Income Tax Department said it has issued refunds of over Rs 1.01 lakh crore to 27.55 lakh taxpayers between April 1 and September 8. This include personal income tax (PIT) refunds amounting to Rs 30,768 crore issued to 25.83 lakh taxpayers and corporate tax refunds amounting to Rs 70,540 crore issued to over 1.71 lakh taxpayers during this period. The government has also been emphasising on refunds.

Banks catalysts of economic revival: FM



Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said banks are going to be the catalysts for economic revival. "At this stage, the catalysts for economic revival, the catalysts who have the pulse of every one of their customers, are banks," the FM said. The minister said banks have to introspect on their core business and also focus on welfare. She also said all bank staffers should know the details of government schemes.

State Bank raises ₹4,000 cr in AT1 bonds

State Bank of India said it has raised Rs 4,000 crore through the issuance of Basel III compliant debt instruments. The Committee of Directors for Capital Raising at its meeting accorded approval to allot 40,000 Basel III compliant additional tier-bonds (AT1) aggregating to Rs 4,000 crore to bond subscribers on Sept. 9, SBI said in a filing. The bonds bear a coupon rate of 7.74 per cent, the lowest ever, it said.

Investigation into import of PVC resin from Japan

India has initiated a probe into an alleged increase in imports of a certain type of PVC resin, used in various sectors including construction and medical devices, from Japan following complaints by domestic firms. A notification from the Directorate General of Trade Remedies said an application was filed by DCW, DCM, Shri Ram and Chemplast Cuddalore Vinyls for initiation of a probe into imports of 'PVC suspension grade resin' from Japan.

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■ Policy-makers to meet after Sept. 15

Govt set to exceed borrowing target

SIDDHARTHA SINGH
SEPT. 9

India is set to exceed its annual borrowing target after the world's biggest lockdown decimated the government's revenue collection goals, people with knowledge of the matter said.

Officials from the finance ministry and the Reserve Bank of India will meet later this month to decide on the amount of borrowings needed beyond the targeted Rs 12 lakh crore (\$163 billion) in the year ending March 31, the people said, asking not to be identified as the discussions were private. Policy makers will also deliberate on options to raise funds, including selling debt directly to the central bank, the people said.

The meeting will be scheduled after September 15 because the government will have a clearer visibility of its financial position after advance taxes start flowing in, they added. All these proposals are being discussed and no final decision has been taken. A finance ministry spokesman was not immediately available for a comment.

The government isn't keen on slashing spending at a time when the country's economic outlook is grim. The economy contracted 23.9 per cent in the quarter ended June, the worst on record, after an extended lockdown to control the spread of the virus wiped out activity



STATES HAVE TO CUT CAPEX BY ₹3.4 L CR

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, SEPT. 9

Despite the two options for additional borrowing put forth by the Centre, states will have to curtail FY21 capital spending by Rs 1 lakh crore to Rs 3.4 lakh crore, taking into account shortfalls in GST compensation and central tax devolution (CTD), finds Icra.

While offering two borrowing options, the Centre had pegged the GST compensation requirement of states at Rs 3 lakh crore for FY21 and the expected GST cess collections at Rs 65,000 crore, implying a gap of Rs 2.35 lakh crore. However, Icra has projected this gap to be Rs 2.9 lakh crore.

It estimates that in the current fiscal year, state governments would see fiscal deficit of a mini-

mum 4.25 per cent and maximum 5.52 per cent of GSDP.

Further, central tax devolution to the states will be Rs 5 lakh crore, Rs 2.8 lakh crore lower than the Rs 7.8 lakh crore budgeted by the Centre for FY21, partly on account of the adverse impact of the pandemic on consumption and the tax revenues of the Centre and the adjustment for excess devolution made in FY20.

Hence, there will be a shortfall of Rs 3.4 lakh crore. The additional maximum borrowing of 2.52 per cent of GSDP under Option I, if the states meet all the prescribed reforms within the set timeline, would be inadequate to cover the shortfalls in GST compensation of Rs 2.9 lakh crore and in CTD of Rs 2.8 lakh crore by Rs 1 lakh crore.

It estimates that in the current fiscal year, state governments would see fiscal deficit of a mini-

and dried up tax collections.

The government also wants to accelerate investments in port, roads and other infrastructure to

stimulate the world's fifth largest economy in the remaining part of the financial year, the people said.

—Bloomberg



AstraZeneca vaccine trial paused over adverse effect

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, SEPT. 9

The human trials of one of the most promising Covid-19 vaccine candidates, being developed by the University of Oxford and simultaneously undergoing trial in India, has been put on hold after a UK participant had an adverse reaction to it.

AstraZeneca, the biopharmaceutical giant in tie-up with the university to produce the vaccine, described the pause as a "routine" one following what was an unexplained illness".

The trials had moved into phase III after successful phase I and II testing had raised worldwide hopes of it being ready by early next year as results showed that it produced a positive immune response.

The vaccine moved to phase III testing in recent weeks, involving around 30,000 participants in the US as well as in the UK, Brazil and South Africa.

As part of the ongoing randomised, controlled global trials of the Oxford coronavirus vaccine, our

BUT SERUM INST. SAYS INDIA TRIALS CONTINUING

Sept. 9: Serum Institute of India said on Wednesday that trials of AstraZeneca Plc's Covid-19 vaccine candidate in the country are ongoing and has not faced any issues. "We can't comment much on the UK trials," Serum Institute said in a statement, adding "as far as Indian trials are concerned, it is continuing and we have faced no issues at all."

—Reuters

standard review process was triggered and we vol-

untarily paused vaccination to allow a review of safety data by an independent committee, said a spokesperson for AstraZeneca on Tuesday evening.

This is a routine action which has to happen whenever there is a potentially unexplained illness in one of the trials, while it is investigated, ensuring we maintain the integrity of the trials. In large trials illnesses will happen by chance but must be independently reviewed to check this carefully, the spokesperson said.

Stressing that the adverse reaction involved only a single patient, the spokesperson added that the team is working to expedite the review of the single event to minimise any potential impact on the trial timeline.

We are committed to the safety of our participants and the highest standards of conduct in our trials, the spokesperson said.

Phase III trials in vaccines often involve thousands of participants and can last several years.

—PTI

standard review process was triggered and we vol-

untary liquid funds witnessed outflow of Rs 15,814.01 while overnight fund saw outflow of Rs 10,298.03 crore while healthy inflows were recorded in money market funds (Rs 7,911.53 crore), ultrashort duration funds (Rs 5,428 crore) and low duration funds (Rs 5,368 crore). Overall, the fixed income category witnessed outflows of Rs 3,907.53 crore.

The August month data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed outflows of

Happiest Minds IPO subscribed 151 times

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, SEPT. 9

In a major boost to the primary equity market, public issues of Happiest Minds Technologies and Route Mobile received huge interest from all categories of investors. Both public issues have been fully subscribed.

Happiest Minds' Rs 702 crore initial public offering has been subscribed 150.98 times on the closing day, as per updated stock exchange.

Leading brokerages had given a subscribe and subscribe for long term, call on Happiest Minds offer, leading to a huge rush from the retail investors category.

As per the latest data provided by the managers of the issue, Happiest Minds received over 22 lakh applications. Retail individual category portion was subscribed 70.94 times while high network investors category was subscribed 351.46 times and institutional category was subscribed 77.43 times.

Route Mobile's Rs 600-crore IPO has been fully subscribed on the very first day of the bids opening, as per the subscription data updated by the stock exchanges.

Reliance Retail gets ₹7,500 crore

New Delhi, Sept. 9: US private equity firm Silver Lake Partners will buy 1.75 per cent stake in Reliance Industries Ltd's retail arm for Rs 7,500 crore.

Silver Lake will invest Rs 7,500 crore in Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd, a subsidiary of RIL, for a 1.75 per cent stake, the Indian firm said in a statement.

"This investment values RRVL at a pre-money equity value of Rs 4.21

PF board okays 8.5% rate

EPFO to credit 8.15% interest now and 0.35% after December

New Delhi, Sept. 9: Retirement fund body EPFO on Wednesday decided to provide 8.5 per cent rate of interest on employees' provident fund (EPF) for 2019-20 as committed earlier.

In March this year, Employees' Provident Fund Organisation's apex decision-making body Central Board of Trustees headed by labour minister Santosh Gangwar had approved 8.5 per cent interest rate on EPF for last fiscal.

In a virtual CBT meeting on Wednesday, the EPFO has decided to provide 8.5 per cent rate of interest, a labour ministry statement said.

"In view of exceptional circumstances arising out of Covid-19, the agenda regarding interest rate was reviewed by

Employees' Provident Fund interest rate

Year	Interest Rate (%)
2010-11	9.5
2011-12	8.25
2012-13	8.50
2013-14	8.75
2014-15	8.75
2015-16	8.80
2016-17	8.55
2017-18	8.55
2018-19	8.65
2019-20	8.50

Figures in per cent Source: KBK Infographics

(capital gain) from the sale of ETFs (exchange traded funds) subject to their redemption by 31 December, 2020," the statement said.

The board has recommended accounting such capital gains (from sale of ETFs) in the income of the financial year 2019-20 as being an exceptional case.

According to a source, the EPFO will provide 8.15 per cent interest on EPF soon and the remaining 0.35 per cent rate would be credited into the subscribers' account by December 31, after liquidation of ETFs.

The CBT also decided to hike the maximum sum assured payable under Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme 1976 to Rs 7 lakh from existing Rs 6 lakh.

—PTI

Biden for tax penalties on offshore profits

JENNIFER EPSTEIN
SEPT. 9

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden is proposing a 10 per cent tax penalty on companies that move operations overseas and a 10 per cent tax credit for companies that create jobs in the US in a policy rollout Wednesday.

Biden, who is launching a renewed focus on economic issues with a speech in Michigan, also will promise to reverse Trump administration policies that his campaign said amount to "loopholes" that allow offshoring to take place. The former vice president will also pledge

Biden will also say that Trump has broken his promises to bring jobs and profits back to the US.

"Offshoring, outsourcing, buying American. These are areas where Donald Trump's record has not

been remotely matched by the reality," senior policy adviser Jake Sullivan said.

Biden will propose a 28 per cent corporate tax rate plus a 10 per cent penalty surtax on the profits from any production by a US company overseas for sale on American soil, making the overall tax rate on those profits 30.8 per cent.

The penalty will also apply to those profits海外 that serve the US. He also plans to implement what his campaign described as "strong anti-inversion regulations and penalties," though it did not detail those plans.

—Bloomberg

Collections rising for NBFCs in key retail verticals

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, SEPT. 9

NBFCs have witnessed 15 to 20 per cent improvement in their collections across different segments of retail lending in the last two months.

Increased optimism has led to overall collection efficiency in segments like micro loans, vehicle finance, affordable housing, according to Motilal Oswaal Research.

Micro-finance collections have improved to 70-75 per cent by the end of the second phase of moratorium, though disbursements are still muted.

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka have posted strong collection performances, while Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Odisha and Maharashtra have witnessed lower collections due to either prolonged lockdowns or political interference.

Sa-Dhan too had observed that overall collection rate has been improving from 35-40 per cent in April, to 45-50 per cent in May, 65-70 per cent in July. Sa-Dhan has been anticipating collection rates to move up to 80-85 per cent by September.

Vehicle finance has seen collections improving to 80-90 per cent, according to Motilal. Vehicle financiers operating in rural and semi-urban locations have seen faster-than-expected recovery. This is attributable to the focus on partial collections, even from customers under moratorium.

Bajaria, 49, who was crowned Miss India USA in 1991, moved to the US from London with her family when she was 8. She lives in Los Angeles with her writer husband Doug Prochilo and their three children.

gory, liquid funds witnessed outflow of Rs 15,814.01 while overnight fund saw outflow of Rs 10,298.03 crore while healthy inflows were recorded in money market funds (Rs 7,911.5

SHORT TAKES

Tokyo governor firm on Games

Tokyo: The postponed Olympics must be held next year "by all means," Tokyo's governor said on Wednesday, becoming the latest official to insist the event is feasible despite the coronavirus pandemic.

Yuriko Koike's remarks, at an event hosted by Kyodo news agency, come after International Olympic Committee vice-president John Coates told AFP that the Games would go ahead in 2021 "with or without Covid".

"Athletes are going through much hardship due to the one-year delay given that their physical condition and motivation were targeted at this summer," Koike said, according to an English translation of her remarks published by Kyodo. "We have to go forward with the Games next summer by all means," she added, at the corporate event for the news agency's subscribers. The city will "implement every possible measure" to ensure the safety of the event, Koike said. — AFP

Roy makes it to One-Day squad

Manchester: Jason Roy was added to England's squad on Wednesday for the upcoming One-Day International series against Australia after recovering from a side strain. The explosive opener missed the recent T20 series against Pakistan and Australia with the injury he sustained in training. Dawid Malan was promoted to the reserve list on the day he rose to No.1 on the Twenty20 player international rankings after scoring 66, 44 and 21 against Australia in the series. England won 2-1. That took his career average to 48.71 and his overall strike-rate to 146.66. The ODI series against Australia starts Friday in Manchester. They are the first ODI matches between the countries since England won the Cricket World Cup on home soil last year. — AP

De Bruyne is Eng footballer of year

London: Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne was voted English football's player of the year, denying Liverpool a third straight winner of the prestigious award. De Bruyne became the first City player to capture the Professional Footballers' Association award after scoring 13 goals and making a record-breaking 20 assists last season. The Belgian credited manager Pep Guardiola for giving him the freedom to be creative. "Most of the time he just lets me be," De Bruyne said of Guardiola.

"We speak often about the team but in a lot of senses he knows when he gives the orders of what the team has to do that I will listen. But then on the other side, he gives me a lot of freedom; I don't know why, that's just the way it goes between us. He knows in one way I will always put the team first and then obviously if I can help myself I'm going to do that," he said. — AP

Vikas gets the nod to train in US

New Delhi: Olympic-bound boxer Vikas Krishan has got the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) approval to train in the USA, where he also plans to resume his career in the professional circuit. SAI has approved his training in the US till November 30 and also sanctioned ₹17.5 lakh for the stint. Vikas, who competes in 69kg category currently, is an Asian and Commonwealth Games gold-medallist. He will be travelling to the US along with his American coach Ron Simms Jr and they will train at the Alexandria Boxing Club in Virginia till November 30. — PTI

Live on TV

CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Final: Trinbago Knight Riders vs St Lucia Zouks from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

US OPEN TENNIS

Matches from 9.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, 2, HD

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20

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Cristiano's century

Ronaldo second player to score 100 international goals

Stockholm, Sept. 9: Add 100 international goals to the extraordinary list of milestones achieved by soccer superstar Cristiano Ronaldo.

Ronaldo became just the second male player to reach a century of goals for a national team when he curled a free kick into the top corner from 25 metres for the first of his two strikes in Portugal's 2-0 away win against Sweden in the Nations League on Tuesday.

Scoring one of the best goals of his international career was a fitting way to enter the "100 Club," where he joins former Iran striker Ali Daei, and he wheeled away in delight in an empty Friends Arena in Stockholm before performing his trademark celebration the mid-air piroette.

Ronaldo, who was playing in his 165th game for Portugal, then added a second goal another curler into the top corner and needs nine more to surpass the international record of 109 scored by Daei from 1993-2006.

Ronaldo already holds the record for goals in the Champions League with 131, 16 more than nearest rival Lionel Messi.

Portugal has won its two opening group games after beating Croatia 4-1 on Saturday, when Ronaldo was absent because of a toe infection. Belgium and France also have maximum points. The top-ranked Belgians beat Iceland 5-1 and France defeated Croatia 4-2 the same scoreline as the 2018 World Cup final.

England drew 0-0 at Denmark in Copenhagen.

GIROUD NEARS RECORD

Oliver Giroud moved to within one goal of Michel Platini's national record for France by converting a penalty to complete the victory over Croatia at the Stade de France.

The striker was handed the opportunity to move onto 40 international goals by Antoine Griezmann, who gave away penalty duties having missed his last three for France. Giroud made no mistake in the 77th minute.

A well-taken individual goal by center back Dejan Lovren put Croatia ahead, but Anthony Martial set up Griezmann for the equalizer before sliding in for a shot that hit the post, struck goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic on the back of the head, and rebounded into the net. — AP

Mbappe scored the winner for the world champion



Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates scoring the opening goal, his 100th goal for Portugal, during the UEFA Nations League football match against Sweden in Solna, Sweden, on Tuesday. Portugal won 2-0. — AFP

Covid +ve Mbappe ruled out

MESSI BACK TO TRAINING WITH BARCELONA SQUAD

Barcelona, Sept. 9: Lionel Messi rejoined the rest of his Barcelona teammates at practice on Wednesday. Messi had been practicing separately from the group since returning to the club on Monday. He had not been with the squad since announcing he wanted to leave and then deciding to stay to avoid a legal dispute with Barcelona.

He needed to pass two Coronavirus tests before he could practice with the rest of the squad under incoming coach Ronald Koeman.

Also back with the group was Philippe Coutinho, who also had been practicing separately. Players who had been with their national teams for Nations League matches also returned, including Frenkie de Jong, Ansu Fati and Sergio Busquets.

Barcelona said that defender Samuel Umtiti has been cleared by doctors after recovering from Covid-19. Luis Suarez and Arturo Vidal, who like Umtiti are not in Koeman's plans for the season, also have been practicing normally.

The club has scheduled a friendly against third-division club Nastic for Saturday. — AP

ons in a 1-0 victory over Sweden in their opening Nations League encounter. However, he was expected to be rested for the game at the Stade de France against Croatia, with PSG's opening match

of the French league season scheduled for Thursday away to Lens.

Mbappe is the fourth player to be withdrawn from the France squad following a positive Covid-19 test. — AFP

CANADA QUINN COMES OUT AS TRANSGENDER

Los Angeles, Sept. 9: Canada and OL Reign midfielder Rebecca Quinn came out publicly as transgender in an Instagram post on Tuesday.

The 25-year-old player, who won Olympic bronze with the Canadian women's team in 2016 and played for Canada at the 2019 Women's World Cup, said the post was aimed at helping "queer folk" feel safe on social media.

"As I've lived as an openly trans person with the people I love most for many years, I did always wonder when I'd come out publicly," Quinn wrote in an Instagram post.

Quinn is one of the most prominent North American team sports athletes to come out as transgender. — AFP

Awesome Osaka cruises into semis

New York, Sept. 9: Japan's Naomi Osaka sailed into the semifinals of the US Open on Tuesday as Alexander Zverev of Germany booked his spot in the last four of the men's draw.

Osaka, the tournament's fourth seed, swept aside unseeded Shelby Rogers in straight sets to set up a match with Jennifer Brady for a place in Saturday's final.

The 22-year-old Osaka required just 1hr 20 min inside an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium to defeat the 27-year-old Rogers 6-3, 6-4.

Osaka, the world number 9, said her victory was payback for three previous defeats to the 93rd-ranked Rogers.

They included a 2017 loss on clay in Charleston that Osaka said had left "a really bad aftertaste" in my mouth.

"Honestly, I just felt like she had the upper hand because I've never beaten her," Osaka said.

Osaka's dominant service game contributed to a comfortable runout for the 2018 US Open champion.

She won 83 per cent of points on her first serve and 70 per cent on her second.

In contrast, Rogers managed only 66 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. Rogers hit 29 unforced errors compared to just eight committed by Osaka.

Brady conquered some

serious nerves to defeat Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva and reach the semifinals of a Grand Slam for the first time.

The American 28th seed needed just 1hr 9 min to blow away her 23rd-seeded opponent 6-3, 6-2.

Brady is yet to drop a set and has lost only 24 games during her march to the semis, the fewest of anyone left in the draw.

Osaka said Brady would be a formidable opponent.

ZVEREV EASES PAST CORIC, IN SEMIS

Zverev bounced back from a shocking start to oust 27th-seeded Croatian Borna Coric in four sets.

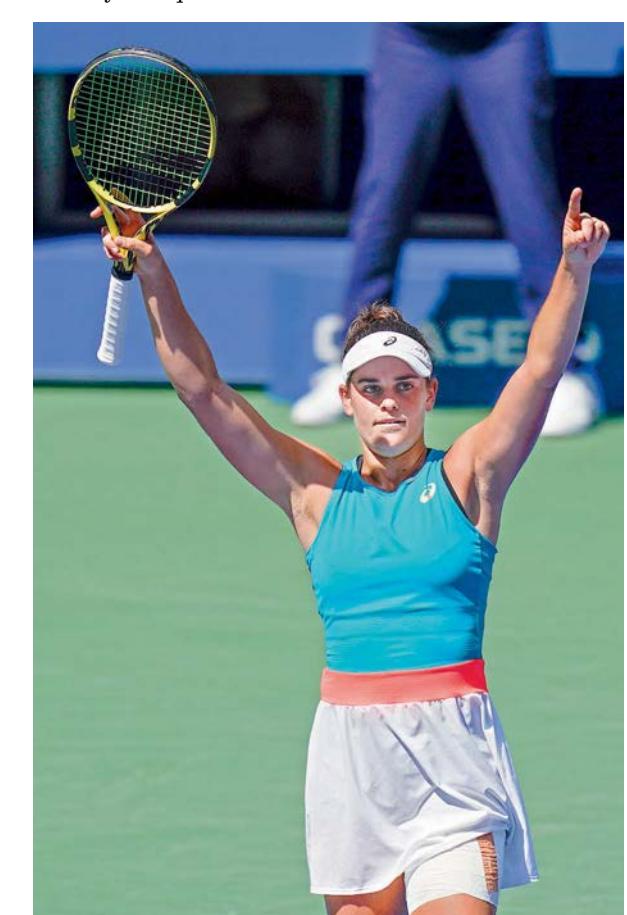
The 23-year-old German prevailed 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 in 3hr 25min.

He began playing more aggressively after finding himself a set down, and 4-2 behind in the second set.

The German will play Spain's 20th seed Pablo Carreno Busta for a place in Sunday's final.

The Spaniard defeated 12th-seeded Canadian Denis Shapovalov 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4), 0-6, 6-3 in an epic five-setter that ended in the early hours of Wednesday.

On Wednesday, second seed Dominic Thiem faces Australian Alex de Minaur and third seed Daniil Medvedev plays compatriot of Andre Rublev for the other semifinal spot? — AFP



Jennifer Brady of the United States reacts after defeating Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan during the quarterfinals of the US Open tennis championships in New York on Tuesday. Brady won 6-3, 6-2. — AP

YUVRAJ UP FOR COMEBACK

New Delhi, Sept. 9: World Cup-winning former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh has decided to come out of retirement, giving in to a request from the Punjab Cricket Association more than a year after he called it quits.

The Player of the Tournament at the 2011 World Cup, Yuvraj had announced his retirement from all forms of cricket last June. PCA secretary Puneet Bali was the first person to approach the Yuvraj with an offer to come out of retirement for the benefit of Punjab cricket. He has agreed to resume for the state at least in the T20 format.

"Initially, I wasn't sure that I wanted to take up the offer. I was done with domestic cricket, though I did want to continue to play in other domestic franchise-based leagues worldwide if I got permission from the BCCI," Yuvi was quoted as saying by Cricbuzz. — PTI

Aussies pull one back at the end of T20 series

Southampton, Sept. 9: Australia gained a consolation victory in the final match of its Twenty20 series against England to regain top spot in the format's world rankings at the expense of its fierce rival.

Australia chased down its target of 146 with three balls to spare for a five-wicket victory at the empty Rose Bowl, with Mitch Marsh hitting the winning run to finish unbeaten on 39.

England won the series 2-1, but needed to sweep it to remain top of the T20 rankings after climbing into first place because of its win in the second match on Sunday.

England opener Jonny Bairstow overcame a slow start to smash a 44-ball 55 containing three fours and three sixes and lead the team to 145-6.

That was the lowest score of the series so far, with paceman Mitchell Starc very economical by conceding just 20 runs off his four overs.

Joe Denly's late-innings 29 off 19 balls gave England's total some respectability. — AP

Brief scores: England 145/6 in 20 overs (J. Bairstow 55, D. Malan 21, Moeen Ali 23, J. Denly 29 n.o., Zampa 24/5) lost to Australia 146/5 in 19.3 overs (A. Finch 39, M. Stoinis 26, M. Marsh 39 n.o., Rashid 3/21).

Australia's Marcus Stoinis (second from right) celebrates the wicket of England's Dawid Malan during their Twenty20 cricket match in Southampton. — AFP

CHAHAR BACK IN HOTEL

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, SEPT. 9

Chennai Super Kings heaved a sigh of relief on Wednesday when Deepak Chahar returned to the team hotel in Dubai after completing his 14-day quarantine period. However, batsman Rituraj Gaikwad and one more CSK member are still in isolation and expected to join the squad only on September 12.

Chahar's return is good news for CSK, but the pacer still has to clear a cardiovascular test to be conducted by BCCI's medical team in order to join the training camp. His availability for the opening game against Mumbai Indians to be held on September 19 is still in doubt.

Tarouba (Trinidad and Tobago), Sept. 9:

Trinbago Knight Riders and St. Lucia Zouks registered dominant wins in their respective semifinals to qualify for the Hero Caribbean Premier League final here.

The Knight Riders are now in a position to complete the first perfect season in CPL history, as they have won all 10 league matches plus the semifinal.

The Trinbago Knight Riders restricted Jamaica Tallawahs to 107 for seven and then chased down the target with nine wickets and five overs to spare to give them a chance to win a fourth CPL title.

In the other semifinal, St. Lucia Zouks were even more ruthless as they bowled out Guyana Amazon Warriors for 55 in 13.4 overs and got to the target in 4.3 overs without losing a wicket.

Sent in to bat, the Tallawahs struggled as each of the first three overs yielded a wicket.

Akeal Hosein accounted for Jermaine Blackwood and Mujeeb Ur Rehman, while Khary Pierre sent back Glen Phillips as Tallawahs were reeling at 10 for three in 2.4 overs.

The Powerplay period ended with Tallawahs at 28 for four and it included a Pierre over with five wides. — PTI

Butler shines as Miami pip Bucks

Miami, Sept. 9: The Miami Heat punched their ticket to the NBA Eastern Conference finals Tuesday, beating top-seeded Milwaukee 103-94 as injured Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo watched from the bench.

Jimmy Butler and Goran Dragic finished with 17 points apiece as six Heat players scored in double figures and Miami completed a 4-1 series victory in a bruising encounter against the league's top team.

Khris Middleton led the Bucks with 23 points.

Antetokounmpo – tipped to scoop a second straight NBA Most Valuable Player award this season – aggravated his sprained right ankle in the first half of the Bucks' game-four overtime victory over the Heat. The Bucks declared him inactive less than an hour before tipoff on Tuesday. The loss of Antetokounmpo, who averaged career highs of 29.5 points and 13.6 rebounds per game this season, was a huge blow for the Bucks, as they tried to do what no NBA team has done before: come back from an 0-3 deficit to win a seven-game playoff series.

It's the second straight campaign that the Bucks built the best regular-season record only to come up short in the playoffs. — AFP