

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 15 | OCTOBER 2020

## WEATHER



Max: 32°C  
Min: 23°C  
Rainfall: 0.5 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Purattasi 29  
**Tithi:** Chaturtashi  
**Star:** Uthiram  
**Rahukalam:**  
1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**Yamagandam:**  
6 am to 7.30 am

## Mulayam tests Covid positive

**Lucknow:** Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the party said Wednesday. The 80-year-old leader is admitted to the Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon. "Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav has tested positive for Covid-19 and is being monitored by doctors. As of now, there are no Covid symptoms in him," it tweeted.

## COUNTER POINT

Flashback



**What negligence... We will make life jacket compulsory for all citizens!**

Subhani, who began CounterPoint on December 11, 1992 and took only one break from work in his entire career, is on personal leave of bereavement. We present some of his best cartoons of rib-tickling wisdom published on Page 1 and on the Edit Page till he returns.



## Renowned Kuchipudi exponent Sobha Naidu passes away

**Hyderabad, Oct. 14:** Renowned Kuchipudi exponent Sobha Naidu, a recipient of Padma Shri and numerous other awards, passed away here on Wednesday. Naidu, who was in her sixties, was undergoing treatment at a private hospital and the end came around 0100 hours on Wednesday, sources close to her said.

Sobha Naidu's major achievements include choreography and presentation of Ballets Vipranarayana, Kalyana Srinivasam and many others in which she was the main protagonist and donned various roles like Satyabhama, Sevadevaki, Padmavathi, Mohini, Sai Baba, and Goddess Parvati which won her great appreciation. As a Guru (teacher), she trained a number of students from India and abroad. Her performances have also won accolades in foreign countries. She has presented a series of performances at different venues in the US and also performed in countries, including the UK. — PTI



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**HC dismisses as withdrawn Rajini's property tax plea**



## WORLD | 5

**China, far left desperate for Biden win: Trump**

## SPORT | 8

**Srikanth sails into Round 2**



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## Implement interest waiver as soon as possible, says SC

**PARMOD KUMAR**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

The Supreme Court on Wednesday hit out at the Centre for taking inordinate time in implementing its decision to waive the interest on interest on loans up to ₹2 crore for six months of the Covid moratorium period, from March 1 to August 31, describing it as "unfair" and saying, the "common man's Diwali in government's hands".

The court told the government to inform it of the steps taken by it and the banks to implement the decision to waive the compound interest on loans upto ₹2 crore for eight categories of borrowers, including individuals and small industries.

## ECOLOGY CONCERNS

# SC upholds Nilgiris elephant corridor

**New Delhi, Oct. 14:** The Supreme Court Wednesday upheld the Madras high court's 2011 decision asking resort owners including Bollywood actor Mithun Chakraborty and private land owners to vacate and hand over the possession of their land falling under the 'elephant corridor' to the district collector of Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu.

A bench comprising Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices S Abdul Nazeer and Sanjiv Khanna delivered the verdict on 35 petitions including that of Hospitality Association of Mudumalai and Chakraborty against the



Madras high court's judgement. Writing for the bench, Justice Nazeer took note of objections of some resort owners and land owners with regard to variance in acreage of the elephant corridor as notified by the impugned Government Order (GO) and the actions of acquisition taken by the District Collector of Nilgiris. It said there has been

allegation of "substantial variance between the acreage recommended for acquisition by the Expert Committee Report and the acreage in the impugned GO" and appointed a three-member Inquiry Committee headed by Justice K Venkatraman, former judge of the Madras High Court, to deal with grievances. The top court, in its judgement dealt with various aspects related to the existential crisis being faced by elephants and said, "despite being a figure of traditional cultural reverence, today the elephant species is severely threatened in India." — PTI

## J&K: Abdullahs and Mehbooba join hands

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 14

Jammu and Kashmir's mainstream political icons and former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti have resolved to put up a joint front along with other like-minded political parties and leaders against the Centre's "onslaught" against the erstwhile state's unique identity, the political and economic interests of its people and for seeking restoration of the special status it enjoyed prior to August 5, 2019.

Abdullah on Wednesday called on People's Democratic Party (PDP) Ms. Mufti at her official residence here to discuss briefly with her the contours of a broader alliance, the foundation of which would be the 'Gupkar Declaration'. 'Gupkar Declaration' is a pledge of Kashmir's mainstream parties which they

● **Last month, the leaders of National Conference (NC), PDP, Peoples Conference, Awami National Conference, CPIM and Congress issued a joint statement here saying that they are "wholly bound" by the "Gupkar Declaration: and "will unwaveringly adhere to it"**

took at a meeting held at Senior Abdullah's residence along Srinagar's Gupkar Road on August 4, 2019, a day before the state was stripped of its special status and split up into two Union Territories (UTs).

It had warned the Centre that abrogation and even modification of Articles 35A and 370 of the Constitution and delimitation or trifurcation of the State would be seen as an "aggression" against its people and fought back tooth and nail.

## Punjab farmers leave meet over minister's absence

**New Delhi, Oct. 14:** Farmers' organisations from Punjab Wednesday boycotted a meeting called by the Union agriculture ministry to resolve their concerns over new farm laws, and accused the government of playing double standards with no minister present to hear them out.

Representatives from 29 farmers' organisations, including Joginder Singh-led Bharati Kissan Union, were miffed at the absence of Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State for Agriculture in the meeting. The meeting was convened at the Krishi Bhavan amid police security to avoid any protest. After the meeting, agitated farmers' representatives were seen shouting slogans and tearing copies of new farm laws outside Krishi Bhavan. — PTI

## Trolls mock VSP for donning Lanka cap

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR | DC**  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Award-winning actor Vijay Sethupathi was at the receiving end of Tamil people's fury as a hashtag, #ShameOnVijaySethupathi, trended on Twitter through Wednesday with people slamming him for agreeing to play the role of ace Sri Lankan bowler



Muthiah Muralidaran in the upcoming biopic '800' in Tamil.

Garnering 102 K Tweets by 6.00 pm, the hashtag trended since the day broke

with supporters of the Eelam cause knocking him off the pedestal in which Tamil film industry had placed the actor with the title 'Makkal Selvan' by telling him 'you are a sell out.'

'Tweeple put out visual images to remind him of the horror the Tamil people faced from the Sri Lankan army and pointed out that Muthiah Muralidaran was

an apologist of the Lankan establishment and never spoke up for the Tamil people, despite being a Tamil himself.

Reproducing an old interview of Muralidaran, in which he says 'forget and forgive,' a Twitter user said 'This guy does not have a spine' and told Sethupathi that he would regret acting in his film. ■ P3

## Rain fury wreaks havoc in Telangana and Andhra

**Hyderabad/Amaravati, Oct. 14:** Hyderabad on Wednesday witnessed monsoon fury that inundated roads, flooded houses, toppled and swept away vehicles and left 19 people dead, as unprecedented rains lashed the capital city, besides some other districts in Telangana.

The rains showed no signs of abating in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured all possible help to the two Telugu-speaking states.

For October, the Begumpet met office observatory in Hyderabad recorded the highest ever rainfall of 192.1 mm on Wednesday.

In AP, for the second time in less than 20 days, the river Krishna remained swollen on Wednesday as it received heavy flood due to rainfall over the last couple of days.

Parts of Telangana, mainly Hyderabad, bore the brunt of the monsoon, even as Nalgonda and Yadadri districts too suffered.

At least 19 people were killed since Tuesday night in different areas here in wall and house collapse incidents due to the heavy downpour, officials said.

The victims included a toddler.

Under the Cyberabad



Floodwater gushes through a street following heavy rains, at Falaknuma, in Hyderabad, on Wednesday. — PTI

Police Commissionerate limits, five people went missing after they were washed away in high flow of water, police said, adding, a search was on.

In Banjara Hills a 49-year-old man, running a naturopathy clinic, was electrocuted when he was trying to remove water from the cellar of his inundated apartment.

TV channels showed visuals of a man being washed away and residents climbing the terrace of their houses seeking help.

He was later rescued by police and locals.

The state government declared a holiday for all government offices and private institutions on Wednesday and Thursday, even as people were advised

to stay indoors unless it was an emergency.

KT Rama Rao, Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, held an emergency meeting with senior officials and reviewed the rescue and relief operations in the city.

He said several trees and electricity poles were uprooted due to the deluge and directed the Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL) to coordinate with Municipal Administration and Police Departments to ensure that power is restored at the earliest.

On the Vijayawada-Hyderabad Highway, vehicles moved at snail's pace. — PTI

## Amidst strain in relations, Army chief to visit Nepal next month

**PAWAN BALI | DC**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

At a time when relations with Nepal have deteriorated in recent months, Indian Army chief General MM Naravane will visit the country in November, said sources on Wednesday.

This will be the first high profile visit by an Indian official to Nepal since the diplomatic relations have soured. According to sources the visit comes at the invitation of Nepal's government.

"The visit was planned earlier but was postponed due to lockdown in both countries owing to COVID-19 pandemic," said a senior official. The dates of the visit are being finalised and is likely to be in the first week of November.

During the visit, Gen Naravane will also be conferred the honorary rank of "General of the Nepali Army" by President Vidya Devi Bhandari at an investiture ceremony, an age-old tradition that first started in 1950.

India also confers the honorary rank of 'General of Indian Army' to the Nepal Army Chief.

Gen Naravane will also meet top defence and army officials in Nepal during his visit.

## Delhi goes to top of table with 6 wins



Opener Shikhar Dhawan's half-century propelled Delhi Capitals to a 13-run win over Rajasthan Royals in an IPL game in Dubai on Wednesday. ■ Report on P8 — BCCI

## Nitish: Don't fall in anybody's 'publicity trap'

**Banka/Bhagalpur, Oct. 14:** Beginning his election tours with a public meeting at Banka, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Wednesday alerted people not to fall in anybody's "publicity trap" else while their income would multiply but that of the common man would slide as was the case before the present dispensation came on the scene.

He cautioned people that any error in making a right decision while casting vote would pave way for return of condition that prevailed 15 years before the NDA assumed reins of the state in 2005 end.

After launching campaign for Bihar polls on Monday with a virtual rally and addressing two more digital rallies Tuesday, Kumar started addressing election meetings physically with a public meeting at Balua maidan

in Banka district during the day. From there he flew to Bhagalpur to address a second rally at Sultanganj and after that another one at Munger and the last in Mokama in the outskirts of Patna. On return to the state capital, he addressed a virtual rally from the party headquarters in a bid to reach out to maximum number of people during the election. — PTI

because the Indian Army did not have a Muslim Regiment in 1965 or since.

"The 'Muslim eegiment' posts are an attack on India's Armed Forces," said the letter signed by 120 veterans including former chief of the Indian navy Admiral (retd) Laxminarayan Ramdas. The veterans said that this falsehood is being spread by forces inimical to the country and its Armed Forces and will adversely affect morale and national security.

## Armed forces veterans write to Prez on 'Muslim regiment' fake news

**PAWAN BALI | DC**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

Armed forces veterans from Army, Navy and Air Force have written an open letter to the President of India demanding action against those posting fake social media posts that Indian Army had a 'Muslim regiment', which had refused to fight against Pakistan during the 1965 war and was then 'disbanded'. The letter said that these 'Muslim regiment' posts are blatantly false

## Chamundi Hills off limits to Dasara tourists in Mysore

**M.B. GIRISH | DC**  
MYSURU, OCT. 14

The Covid-19 spike has forced the Karnataka government to resort to very low key Dasara this year, where no more than 200 participants would be allowed inside the infamous Mysuru palace premises during the nine day celebration. Besides, the government has also decided to ban public entry to Chamundi hills, either by road or through the steps, which would be enforced ahead of Dasara inauguration.

A decision regarding this was taken during meeting of Dasara Committee here on

Wednesday, which also decided not to allow more than 300 people in the palace premises during infamous Jambu Savari, when the elephants carry Golden Howda, belonging to erstwhile Royal Family. Usually, over two lakh tourists from all over the world arrive in Mysuru during Dasara season, which last for nine days during Navaratri. Besides, Dasara exhibition lasts for one month, which is another major tourist attraction during the season.

It has been a customary to decorate entire city with lighting arrangements during nine days celebration, which



used to go on from 6 pm to 6 am. However, this year, the lighting would be just around the palace and it would be only four hours between 6 pm and 10 pm.

Meanwhile, there is trend of rise in inflow of devotees to Chamundi Hills during

● **Major crowd pullers such as yuva dasara, food mela, farmers dasara among a host of cultural programmes have been cancelled owing to Covid-19 scare**

Dasara season. In the view of Covid-19 spike, where Mysuru has witnessed second highest Covid-19 cases in Karnataka, Deputy Commissioner Rohini Sindhuri has banned the entry of public to the Hills from October 14 mid night to 18 midnight. Again,

the entry of visitors to the Hills will be banned from 5 am of October 23 5 to midnight of November 1 midnight. Even, entry by devotees to the Hills by steps stands banned. Chamundi Hills, about 12-km from Mysuru city, has a temple dedicated to Goddess Chamundeshwari, presiding deity of Mysuru.

Amid Covid-19 cases in Mysuru, the State Government is set to hold 10-day Dasara festivities and the inaugural function of the festivities will be held on October 17 atop Chamundi Hills by noted cardiologist C.N. Manjunath. Major crowd pullers such as yuva dasara,

food mela, farmers dasara among a host of cultural programmes have been cancelled owing to Covid-19 scare. However, illumination of the city has also been brought from 100 km earlier to 50-km distance of illumination this year.

Even, the cynosure of the Dasara festivities, jumbo savari, procession by cultural troupes with a golden howdah mounted on an elephant has been restricted to Mysuru Palace premises while earlier the procession used to be held from Mysuru Palace premises to Bannimantapa, covering 6-km distance.



## OTHER STORY

## Two highway robberies reported from suburbs

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Police on Wednesday began a search for a gang of highway dacoits, who allegedly broke into a house on Chennai-Tiruchy national highway on Tuesday midnight.

According to police, the gang of highway robbers barged into the house of Venkatesh(60) in Balaji Nagar in Melmaruvathur. Venkatesh rented the down portion of his house to a few North Indian employees and the second floor of the building was used by Venkatesh's family occasionally, though they lived in the city.

Police said around midnight, a seven-member masked gang with armed weapons broke into the ground floor of the house. They allegedly attacked the employees as they could not find any valuables. The robbers then went on to the locked house on the second floor and reportedly stole silver pooja ornaments kept in the house weighing at least two kilograms. The dacoits also fled the spot in a van parked in front of the house.

After being alerted by the house occupants, Venkatesh lodged a complaint with the Chengalpatt Superintendent of police, Kannan. The complaint was forwarded to the Melmaruvathur police, who arrived at the spot with sniffer dog 'Jhansi' and a team of forensic experts. After an inquiry, a case was registered by the police. Investigations are on to nab the assailants, police said.

In another highway robbery reported on the night intervening Tuesday and Wednesday, the wall of a Tasmac outlet was drilled and unidentified men made away with liquor bottles worth lakhs.

The incident which took place in Vedal village on Chennai-Bengaluru national highway came to the light on Wednesday morning. Based on the complaint from the manager of the shop, a case was registered by the Kanchipuram taluk police.

According to police, the salespersons closed the shop at around 10 pm on Tuesday. When returned on Wednesday morning to open the outlet, they found a huge hole in its wall. They rushed inside to see the liquor bottles and cash from the box stolen.

## Stress laid on scientific way of handwashing

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

As the world observes Handwashing Day on Thursday, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic which demands frequent handwashing and strict social distancing, the awareness about the scientific way of handwashing takes a key role in developing a healthy society.

Though the Handwashing Day was started observing in 2008, this year it plays a different role as the world is moving through the raging pandemic which has already killed millions across the globe. People, across the borders, are being taught the importance of keeping hands hygienic through constant anti-Covid-9 campaigns.

Medical practitioners say regular handwashing is the most simple and effective method to prevent many deadly diseases. Right from Diarrhea to Covid-19, the role of handwashing is vital.

Dr S. Sobhana, consultant neonatologist and pediatrician, Women's Centre, Motherhood Hospital, says the awareness about handwashing should begin from every home itself. It's important to make every parent aware of the advantage of building a habit of handwashing among their children. "The kids are often susceptible to communicable diseases as they come in direct contact with dirt when they play outside. So the parents should develop fun-filled methods that



Health secretary Radhakrishnan at the handwashing awareness campaign at KMC hospital Chennai on Wednesday.

— DC

could encourage kids to keep their hands hygiene. In the time of pandemic, people across all age groups should follow the habit of handwashing to prevent the infection of coronavirus. In that case, the authorities should give special emphasis on this year's handwashing day," she says.

According to healthcare activists, though people are aware of the necessity of handwashing, they don't know about the scientific side of handwashing. "If you want to prevent pathogens from entering the body, you have to wash your hands for at least 20 to 40 seconds with soap. Only when you clean your palm -

outside and inside - and finger gaps by rubbing with nails, you will get the desired effect of handwashing.

Handwashing is extremely important before and after you attend nature's call and eat food. You should always be sensitive to the fact that your hand would get dirty when you return home after travelling in public transport, and handling currency notes. So wash hands taking enough time," says Dr Rex Sargunam, president, Tamil Nadu Health Development Association.

"The mothers, who take care of babies, must wash their hands before and after

handling the baby's excreta and breastfeeding. Before you take a baby in your hands, handwashing must be ensured. People have often been seen misconstrued that the hands can be kept disinfected when they are washed under the pipe water without using the soap. It will not yield the desired impact on our body. So it is important to create awareness among people about washing hands in a scientific way. Covid-19 is one of the diseases we got in this century that described the importance of handwashing. So we have to learn to wash the hands with water and soap," he said.

## Conserve wetlands in state, says Sacon study

A. ARUL PALANI | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

The Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (Sacon) has sought immediate action to conserve wetlands in the state. In a study conducted by Sacon on 'Criteria for wetland prioritisation and framework for wetland monitoring in Tamil Nadu' the research team has calculated that the wetland health status score for each of the 141 wetlands taking into consideration the ecosystem services, land use patterns, threats and biodiversity values recorded.

Based on the Wetland Health Status (WHS) score Sacon has ranked the 141 wetlands. Of which 4 wetlands - Uppidamangalam and Velliyana lake from Karur district, Panamarathupatti lake from Salem district and Madipakkam lake from Chennai - need most urgent and immediate attention. And 19 wetlands need urgent and immediate attention, 21 wetlands need immediate attention, 40 wetlands need to be prioritized, 25 wetlands conservation measures need to be initiated and 32 wetlands Conservation plans should be implemented.

The total wetland area estimated by the Space Applications Centre (SAC, Isro), Ahmedabad, is 15.26 million ha, which is 4.63 per cent of the geographic area of the country. As per the 2011 National Wetland Atlas, Tamil Nadu has 6.92 per cent of its land mass

## 'Unrecognized slums face gross inadequacy of basic services'

In another study 'Toward Slum-Free Cities: A Review of Innovations and Practices in Slum Clearance from International and Indian Cities, with special Focus on Chennai' conducted by the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, the research team has noted that according to 2001 census 17.4 per cent of the city's population (over one million people) live in slums, but this proportion grew to 28.5 per cent in 2011. Eight resettlement areas have identified by Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board as slums - Ambedkar Paalam in Mylapore, Udhya Suriyana Nagar in Vyasarpadi, Saalaima Nagar in Otteri, Shastri in Pulianthope, Muthamizh Nagar in Kodungaiyur, Ambedkar Nagar, Cart Track Road in Velachery, Raja Rathinam Nagar in Kodungaiyur and Kannagi Nagar in Thoraipakkam. After 1985, no new slums have been recognized by the government. The study pointed out that the unrecognized slums face gross inadequacy of basic services and increased vulnerability to eviction and resettlement. There has been shortage of land for relocating and resettlement. Stating that effective and sustainable slum upgradation cannot occur without community participation, the study sought that the state must concentrate on building institutional structures to support participatory mechanisms. Among others these studies were presented in the second round of Tamil Nadu State Land Use Research Board Meeting for 2020-2021. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of C. Ponnaian, vice chairman, State Development Policy Council (SDPC), Chennai with Anil Meshram, member secretary, State Development Policy Council, Dr B.C. Archana Kalyani, head of division (land use) and Tamil Nadu State Land Use Research Board members on Wednesday through a video conference at SDPC.

categorized under wetlands. These wetlands resources are mainly replenished by the seasonal rainfall during the north-east monsoon.

## FESTIVAL BUS BOOKING



Ticket booking for Deepavali special buses commences at CMBT at Koyambedu on Wednesday.

— DC

## HC dismisses as withdrawn Rajini's plea

Chennai, Oct. 14: The Madras High Court on Wednesday dismissed as withdrawn a petition filed by top actor Rajinikanth over a property tax demand of ₹6.50 lakh by the city corporation on his marriage hall here for the first half of the current financial year.

Justice Anitha Sumanth warned of imposing costs on the actor for approaching the court soon after sending a notice to the civic body for relief under vacancy remission rule citing closure of the marriage hall due to Covid-19 lockdown during the six month period.

The petition, in which the actor sought a direction to the civic body to dispose of his notice, was dismissed as counsel filed a memo later in the day.

The actor submitted that he regularly pays property



tax for his marriage hall Raghavendra Mandapam and had paid the last due for the second half of 2019-20 on February 14.

The corporation has recently raised a property tax demand of Rs 6,50,660 for the period from April to September this year.

The petitioner submitted that Section 105 of the



Chennai City Municipal Corporation Act, 1919 allows remission in the tax amount if any building remained unlet for 30 or more consecutive days in any half-year.

He said his hall has been 'unlet/vacant' since March 24, when the government had imposed a national lockdown to stem the

spread of coronavirus. The bookings made earlier had been cancelled and the deposit money refunded to the concerned persons.

Hence, he had sent a notice to the Corporation on September 23 seeking vacancy remission under Section 105 of the act but the first respondent, the civic body's chief, has not passed any orders.

While so, the corporation also warned of levying a two per cent penalty if he did not pay the amount by October 15, he said.

He sought an interim injunction restraining the civic body from seeking penalty pending disposal of his petition in the court and a direction to the corporation commissioner to dispose of his September 23 notice for vacancy remission.

— PTI

## Hyderabad bound flights diverted to Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Five domestic flights were diverted from the Rajiv Gandhi international airport to Chennai airport after the incessant rains flooded the city.

An Indigo flight from Delhi with 129 passengers to land at 9.30 pm on Tuesday, but as the runway experienced heavy wind and rains, the aircraft was diverted to Chennai. Similarly, an Indigo airline from Jaipur, which was to land in Hyderabad on Tuesday night was also asked to go to Chennai as they too had difficulty to land the aircraft here. Three Indigo flights from Varanasi, Mumbai and Kolkata respectively, which were supposed to land in Hyderabad from 10 pm, were diverted to Chennai, officials said.

According to airport sources, the flights were diverted because of the heavy rains on the runway and to avoid any risk while the aircraft landed. The diverted flights landed back in Hyderabad by 1:30 am on Wednesday.

## Q Branch arrests Sri Lankan 'don'

P.A. JEBARAJ / SINDHIYA  
SAMUEL | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

The officials of Q Branch arrested a Sri Lankan national from Bengaluru allegedly involved in several murders and drug smuggling cases, internationally. Kanchipuram district Q-Branch officials rounded up the accused on Tuesday night at gunpoint.

According to official sources, the arrested was identified as Alahapeerumaga Sunil Gamini Fonseka, (52) a Sri Lankan national, commonly known

as 'don' and a leading member of Sri Lankan mobster, Kimbula-Ela-Guna, who was a major drug dealer in the island country.

The gang was involved in LTTE activities too. The gang took part in LTTE's failed attempt to kill President Chandrika Kumaratunga in 1999. Accused Sunil Gamini Fonseka was also involved in the attack.

It is said that he fled to Tamil Nadu, 11 years ago using a fake Sri Lankan passport and had been living here since then. He had also obtained Indian pass-

port fraudulently. It is alleged that he had monitored and conducted drug trafficking activities worldwide from Tamil Nadu. He was alleged to be in touch with Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar.

The Kanchipuram, Q-Branch police who had received a tip-off that the International mobster was staying in an apartment in Pudukkottai in Kanchipuram swung into action. However, on learning about this, Sunil Gamini fled to Bengaluru. A special team of Q-Branch officials traced him to

Bengaluru and arrested him from there with the help of the state police and other agencies on Tuesday night.

He was rounded up by the team at gunpoint. Sources said that the accused was brought to Tamil Nadu and was produced in Chengalpatt judicial magistrate court on Wednesday.

Magistrate Gayathri Devi remanded the accused to judicial custody till October 28, following which he was lodged at the Chengalpatt Sub-Jail.

## IIT-M startup develops gamified coding platform for children

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

IIT-Madras (IIT-M)-incubated startup GUVI has developed India's first 'Gamified coding platform' called 'HackerKID', which aims to teach coding for children in fun environment. The startup worked with more than 1,200 children from the Netherlands, the US, Australia and India while developing the product features and designs for HackerKID.

Mr. S.P. Balamurugan, chief executive officer, GUVI, said that HackerKID was the first product launched in India as a platform for extensive coding practice utilising block-based programming with a game-enabled environment specially designed for children. The current players in the market who teach coding are failing in the 'practice' part, which is essential to learn coding. HackerKid fulfils that need for kids who want to learn coding," he said.

Children are introduced to 'Block-based programming' in HackerKID and provided with a virtual playground to practise challenges. Block-based programming is an easy and powerful way to develop software. The 'drag and drop' of blocks or chunks of coding instructions make it simpler for kids.

The beginner's level of 'Turtle module' is being offered free of cost and features points, rewards, badges for each activity in block-based programming

**The beginner's level of 'Turtle module' is being offered free of cost and features points, rewards, badges for each activity in block-based programming and showcases the kid's creativity to fellow learners through a leaderboard. The 'Turtle' module prepares kids for the 'International Block Coding Olympiad' which is scheduled to be held shortly**

and showcases the kid's creativity to fellow learners through a leaderboard. The 'Turtle' module prepares kids for the 'International Block Coding Olympiad' which is scheduled to be held shortly.

Registrations are now made open to the public. Parents can sign-up at <http://www.hackerkid.org> and experience the platform along with their kids. Bulk registrations for schools are also facilitated free of cost. Requests can be sent to [reach@hackerkid.org](mailto:reach@hackerkid.org).

GUVI is an integrated ed-tech platform in vernacular language. It has already upskilled more than 4.6 lakh engineers in latest technology skills such as Python, Java and Machine Learning, among others and help them gain placement in IT firms.

## Waterfalls in Courtallam in full flow

M. ARULOLI | DC  
TENKASI, OCT. 14

Almost all waterfalls in Courtallam in Tenkasi district at the foothills of the Western Ghats are in majestic full flow, but without visitors due to the prolonged Covid-19 lockdown.

"This year the waterfall in almost all the falls is very good due to the incessant rain on the Western Ghats, but has no visitors to enjoy and appreciate it," regretted Ramachandran, a fruit vendor, who usually puts up his fruit stall at Main falls and five falls area. Now he is selling fruits outside Courtallam on the Madurai Road.

On Wednesday, Main falls and five falls at Courtallam had full flow due to the

heavy rain. However, not even local people were allowed to have a glimpse of the waterfalls.

The tourist spots in Kanyakumari district too have a deserted look despite the pleasant climate. The Thirparappu falls, though in full flow, has no visitors.

The farmers, however, are jubilant as the dams in the district had good inflow. Surulode in Kanyakumari district, experienced the highest rainfall level of 48.6mm during last 24 hours.

The Pechiparai Dam, having an inflow of 657 cusecs on Wednesday, had a water level of 39.15 ft. Around 108 cusecs of water were discharged from the dam, which may be increased further due to the continuing

rain, according to PWD sources. The Perunchani Dam, registering its water level at 69.20 ft, had an inflow of 938 ft. Around 800 cusecs of water were discharged for irrigation.

In Tenkasi district, the Guntaru and Adavinainar dams have reached their maximum level. The Kadanathanthi dam on Wednesday morning was at 76.70 ft against its full capacity of 85 ft. The Ramanathi dam too is just 8 ft short of its maximum holding capacity. Karuppanathi dam was at 68.02ft against its capacity of 72ft.

As rain continues on the Western Ghats, all these dams in Tenkasi district are expected to attain their maximum water level in the next couple of days.



A view of the Main falls in Courtallam on Wednesday.

— DC



## OTHER STORY

## Sick, pregnant elephant which strayed into village, dies

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUNELVELI, OCT. 14

A sick, pregnant wild elephant, roaming near the Kallidaikuruchi forest area for more than a week, died on Wednesday.

The pachyderm, aged around 16, came out of the forest a week ago to Pottal village in Tirunelveli district. However, it was very calm, said the farmers at Pottal village.

"Had the forest officials taken necessary measures to treat the elephant it could have been saved," felt the local villagers, who regretted the death of the female elephant as it did not damage any of their crops though it was roaming near the farm fields.

According to Omkhar, director of Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, the female elephant had a 10-month-old calf in its womb. The elephant having tooth infection was unable to take food for more than 10 days and it died of severe debility.

## 43-yr-old ends life on son's death anniv

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Two years after a 43-year-old man lost his teenage son to suicide, the former allegedly ended his life on Tuesday, on the death anniversary of his son.

The deceased identified as Mahendran (43) of Katrambakkam in Sriperumbudur used to work as a coolie. Police said Mahendran's 17-year-old son Pazhani ended his life by hanging from a high tension overhead wire in the village, two years ago.

Even after two years of Pazhani's death, Mahendran was unable to bear the loss of his son. On the second death anniversary of his son on Tuesday, Mahendran went missing from his house. He was later spotted hanging dead from the exact spot his son took his own life.

The body was recovered by the family. Based on the information, on Wednesday morning Somangalam police sent the body to the Sriperumbudur hospital for post-mortem. A case has been registered.

## Actor criticised for wearing Lankan flag on his chest

From P1

Reacting to a quote of Sethupathi that Muralidaran was a 'very admirable and loveable' person, another user said the Sri Lankan government had massacred 2 lakh Tamils in Eelam and that no other proof was needed for Sethupathi.

One of the main things that the Tamil people took objection to was Sethupathi wearing the Sri Lankan flag on his chest for the film, which is being produced by Movie Train Motion Picture and Dar Motion Pictures and directed by M S Sripathy.

Movie Train Motion Picture is a new company incorporated in Chennai only in December, 2019, and Dar Motion Pictures is a Mumbai based company run by Arun Rangachari and Vivek Rangachari, while Sripathy is seemingly a new face to Tamil cinema.

With a rumour floating around that there is a Sinhala hand behind the project with even names like Namil Rajapakse being bandied about, many

**Even on other social media, the actor was slammed so much that lyricist Kavignar Thamari even said that she would try to persuade Sethupathi to give up the project and many other activists saw a deep conspiracy behind the making of the film itself**

## MARK SHEETS RECEIVED



Students pose with their plus-2 original marksheets at Everwin matriculation higher secondary school in Kolathur on Wednesday.

— DC

## Kanyakumari byelection before February 2021

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

The byelection to the Kanyakumari Lok Sabha seat, which fell vacant following the death of Congress member H. Vasanathakumar on August 28, would be held before February, 2021, Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo said on Wednesday.

He told mediapersons at the secretariat, where he was holding meetings, that the vacant seat in

Parliament would be filled before the mandatory six months as the department was ready for the elections.

EVMs and other equipment required for the polls had been kept in readiness and they were waiting for the Election Commission of India's announcement, he said.

Asked about the Assembly elections in 2021, Sahoo said if the Corona crisis continued even that time, the precautions that were being proposed to be

followed in the Bihar elections would be adhered to.

One of the steps would be to convert the votes of people above 80 years to ballot votes, he said, adding that 3 per cent of the electorate now fell under that age group.

Draft Electoral rolls would be released by November 16 after a meeting with representatives of recognized political parties and another meeting with the district collectors were held, he said.

## -----Quota to students of govt schools in med admission-----

## HC seeks instructions on pending bill

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

With a view to protect the interest of the students of government schools seeking medical admission, the Madras high court has asked advocate general of the state to get instructions on the Tamil Nadu admission to undergraduate courses in medicine, dentistry, Indian medicine and homeopathy on preferential basis to Students of Government Schools Bill, 2020, which was sent for assent on September 15, 2020, (with regard to the decision to be taken in respect of the Bill).

Passing interim orders on a petition, a division bench comprising Justices N.Kirubakaran and B.Pugalendhi asked the



advocate general to get instructions at the earliest and posted to October 16, 2020, further hearing of the case.

The bench said it is represented that the Bill viz., The Tamil Nadu admission to undergraduate courses in medicine, dentistry, Indian medicine and Homeopathy on preferential basis to the students of the Government schools bill, 2020, has been passed by the

Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly unanimously on September 15, 2020, and the same is said to have been sent for assent on the very same day. However, it is pending for the past one month without any decision, the bench added.

The bench said moreover, the Neet results were to be published on October 16, 2020, and the medical admission process was to start thereafter. Therefore, the interest of students from government schools has to be safeguarded. The data would reveal that only 3, 5 and 6 students from government schools got admission in the medical colleges for the past three years viz., 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. Therefore, if no decision is taken with regard to the

## Elephant corridor case petitioner recalls DC's role

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC  
OOTY, OCT. 14

While the Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the Madras high court judgment of 2009, restoring the Segur Valley elephant corridor that traverses via Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) buffer zone limits for 22 km between Singara and Sriyoor jungles, Chennai-based environment activist Elephant G. Rajendran, the petitioner in this PIL on elephant corridor, recalled how a quiet ride to a jungle temple in the MTR buffer zone, along with this correspondent, in the summer of 2008 led him to file a case for restoration of the jumbo corridor. He

also appreciated the Deccan Chronicle's role in the corridor case genesis.

Mr. Rajendran recalled how he and his son along with this correspondent walked up to the Sri Murugan Temple atop the Vibhuthimalai in Bokkapuram hamlet in MTR buffer zone in 2008 to worship the deity there and to take a view of the illegal buildings being built along the Bokkapuram jungle fringes. "It was my first visit to that temple. The very look of buildings mushrooming in the private lands interspersed with the jungles showcased the fact that it was causing hindrance to the jumbo movement. While the DC

correspondent informed me that the age-old elephant corridor was not being maintained properly leading to the violations and mushrooming of buildings, I instantly made up my mind to file a case in the high court to restore the Segur Valley elephant corridor which connects the MTR and the jungles of neighbouring Kerala and Karnataka with Sathyamangalam in Erode" he pointed out.

"I filed the case in 2008 and in December 2009 the Madras high court passed the order to restore the corridor. After a few review petitions filed in the HC, the case went to the Supreme Court. Though

the apex court ordered the sealing of tourists' resorts in the Segur Valley corridor in 2018, now, it upheld the 2009 judgement of the Madras high court. It virtually means that the resorts and other buildings and encroachments in the corridor have to be removed. I thank the Nilgiris district administration, forest administration and others who supported my cause. Deccan Chronicle played a pivotal role in the genesis of this case, and it tirelessly and fearlessly exposed the violations in the corridor over the time. It was helpful in submitting the particulars in the court during the hearings" Mr Rajendran added.

## Bring reservation this year itself: Stalin

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

DMK president M. K Stalin warned the AIADMK government against sacrificing the interest of medical college aspirants in the altar of its own electoral considerations with a view to continue its alliance with the BJP in the coming Assembly elections.

Pointing out that the state had not sought the implementation of the court order providing 50 per cent reservation for OBCs in the all Indian quota for admission in medical and dental courses in the state from this academic year itself, Stalin said the AIADMK

## Vaiko angry that Shah wrote to CM in Hindi

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

MDMK general secretary Vaiko urged Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami to send back the letter of condolence from Home Minister Amit Shah, which has been written in Hindi, with a note 'I do not read Hindi.'

Shah's writing in Hindi was like adding insult to injury, Vaiko said in a statement on Wednesday, telling the Chief Minister that if he did not send it back, Shah would be only corresponding with him in Hindi hereafter.

government was reluctant to ask for it from the Centre since it wanted to continue the electoral alliance.

Recalling that the AIADMK government had gone to court to implement the reservation policy from

this academic year itself, Stalin, in a statement on Wednesday, said that in the committee formed with representatives of the Centre, state and Medical Council of India, the state had not made the demand.

## What's CM's stand on Tanishq ad: Kani

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

What is the stand of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister on the pulling out of the Tanishq Ekavatam jewellery collection advertisement, asked DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi.

In a tweet, she said 'TN government is a major shareholder in @TanishqJewelry. TN is a state which had always stood for secularism.'

The advertisement featuring a Hindu girl married into a Muslim household being made to feel totally comfortable by the in-laws who arrange for

her baby shower in the traditional Hindu style.

When the girl pointed out to the elder woman, probably her mother-in-law, that such practises were not part of the family, she says, making daughters happy was the tradition.

The advertisement highly appreciated by many people who found it to be very beautifully conceived, was pulled out after Hindutva trolls called it as an attempt to promote 'love jihad.'

Many people blamed the Tata group to which the Tanishq brand belongs for taking a decision that would only help Hindutva forces.

## Cops book Scripture Union preachers on charges of sexual harassment

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

The Chennai police have booked Scripture Union preachers Samuel Jaisunder and Reuben Clement on the charges of sexual harassment.

The case has been registered after the city police commissioner received an online complaint over the alleged misbehaviour with the minor girls. The online complaint was transferred to the Ayanavaram police station since the office of the Scripture Union comes under the jurisdiction.

The complaint was given by the Scripture Union against the duo, after over 20 women and minor girls shared screenshots alleging that the preachers Samuel Jaisunder and Reuben Clement texted inappropriately.

The union on August 4 received a complaint from the father of a 19-year-old that Jaisunder was allegedly sending an inappropriate text to his daughter. However, the incident came to light only after the screenshot of the chats posted by Twitter user

@joelgiftson17 made rounds on social media platforms.

"We suspended both Samuel Jaisunder and Reuben Clement from their services with the Scripture Union and further called upon them to respond to the various allegations made against them. We hereby report these incidents for your information and appropriate action," read the complaint.

City police commissioner Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal ordered a probe into the case. An FIR has been filed in the Ayanavaram station against the preachers. They have been booked under 354(A) (Whoever assaults or uses criminal force to any woman, intending to outrage or knowing it to be likely that he will thereby outrage her modesty), 67 (A) (Punishment for publishing or transmitting of material containing the sexually explicit act, etc., in electronic form.) of the Information Technology Act 2008. read with Section 4 of Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Women Act.

## Udhayakumar: TN leader in e-governance and IT

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Minister for Revenue, Disaster Management and Information Technology R.B. Udhayakumar on Wednesday said that Tamil Nadu is a leader in India in e-governance, IT & business process management exports.

Inaugurating the virtual International Conference - ICT Academy Global Technology Forum 2020 (GTF 2020), he said a number of SAAS companies recognised at world level are attracting investments at global level and creating employment opportunities. The state government has introduced various initiatives to fulfill the vision of the Tamil Nadu startup and innovation policy to establish, support infrastructure and strengthen the existing mechanism in



thrust areas like IOT and Artificial Intelligence.

Additional Chief Secretary - IT Hans Raj Verma said "GTF2020 is a perfect platform for raising the vision for the nation. The Prime Minister had given a clarion call of making India 'Atmanirbhar' and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister gave a mandate to the IT Department that the youth must be trained with skills for the future. We need to create more of such ecosystems that ensure that the aspirations of the youth are met," he added.

Chairman, ICT Academy and Emeritus Vice

DC CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE, OCT. 14

The police have arrested five persons including two women in connection with the murder of a 62-year-old woman for gold jewels in Coimbatore a couple of weeks ago. Another person is on the run.

Dhanalaxmi was found dead inside her house at

Kembatti Colony on September 30.

Following investigation, the special team of police arrested Latha Rani, 47, a resident of the same area along with her younger sister Revathi, 43, and three youths identified as Manoj Kumar, Selvam and Sathyaseelan from Peelamedu for being part of the murder conspiracy.

According to police, Latha Rani met Dhanalaxmi in a grocery store at Kembatti Colony a few months ago and befriended her. She also visited the house of Dhanalaxmi frequently.

There she came to know that Dhanalaxmi had a good collection of gold jewels and money. Latha shared this information with her younger brother Thilak and

sister Revathi and the trio planned to steal the jewels with the help of Thilak's friends Manoj Kumar, Selvam and Sathyaseelan.

Thilak watched the house of Dhanalaxmi for more than a month. After a detailed surveillance Thilak along with his friend Selvam met Dhanalaxmi on September 30 night after her son left for night duty.

Thilak claimed it was his birthday and he had come to get her blessings. After entering the house he gave her a sweet mixed with poison. After few minutes Dhanalaxmi became dizzy and suspecting the duo she attempted to raise an alarm. Meanwhile the duo assaulted her to death and fled with 70 sovereigns of gold jewels.

Collecting the CCTV camera footages installed in the stretch police cracked the murder and arrested the five offenders. During investigation they admitted their crime. The police also seized 30 sovereigns of gold jewels, car, auto and two wheelers from the gang. The special team has launched a search for Thilak who is on the run.

— PTI



SHORT TAKES

CABINET CLEARS SPL PACKAGE FOR J&K

New Delhi, Oct. 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hailed the Union cabinet's decision to approve a special package of ₹520 crore for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, saying it will further 'ease of living' for the people there.

Modi also said the STARS project, which was also approved by the cabinet, strengthens the efforts to transform the education sector.

The Cabinet has approved a special package of ₹520 crore for the two UTs for a period of five years till financial year 2023-24 and decided to ensure funding of DAY-NRLM in J&K and Ladakh on a demand-driven basis without linking allocation with poverty ratio during this extended period, the rural development ministry said in a statement.

"The cabinet decision will further 'ease of living' for the people of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh," the PM tweeted. The cabinet also approved the STARS project under the new National Education Policy to support states in strengthening the school education system.

SC HITS OUT AT CENTRE ON MORATORIUM

PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

The Supreme Court on Wednesday hit out at the Centre for taking inordinate time in implementing its decision to waive the interest on loans upto ₹2 crore for six months of the Covid moratorium period, from March 1 to August 31, describing it as "unfair" and saying, the "common man's Diwali in government's hands".

The court told the government to inform it of the steps taken by it and the banks to implement the decision to waive the compound interest on loans upto ₹2 crore for eight categories of borrowers, including individuals and small industries. "You have taken a decision, please implement it," the court told the government.

The Centre had on October 2 informed the SC of its decision to waive interest on interest (or compound interest) on loans upto ₹2 crore and had said that it will finalise the modalities by November 15.

Making it clear that it will brook no further delay, Justice Ashok Bhushan, heading a three-judge bench also comprising Justice R. Subhash Reddy and Justice M.R. Shah, fixed next date of hearing. "We are listing the matter after vacation on November 2. By then you tell us the modalities of the implementation (of the decision), orders and circulars," Justice Bhushan said.

LEFT-CONG TALKS ON SEAT-SHARING FOR BENGAL SOON

Kolkata, Oct. 14: Talks between the Left and the Congress over sharing of seats for the 2021 West Bengal assembly elections will begin next week, their leaders said on Wednesday.

The Left and the Congress have hit the roads together over the last one year on several issues, opposing the TMC government in the state and the BJP-led government at the Centre.

"Now, this is the time to take forward this alliance to its logical conclusion, and that is sharing of seats for the elections. The preliminary talks will begin next week," state Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said.

"The TMC and the BJP are trying to polarise the state on communal lines, and it is the duty of the Left and the Congress to provide a third alternative," he said.

The two sides want to begin the talks as early October for the elections likely to be held in April-May next year to avoid last-minute hiccups, he said.

"The talks are being started now so that there are no problems at the last moment. We struck a seat-sharing deal for the 2016 assembly elections but it was half-baked. During the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, we couldn't stitch an alliance as the talks failed at the last moment," Chowdhury said.

The Left-Congress tie-up bagged 76 seats in the 294-member assembly in 2016.

Senior Congress leader and MP Pradip Bhattacharya is the chairman of the newly-formed coordination committee.

# Farmers boycott meet as no minister present

## Farmers' representatives tear copies of new farm laws

New Delhi, Oct. 14: Farmers' organisations from Punjab on Wednesday boycotted a meeting called by the Union agriculture ministry to resolve their concerns over new farm laws, and accused the government of playing double standards with no minister present to hear them out.

Representatives from 29 farmers' organisations, including Joginder Singh-led Bharati Kissan Union, were miffed at the absence of Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State for Agriculture in the meeting.

The meeting was convened at the Krishi Bhavan amid police security to avoid any protest.

After the meeting, agitated farmers' representatives were seen shouting slogans and tearing copies of new farm laws outside Krishi Bhavan.

More than 30 representatives, who had come in a bus, were mostly senior citizens but had not even worn face masks despite the Coronavirus pandemic.

"No proper discussion took place. Neither Union agriculture minister nor junior ministers were present to hear our concerns. We asked why the minister is not meeting us, why the government is playing double standards by calling us here and ministers holding virtual meetings in Punjab. There was no proper response," Darshan Pal, member of the coordination committee of 29 farmers' organisations, said after the meeting.

Since there was no response from Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agrawal, who was chairing the meeting, farmers' organisations decided to boycott the meeting, he said.

"BJP leaders are holding virtual meetings in Punjab and talking against us. We are called to Delhi and no minister wants to listen to us," Pal, who also heads the Krantikari Kisan Union Punjab, added.

Harjinder Singh from Ajad Kisan Sangathan said, "The agriculture secretary had invited us to take our feedback on the new farm laws. We

thought the agriculture minister would be there, but only the secretary was present."

The secretary tried to explain that the new laws are good and will yield good results in future, he said.

"We knew the secretary had no authority and there is no point discussing it with him. We decided to boycott," he added.

Bharati Kissan Union State President Joginder Singh in a representative made to the government has demanded repeal of the recent farm laws, legally ensure minimum support price (MSP) for crops, implementation of recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission among others.

Farmers in Punjab and Haryana and other states are protesting against new farm laws which they feel will lead to procurement in the hands of corporates and the end of MSP.

Meanwhile, the central ministers are reaching out to farmers, scientists and agri professionals in Punjab to clear misgivings about farm laws.

— PTI

## PUNJAB SPECIAL ASSEMBLY SESSION PLANNED

Chandigarh, Oct. 14: The Punjab government has decided to convene a special session of the state assembly on October 19 to bring in a legislation to counter the Centre's farm laws.

A decision to this effect was taken at a meeting of the state cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh here. The meeting was held through a video conferencing, according to a government statement.

The Chief Minister had earlier announced that his government will fight the anti-federal and vicious farm laws tooth and nail through legislative, legal and other routes.

A few days ago, the CM had said he would call a special session of the assembly to bring in necessary amendments to state laws to negate the dangerous impact of the central laws.

— PTI



## ARMY CHIEF TO VISIT NEPAL NEXT MONTH

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

At a time when relations with Nepal have deteriorated in recent months, Indian Army chief General M.M. Naravane will visit the country in November, said sources on Wednesday.

This will be the first high profile visit by an Indian official to Nepal since the diplomatic relations have soured. According to sources the visit comes at the invitation of Nepal's government.

"The visit was planned earlier but was postponed due to lockdown in both countries owing to Covid-19 pandemic," said a senior official. The dates of the visit are being finalised and is likely to be in the first week of November.

During the visit, Gen Naravane will also be conferred the honorary rank of "General of the Nepali Army" by President Vidya Devi Bhandari.

# Fake 'Muslim Regiment' has veterans fume

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

Armed forces veterans from Army, Navy and Air Force have written an open letter to the President of India demanding action against those posting fake social media posts that Indian Army had a 'Muslim Regiment', which had refused to fight against Pakistan during the 1965 war and was then "disbanded".

The letter said that these 'Muslim Regiment' posts are blatantly false because the Indian Army did not have a Muslim Regiment in 1965 or since.

"The 'Muslim Regiment' posts are an attack on India's Armed Forces," said the letter signed by 120 veterans including former chief of the Indian navy Admiral (ret'd) Laxminarayan Ramdas.

The veterans said that this falsehood is being spread by forces inimical to the country and its Armed Forces and will adversely affect morale and national security.

The letter said that Indian soldiers fight shoulder-to-shoulder as a team at every level of all military functioning and operations regardless of the religion, language, and caste.

The letter said that Muslims fighting as part of multi-class regiments proved their absolute commitment to the cause of the nation.

"For example, Quartermaster Havildar Abdul Hamid was posthumously awarded Param Vir Chakra, for his courage and valiance in the Battle of Asal Uttar during the 1965 India-Pakistan War. Also, in the 1965 war, Major (later Lt Gen) Mohammad Zaki and Major Abdul Rafey Khan were both awarded Vir Chakra, the latter posthumously, when he fought against the Pakistani division commanded by his own uncle, Maj Gen Sahibzada Yaqub Khan. Such are the legends of Muslim war-

riors," said the letter. It pointed out that even earlier, at partition in 1947, when his Baluch Regiment went to Pakistan, Brigadier Mohammad Usman chose to remain in the Indian Army.

"He was approached personally by Jinnah to move to Pakistan, but he refused. He fought the Pakistani invasion in Kashmir, was the senior-most officer killed in action in July 1948, and was posthumously awarded Mahavir Chakra for his gallantry," it said.

"He lies buried in the Jamia Millia Islamia campus in Delhi and remains an inspiration to students who throng the annual memorial service that India's Parachute Regiment conducts to honour the gallant paratrooper."

The letter said that such social media posts question the loyalty of all serving and retired Muslim soldiers. Further, it helps the enemy by striking at the morale of India's soldiers to degrade their operational capability, it said.

The letter demanded an investigation on the antecedents of individuals who have made 'Muslim Regiment' posts. "Identify and charge individuals who have made 'Muslim Regiment' posts for anti-national activities. Issue warning to the social media providers (Facebook and Twitter) who have enabled 'Muslim Regiment' posts," it added.

# India's Covid-19 caseload up by 63,509; toll 730

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

India's overall cases of Coronavirus reached 72.39 lakh on Wednesday after 63,509 new infections were detected in a day. The Covid-19 death toll reached 1,10,586 with the virus claiming 730 lives in the last 24 hours. India is just behind the US in terms of the highest number of cases in the world. The US has close to 81 lakh total cases till now.

The number of people who have recovered from Covid-19 has crossed 63 lakh taking the recovery rate to 87.05 per cent while for the sixth consecutive day now the active cases have remained below 9 lakh.

There are 8.27 lakh active cases of Covid-19 infection in the country which comprises 11.42 per cent of the total caseload. The case fatality rate was recorded at 1.53 per cent. **1,446 cases in TS:** There have been 1,446 new cases and eight deaths due to Coronavirus in Telangana on Wednesday. With this, the total number of cases has reached 2,16,238, while the death toll has risen to 1,241. Total recoveries are 1,91,269.

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation has recorded 252 of the new cases. Ranga Reddy accounted for 135 cases, Medchal Malkajgiri 131, and Karimnagar 74 cases. These districts have been constantly recording a high number of cases, indicating how the virus has been rampant in these districts. **K'taka records 9,265**

**cases:** Karnataka on Wednesday reported 9,265 new Covid-19 cases and 75 related deaths, taking the total caseload to 7,35,371 and the toll to 10,198 which also saw 8,662 patients being discharged after recovery. Bengaluru Urban district continued to account for the most number of infections with 4,574 on Wednesday. The state has so far reported cumulatively 7,35,371 Covid-19 positive cases.

**6244 cases in Kerala:** There was no let up in the spike of Covid-19 cases in Kerala on Wednesday when 6,244 fresh cases were reported along with 20 casualties. The state's total caseload at present is 3,08,140 while the toll mounted to 1,066. The deceased included a five-month old baby and a 90-year-old man. Malappuram reported 1,013 cases, followed by Ernakulam 793, Kozhikode 661, Thrissur 581, Thiruvananthapuram 581 and Kollam 551.

**AP sees 3,892 cases:** Andhra Pradesh registered 3,892 new Covid-19 cases taking the tally to 7,67,465 and 28 deaths taking the toll to 6,319 in the last 24 hours. The state health bulletin said the state had a total recovery of 7,19,477 while 41,660 patients are still active with the virus. Of the total new confirmed Coronavirus cases, East Godavari registered 607 followed by 518 in West Godavari and 458 in Krishna.

(With inputs from Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Vijayawada bureaus)



Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir and president of People's Democratic Party Mehbooba Mufti interacts with J&K National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and leader Omar Abdullah at her residence in Srinagar on Wednesday.

— PTI

# Tejashwi files papers, promises 10L jobs if voted back to power

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, OCT. 14

Ahead of RJD releasing manifesto for the upcoming Bihar assembly elections, the NDA has alleged that all promises being made by the opposition are a bundle of lies and "jungle raj will return" in the state if RJD-led grand alliance forms a government in Bihar.

The statement came after RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav filed his nomination from Raghupur assembly seat on Wednesday and hinted that he would be releasing his party's manifesto later this week.

The RJD has been holding Nitish Kumar-led NDA government responsible for unemployment, law and order scenario and failure in controlling flood and Covid crisis in Bihar.

"He (Nitish Kumar) never talks about the unemployment rate in Bihar which is 46.6 per cent. He should also say what their double engine government did during the last 15 years. They keep raising baseless issues to divert attention from the real agenda", Tejashwi Yadav said.

After Tejashwi Yadav filed his nomination from Raghupur, he said that people of the state are not happy with the policies of the state government and would give a resounding victory to the grand alliance during the assembly elections.

"People of the state have made up their mind to

# Sharad Yadav's daughter Subhashini joins Congress

New Delhi, Oct 14:

Ahead of the Bihar assembly elections, Loktantrik Janata Dal chief Sharad Yadav's daughter Subhashini Yadav joined the Congress on Wednesday in the presence of local leaders.

Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader and former MP Kali Pandey also joined the Congress.

Both are likely to contest the upcoming assembly elections in Bihar and are seeking tickets from the Congress party.

Subhashini Yadav, a social worker, said she is taking the responsibility of carrying on the fight of the 'Mahagathbandhan' in Bihar, as her father Sharad Yadav has always supported it.

"I thank Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra for giving me this opportunity. Sharad Yadav is not actively taking part in the Bihar elections, as he is not well. He has always supported the 'Mahagathbandhan'. It is my responsibility to take this fight forward and to take Bihar to greater heights," she said.

Kali Pandey, who switched over from the

● **SUBHASHINI YADAV**, a social worker, said she is taking the responsibility of carrying on the fight of the 'Mahagathbandhan' in Bihar, as her father has always supported it.

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Kali Pandey, who switched over from the

The election in Raghupur constituency is the second phase of polls on November 3.

Political observers are of the view that winning Raghupur would not be easy for Tejashwi who has been pitted against his old rival and BJP candidate Satish Yadav.

Tejashwi had won the seat in 2015 by defeating the BJP candidate by a margin of 22,733 votes.

According to observers, division of Yadav vote

LJP, said it was a homecoming for him as he had earlier extended support to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1984 when he was a member of the Lok Sabha. "I feel honoured to have joined the Congress," he said.

In 1980, Pandey won the Bihar Vidhan Sabha election as an independent candidate and then won the 1984 Parliamentary elections from Gopalganj in the state.

"This is my old home and I am happy to be back to my old home," he said.

Bihar Congress chief Madan Mohan Jha and AICC Secretary for Congress in Bihar Devendra Yadav welcomed the leaders into the party fold.

— PTI

base could cause trouble for the RJD as Satish Yadav who is considered equally strong has been fielded by the BJP this year. In 2010, Satish Yadav had shot to fame by defeating former Bihar CM Rabri Devi from the seat by a margin of 13,000 votes.

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



## IN BRIEF

**Holocaust aid for survivors**

**Berlin:** Germany has agreed to provide more than a half billion euros to aid Holocaust survivors struggling under the burdens of the Coronavirus pandemic, the organisation that negotiates compensation with the German government said Wednesday. The payments will be going to approximately 240,000 survivors around the world, primarily in Israel, North America, the former Soviet Union and Western Europe, over the next two years, according to the New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, also referred to as the Claims Conference. With the end of World War II now 75 years in the past, Holocaust survivors are all elderly, and because many were deprived of proper nutrition when they were young today they suffer from numerous medical issues.

**Lebanon, Israel begin border talks**

**Naqoura (Lebanon):** Lebanon and Israel began indirect talks Wednesday over their disputed maritime border, with American officials mediating the talks that both sides insist are purely technical and not a sign of any normalisation of ties. The US has been mediating the issue for about a decade, but only earlier this month was a breakthrough reached on an agreement for a framework for US-mediated talks. The development comes against the backdrop of Lebanon's spiralling economic crisis and following a wave of US sanctions that recently included two influential former Cabinet ministers allied with the militant Hezbollah group. Israel, the United States, as well as some other Western and Arab countries consider the Iran-allied Hezbollah a terrorist organisation.

**Copters collide, 9 Afghan troops die**

**Lashkar Gah (Afghanistan):** Two Afghan army helicopters collided while transporting wounded soldiers in the southern Helmand province, killing nine Afghan service members, the country's Defence Ministry and local officials said Wednesday. The two Soviet-era Mi-17 helicopters crashed due to technical problems while taking off in Nawa district, the Afghan Defence Ministry statement said. The nine dead were all Afghan crew and soldiers who had been on board the aircraft. Omer Zwak, a spokesman for Helmand's provincial governor, said the helicopters were carrying wounded soldiers when they crashed late Tuesday. He said that over the past week, Taliban fighters have launched coordinated attacks in different parts of Helmand province, which have intensified in recent days. Three local officials in Helmand province said the helicopters were deploying Afghan commandos to repel a Taliban attack in Nawa district.

**CANNIBALISM: LIFE TERM FOR GUILTY MAN**

**Jeffersonville (US), Oct. 14:** A southern Indiana man convicted of killing his ex-girlfriend and eating parts of her body was sentenced Tuesday to life in prison without parole. Joseph Oberhansley was found guilty September 18 of murder and burglary in the death of Tammy Jo Blanton. Clark Circuit Judge Vicki Carmichael sentenced Oberhansley based on a jury recommendation. The body of Blanton, 46, was found at her home the morning of September 11, 2014, badly mutilated with more than 25 sharp force injuries and multiple blunt force injuries, authorities have said. Oberhansley testified that "two Black guys" had been at the victim's home when he arrived around 4 a.m. that day and said they were responsible for Blanton's death and knocking him out. He awoke when police knocked on the door looking for the victim. Oberhansley also was sentenced to six years to be served concurrently on the burglary charge, the News and Tribune reported. Prosecutors dropped an attempt to seek the death penalty last year. Jurors were drawn from Allen County in northeastern Indiana because of the intense media coverage the case has received in the southern part of the state.

**Sea of protesters in Bangkok**

Pro-democracy protesters take part in an anti-government rally in Bangkok on Wednesday.

— AFP

**Feel like 'Superman': Trump****President boasts about new immunity after experimental treatment**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** US President Donald Trump has said that he felt like a "Superman" after his experimental Covid-19 treatment and boasted about his new immunity to the disease which has claimed the lives of 216,000 Americans. Trump, who tested positive for Covid-19 on October 1 and was admitted to a military hospital for three nights and four days, declared himself cured after he was treated with an experimental antibody drug cocktail.

White House doctors have now cleared him for holding election rallies. Holding his second rally since contracting coronavirus, Trump told a crowd of his supporters packed onto an airport tarmac in Johnstown, Pennsylvania that he felt like "Superman" after the treatment. Trump was briefly forced to pause his re-election campaign after he tested positive for Covid-19 and he returned to the campaign trail from the battleground State of Florida on Monday.

Addressing his supporters in Pennsylvania, another battleground state, Trump, 74, thanked the doctors that treated him. "All I know is I took something, whatever the hell it was, I felt good very quickly. I don't know what it

**OVER 4 MN TESTS CONDUCTED IN CHINA'S QINGDAO**

**Beijing, Oct. 14:** Over 4 million Coronavirus tests have been conducted in China's Qingdao city where a local virus cluster was detected over the weekend, officials said. The Coronavirus has killed 4,634 people with 85,611 confirmed infections, including 241 active cases, in China.

No additional Covid-19 cases have been reported in Qingdao as of Tuesday, following an outbreak of new cases that appeared over the weekend, officials said, adding that over 4.2 million people in the city have been tested out of its 9 million population.

— PTI

was, antibodies, antibodies. I don't know. I took it, I said I felt like Superman," Trump said. "Then I said, let me at 'em. Nah, and I could've been here four or five days ago. It's great, we have great doctors. I want to thank the doctors at Walter Reed and Johns Hopkins, and — great doctors," he said.

Trump said, that "one

**Don playing with people's lives: Joe**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** Donald Trump's handling of the Coronavirus pandemic has been "erratic" just like his presidency, his Democratic challenger Joe Biden has said, terming the US president's leadership as "chaotic and divisive" that has cost Americans far too much.

The former vice president said Trump was playing games with people's lives and "the only senior Donald Trump seems to care about" is himself.

"His handling of this Coronavirus pandemic has been erratic just like his presidency. And it has prevented Florida seniors and people all across the

country from getting the relief that they need," Biden said at a campaign event in Florida on Tuesday. Florida is a battleground State which was won by Trump in the 2016 elections. According to Real Clear Politics, which tracks major opinion polls, Biden is leading the state by 3.7 percentage points. However, Trump has been attracting thousands of people to his election rallies in Florida, despite coronavirus social distancing measures in place. Biden claimed that Trump just hasn't been willing to do the work.

— PTI

great job."

Boasting about his new immunity to the disease, Trump said, "And now I'm immune they tell me. I'm immune. I could come down and start kissing everybody. I'll kiss every guy — man and woman. Look at that guy how handsome he is. I'll kiss him. Not with a lot of enjoyment."

— PTI

**WB APPROVES \$12B TO FINANCE VIRUS VACCINES**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** The World Bank has approved \$12 billion in financing to help developing countries buy and distribute Coronavirus vaccines, tests, and treatments, aiming to support the vaccination of up to 1 billion people. The \$12 billion "envelop" is part of a wider World Bank Group package of up to \$160 billion to help developing countries fight the Covid-19 pandemic, the bank said in a statement late Tuesday. The World Bank said its Covid-19 emergency response programmes are already reaching 111 countries.

Citizens in developing countries also need access to safe and effective Covid-19 vaccines, it said. "We are extending and expanding our fast-track approach to address the Covid emergency so that developing countries have fair and equal access to vaccines," said bank's president, David Malpass. "Access to safe and effective vaccines and strengthened delivery systems is key to alter the course of the pandemic," he said. — AP

**China, far left desperate for Biden win: Don**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** China and the far left are "desperate" for Joe Biden's win as the Democratic presidential candidate will "surrender" jobs to China, President Donald Trump said as he returned to the battleground State of Pennsylvania after being treated for Covid-19. In his first political rally in Pennsylvania, which sends 20 electoral college votes, after he was tested positive for Covid-19, Trump on Tuesday hit hard at his political opponent, alleging that the former vice president is known for "surrender".

"Biden will eliminate tariffs on China. He's already said he's going to take the tariffs off China. There goes your steel industry. There goes your aluminum industry. There goes everything. Allowing them to plunder without consequence," he said, addressing thousands of his supporters in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

"The one constant in Biden's platform is surrender. He surrenders. He surrenders, whether it's China, whether it's Cuba. How about Cuba? How about the deal they made with Cuba? How bad was that one? I ended it," he said. "That's why both China and the far left are desperate for a Biden win because he will surrender our jobs to China. China will own the US if that sleepy guy gets the position, okay," Trump said. Trump said that over the next four years, he will make America into the manufacturing superpower of the world. "And

**BIDEN IS WORST CANDIDATE IN U.S. POLITICS**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** US President Donald Trump has described his presidential challenger Joe Biden as "the single worst candidate in the history of America", referring to a few recent gaffes of the Democratic leader who is challenging him.

Republican incumbent Trump, 74, and challenger Biden, 77, are locked in a close contest for the November 3 elections. "I'm running against the single worst candidate in the history of American presidential politics and you know what that does? That puts more pressure on me. Can you imagine if you lose to a guy like this?" Trump told his supporters in the battleground state of Pennsylvania on Tuesday.

— PTI

we'll end our reliance on China once and for all. That's already happening. We'll hire more police, increased penalties for assault on law enforcement, and we will ban deadly sanctuary cities that people don't want," he said. "Unlike 'sleepy' Joe Biden, I will never abandon our nation, and I would never abandon its values. My goal is not to make friends in the DC swamp. My goal is to fight for you and fight for your family," he said. — PTI

**Pak re-elected to UN rights body**

**Islamabad / United Nations, Oct. 14:** Pakistan along with China, Russia and Cuba won seats on the UN Human Rights Council despite strong opposition from activist groups over their abysmal human rights records. In a secret-ballot voting in the 193-member UN General Assembly on Tuesday, Pakistan secured 169 votes, Uzbekistan received 164, Nepal 150 and China 139. Saudi Arabia lost the race with just 90 votes.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo slammed the UN body for electing China, Russia and Cuba to the agency tasked with defending human rights. "The election of China, Russia, and Cuba to the UN Human Rights Council validates the US decision to withdraw from the Council in 2018 and use other venues to protect and promote universal human rights. At #UNGGA this year, we did just that," Pompeo tweeted.

"US commitment to human rights is far more than just words. We have identified and punished human rights abusers in Xinjiang, Myanmar, Iran, and elsewhere, and call for all nations to take this moment to recommit to the #UDHR," he said in another tweet. Last week, a coalition of human rights groups from Europe, the US and Canada called on UN member states to oppose the election of China, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Cuba and Uzbekistan, saying their human

rights records make them unqualified. "The bad news: Governments just elected China to the UN Human Rights Council despite its severe repression in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong. The good news: the number of governments voting for it declined from 180 last time to 139 now. The fear is melting," Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth tweeted after the vote. Pakistan is currently serving on the HRC since January 1, 2018. — PTI

**U.S. BODY: BUILD TECH ALLIANCE WITH INDIA**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** The US should build a formal tech alliance with India that will help develop an overarching Indo-Pacific strategy focused on emerging technology, an independent federal commission on artificial intelligence has said. The newly-created National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence in its report on Tuesday said the Department of State and the Department of Defence should negotiate formal AI cooperation agreements with India, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam. In the report submitted to the Congress and President Donald Trump, the Commission underlined that America must build on the strength of its allies and partners to win the global technology competition and preserve free and open societies.

This recommendation builds on growing support for the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, a strategic forum among the US, Australia, India, and Japan, and calls for formalising ties with these and other nations in the Indo-Pacific region to focus on AI cooperation for defence and security purposes. — PTI

**Pompeo defends Hong Kongers**

**Hong Kong, Oct. 14:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo defended the 12 Hong Kong residents who were detained by China while allegedly trying to flee to Taiwan by boat in August, saying that they had "committed no crime." "They simply believe that they are worthy of freedom and the unalienable rights due to every person," Pompeo said in virtual remarks delivered at the John S. McCain Freedom Award Ceremony on Wednesday.

"They aren't alone in that belief. America stands with them." The 12, some of whom are linked

**CHINA WANTS UNIPOLAR WORLD WITH ALL NATIONS TRIBUTARIES: U.S. OFFICIAL**

**Washington, Oct. 14:** China ultimately wants to have a unipolar world wherein every country is some sort of a tributary to it, a top American National Security Advisor has said, asserting that nations across the globe are starting to realise what Washington is up against

with Beijing.

US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien said the world was slowly entering into a multipolar situation. "They want to have a P-2 instead of P-5. I don't think we're going to have a bipolar situation in the world right now," O'Brien said. — PTI

to anti-government protests and were facing charges in Hong Kong prior to their arrest, are

being held in the southern city of Shenzhen where they await prosecution. Two of them are suspect-

ed of organising an illegal border crossing, while the other 10 are suspected of entering mainland China illegally. The group was believed to have been headed for self-governed Taiwan when they were arrested, following China's imposition of a sweeping national security law targeting political expression in semi-autonomous Hong Kong.

Taiwan is a popular choice among Hong Kong residents looking to leave the city. Relatives say that they are being held incommunicado and have not been granted access to lawyers. — AP

## ORBITING | OUTPOST

**Astronauts trying a two-orbit, three-hr approach to Int'l Space Station****Russian-US crew launches to the space station**

**Moscow, Oct. 14:** A trio of space travellers has launched successfully to the International Space Station, for the first time using a fast-track manoeuvre to reach the orbiting outpost in just three hours. NASA's Kate Rubins along with Sergey Ryzhikov and Sergey Kud-Sverchkov of the Russian space agency Roscosmos lifted off as scheduled Wednesday morning from the Russia-leased Baikonur space launch facility in Kazakh-

stan for a six-month stint on the station. For the first time, they are trying a two-orbit, three-hour approach to the orbiting space outpost. Previously it took twice as long for the crews to reach the station. They will join the station's Nasa commander, Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos cosmonauts Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner, who have been aboard the complex since April and are scheduled to return to Earth in a week.

Speaking during pre-launch news conference at Baikonur, Rubins emphasised that the crew spent weeks in quarantine at the Star City training facility outside Moscow and then on Baikonur to avoid any threat from the Coronavirus. "We spent two weeks at Star City and then 17 days at Baikonur in a very strict quarantine," Rubins said. "During all communications with crew members, we were wearing masks. We made PCR tests

twice and we also made three times antigen fast tests." She said she was looking forward to scientific experiments planned for the mission.

"We're planning to try some really interesting things like bio-printing tissues and growing cells in space and, of course, continuing our work on sequencing DNA," Rubins said. Ryzhikov, who will be the station's skipper, said the crew will try to pinpoint the exact location of a leak

at a station's Russian section that has slowly leaked oxygen. The small leak hasn't posed any immediate danger to the crew.

"We will take with us additional equipment which will allow us to detect the place of this leak more precisely," he told reporters. "We will also take with us additional improved hermetic material which will allow to fix the leak."

In November, Rubins, Ryzhikov and Kud-Sverchkov are set to greet Nasa's

SpaceX first operational Crew Dragon mission, bringing NASA astronauts Mike Hopkins, Victor Glover and Shannon Walker, and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Soichi Noguchi to the space station aboard the Crew Dragon vehicle. It follows a successful Demo-2 mission earlier this year: The Crew Dragon mission was pushed back from Oct. 31 into November, and no new date has been set yet. — AP



DECCAN Chronicle

15 OCTOBER 2020

Koshyari's conduct is beyond the pale

Maharashtra governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari's letter to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray earlier this week asking him to order the reopening of temples, closed on account of the Covid threat, in the upcoming festival season is a singularly unfortunate development. The governor was expected to be more mindful of his constitutional role.

At the very least, he was expected to eschew political partisanship. It hasn't gone unnoticed that Mr Koshyari's letter coincides with the state BJP's agitation for the opening of temples, oblivious to the critical situation Maharashtra faces on the fight against the new coronavirus. Maharashtra is the country's worst hit state on account of the virus in spite of the state government's spirited effort to combat the deadly foe.

It was expected that the governor would urge the government to adopt a calibrated and cautious approach in the face of representations from sections of society to let temples be open to devotees when important religious festivals, where participation is typically at a mass level, are held. But he has done the opposite. He has chosen to be sarcastic in his letter and ask whether the CM has turned "secular", forsaking "Hindutva" that he and his party Shiv Sena proclaim.

In fact, Mr Koshyari has no business subscribing to or supporting a political or ideological creed in official communications. In our Constitution, the role assigned to the governor is to ensure that a state is being governed according to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, in the absence of which the elected government can be dismissed and Central rule imposed for a limited period.

In the present case it is the governor — the gatekeeper of the Constitution in a state — who appears to be in violation. Replying to his letter, the CM was right to remind Raj Bhavan that the occupant of the gubernatorial office has taken his oath on the Constitution, of which "secularism" is an intrinsic part. The tone of Mr Koshyari's letter appears to strongly hint that he himself has no truck with "secularism". Holding such views in an official document, which the letter doubtless is, the incumbent has cast himself beyond the pale of constitutional propriety and offers himself as a poor role model.

In offending constitutional values, the governor offends the people of the state and deserves to be withdrawn. It's a pity he has elected to emulate the poor example set by his counterpart in West Bengal. Looking at the broader picture, it appears that some governors in states run by non-BJP parties — Kerala and West Bengal come to mind, besides Maharashtra — have adopted the policy of needling their state governments. Such an outlook is unlikely to yield a harmonious relationship between the state and the Centre. NCP patriarch Sharad Pawar, one of India's most accomplished politicians, has complained to Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the unbecoming nature of the governor's letter to the CM. A thoughtful reply is in order.

An unfortunate climbdown

Titan stumbled, when its very prominent jewellery brand was arm-twisted into pulling an ad that depicted a happy Hindu-Muslim married home. Like all media, visuals in an advertisement play a huge role in shaping our society. This made this ad — which subtly encouraged viewers to exercise progressive values — both attractive and important. However, it received backlash from those who subscribe to a certain ideological view. Quite unaccountably to freethinkers and progress-loving people, the Hindutva brigade raised the bogey of "love jihad" and opposed this ad.

Their stance militates against who we are as a nation and who we aspire to be. It must be remembered that a composite social culture as well as secularism are important Indian values. The Indian nationalism today is not the nationalism of a particular religious, caste or linguistic community but a nationalism of all the people of India. No one community is privileged by our Constitution, and this is vouched for by the existence of the Special Marriage Act, 1954. It provides for a special form of marriage for the people of India, irrespective of faith. Not only inter-faith couples, anyone who wishes to opt for such a marriage can get married under this law.

Hence, much as BJP minister Himanta Biswa Sarma would like to carry out a crackdown against "love jihad" in Assam, after the Assembly election there in 2021, inter-faith marriages are constitutionally endorsed. It is unlawful to bully, harangue or heckle anyone on this account, and forcing a written apology from the owner of a Tanishq store in Gandhidham amounts to that.

"Cancel culture" is the favourite catch-all used by the Indian right wing today to cry foul against what it sees as liberal and leftist injustices and hypocrisies. This particular type of Hindutva "cancel culture", however, badly hurts the image of the country and its soft power around the world.

The government should make every effort to find out who the trolls are and bring them to book. Sometimes they can defeat even stout-hearted people. Still, we have the wonderful examples of Parle and Bajaj Group who have come out openly and said they will not be cowed by similar threats. These are good examples to follow.

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Flashback



'Auction theory' Nobel: But do people benefit?



Mohan Guruswamy

Of all Nobel Prize disciplines, it is probably Economics after

Medicine that touches the everyday life of mankind. The medical advances that won Nobels were truly pathbreaking and contributed to the saving and betterment of millions of lives. In 1900, the world's life expectancy was 30 years. A hundred years later, in 2000, it had risen to 68. In 2020 it is 72. That we live longer and healthier lives now is primarily owed to the advances in Medicine. This contribution is reflected in the roster of Nobel Prize winners. The very first prize in 1901 went to Adolf von Behring for his work relating to serum therapy for diphtheria — then a major universal killer. The following year it was awarded to Ronald Ross in uncovering the mysteries of malaria while working in a small dispensary in Secunderabad. The world population in 1900 was 1.6 billion and an estimated 5.5 million died that year of malaria. The world population in 2020 is inching towards eight billion and last year it is estimated that 440,000 people died due to malaria. It gives you an idea about how much we owe to the work of Sir Ronald Ross. Similarly, there were the discoveries of Penicillin, Streptomycin and Insulin that altered longevity and the quality of life. The discoveries of blood groups, immunological responses, DNA, cholesterol and fatty acid metabolism were rewarded. The only great discovery that eluded Nobel recognition was that of the polio vaccine by Jonas Salk.

But the Nobel Prizes for Economics can claim no such roster. All the great thinkers and pathbreakers like Adam Smith,

John Stuart Mill, David Ricardo, Alfred Marshall and others belonged to an earlier age. Even the greats like Lord Keynes and Joseph Schumpeter whose philosophies still drive modern economics preceded the age of Nobel economics. A few like Paul Samuelson, Simon Kuznets, Kenneth Arrow, Wassily Leontief and Fredrich Hayek straddled the earlier era. But then it's a relatively recent prize, having been instituted only in 1968 by the Swedish central bank. But with the great seminal works and discoveries already been done, the new pathways to greatness is increasingly due to more esoteric work and research. For instance, in 2017, Roshabh, Young and Hall got the medicine Nobel for "the molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm" and Ratcliffe, Semenza and Kaelin won it for "how cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability". Likewise, we see a similar tendency in economics on the small, rather than the seminal, and the esoteric rather than the extensive development of knowledge. The pursuit of truths takes us from the main veins into the capillaries of knowledge.

The 2020 Economics prize was awarded to Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson of Stanford University "for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats". It is as if a medical researcher was getting a Nobel for work, say, in an aspect of Otolaryngology such as the act of swallowing. It is important, but how widespread are problems related to swallowing? Auction theory is like that. It is an applied branch of economics which deals with how auction markets and people act in them. We in

India know something about auctions, mainly due to the exertions of Vinod Rai, the RSS, India Against Corruption, Subramaniam Swamy, S. Gurumurthy and that great preceptor, Baba Ramdev. They didn't know or care to know that "auction theory" is not just about how much the State got, but also about how much did the people get! In 2010, according to Vinod Rai's asinine projections, the difference between the money collected and that mandated to be collected was estimated at ₹1.76 lakh crores, or \$25 billion, based on 2010 3G and broadband spectrum auction prices. The number crunchers in the CBI did even better. In the chargesheet it filed on April 2, 2011 the loss was pegged at ₹3.1 lakh crores, or \$43 billion. It caused a political upheaval. Inspired by such visions, the Narendra Modi government expected India's largest spectrum sale in 2016 to fetch it ₹5.63 lakh crores. Instead it got only ₹65,790 crores.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences release states that this year's laureates, Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson, have studied how auctions work and have used their insights to design new auction formats for goods and services that are difficult to sell in a traditional way, such as radio frequencies. Robert Wilson developed the theory for auctions of objects with a common value — a value which is uncertain beforehand but, in the end, is the same for everyone. Examples include the future value of radio frequencies or the volume of minerals in a particular area. Wilson also showed why rational bidders tend

With the great seminal works and discoveries already been done, the new pathways to greatness is increasingly due to more esoteric work and research

to place bids below their own best estimate of the common value — they are worried about the winner's curse: that is, about paying too much and losing out. Paul Milgrom formulated a more general theory of auctions that not only allows common values, but also private values that vary from bidder to bidder. He analysed the bidding strategies in several well-known auction formats, demonstrating that a format will give the seller higher expected revenue when bidders learn more about each other's estimated values during bidding. Both seem to suggest that open bidding with all bids in the open may fetch the best prices. But is then a State concerned only with the highest prices or must it also be concerned with the overall benefits? For instance, lower spectrum prices would mean cheaper call and Internet usage time leading to greater usage and greater economic benefits.

The winners last year, Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, won it ironically enough for their study in eastern Odisha of a scheme to replace open-fire cooking used by the world's poorest people with more efficient, less polluting stoves. The duo studied the reasons for its flop. The planners had flopped in their conceptions. I don't think Narendra Modi's genius factored the more mundane considerations when his government launched its colossal public toilets scheme, which we now know is also a spectacular flop. Open defecation is once again rampant. It's little wonder that Mr Modi has given the duo a big avoid. But he has also by and large given Vinod Rai the avoid, probably now realising how farcical his determination of auction value for 2G spectrum was?

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

PANDEMIC BURDEN

The government, already saddled with NPAs upwards of `7-8 trillion, now faces the pandemic burden that may touch `22-27 trillion. The Government of India is a patron aggregator of the economy that regularly runs a fiscal deficit that can service neither large bailouts nor endlessly borrow to eat into future earnings even as its sovereign ratings dip. It just cannot stimulate the economy with small change. It is the RBI that would need to firmly underwrite the huge deficit financing, be it by printing notes or trading in government bonds. With major economic indices looking favourable, even in medium term, high forex reserves and a stable government in control, RBI ought to put in greater trust in India Government Inc and invest. It is bound to recoup investment and even a modest return as did the US Fed over the Wall Street collapse of 2008-09.

R. Narayanan, Chennai

KUSHBOO IN BJP

"A FOOLISH consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds" said Ralph Waldo Emerson (*No loss for Congress, no gain for BJP*, Oct. 13). When Kushboo Sunder feels stultified by Congress' lack of connectivity with people on the ground, she jumps ship and joins the BJP. There are still others in the Congress party who feel suppressed by the domination of the Gandhi family. Citing disgruntlement with the Congress party leadership Jyotiraditya Scindia quit the party. It is Kushboo's turn now to leave the party for similar reasons. TNCC president K.S. Alagiri might say that her leaving the party is no loss, but please tell me which party ever accepts that deserters are a loss to the party. Kushboo is comparably better than many other film stars in the BJP who just add glitz and glamour to the party. She is an accomplished debater. I wish the BJP makes good use of Kushboo to be able to carry its message to the people of Tamil Nadu.

Kangayam R. Narasimhan, Chennai

INDO-PACIFIC NATO

MEDIA REPORTS talk about Indo-Pacific NATO. Yes, this must be the answer to China's expansionist attitude. It swallowed Tibet and now wants to swallow Indian territory along its border with India to establish contact with Arabian and Bay of Bengal seas. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan may yield to all tactics of China but not India. India has validity to claim PoK and CoK. On the other hand China has no business interfering in J&K. Indo-Pacific NATO must be strengthened without delay to take on China.

R. Ganesan, Chennai

Shruti Lakhtakia



A new mantra? Seek, and you shall find; ask, it will be given

A lot has been written about the Narendra Modi government's move to do away with Question Hour during the recently concluded Monsoon Session of Parliament. The value of Question Hour, as an institution that offers the opportunity to question the government, to demand accountability, and to undertake scrutiny, is immense. A total of over 20,000 questions have been asked and answered by governments in the 14th, 15th and 16th Lok Sabhas, averaging more than 13,000 questions a year. Scandals have been uncovered, and several valuable resources about the functioning of the government have been made available that would have otherwise been difficult to obtain and access. Question Hour is definitely an invaluable institution, central to democratic functioning, and must be reinstated at the earliest. But is that enough?

"The answers you get depend on the questions you ask", said American physicist and philosopher Thomas Kuhn. The scope of our questions determines the potential impact of the answers, and this is as true in politics as in research. A preliminary

analysis reveals that a large share of the questions during Parliament's Question Hour seek data that should have been systematically, regularly and easily available in the first place. This is hugely inefficient and wasteful of the limited time available for questioning, and duplicates the efforts of ministries and departments to make data available.

Two main types of questions can be taken up during Question Hour — each day, about 20 "starred" questions are randomly selected to be answered orally, and nearly 230 "unstarred" questions receive written replies. The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha lay out 23 conditions that must be satisfied for a question to be admissible in the House. Very broad questions "raising larger issues of policy" are not allowed, neither are narrow questions pertaining to the "minor details of administration and day-to-day working of the government". Questions related to data and information are generally addressed in unstarred questions.

Yet, despite this, several starred questions raised during the Question

Hour are to do with data that should otherwise be provided in the normal course of events. Analysing the text of all the starred questions asked in the month of February 2020 during the third session of the current Lok Sabha, revealed that nearly 25 per cent of the 140 questions asked during this time pertained to data requests.

For example, on just one day of House business, February 11, 2020, MPs asked for information on the statewide production and consumption of fish, the number of incidents of illegal child trafficking, the total state-wise and year-wise funds released for various schemes and programmes of the ministry of panchayati raj over the past two years, and the number of rural families who shifted from Below the Poverty Line (BPL) to Above the Poverty Line (APL), and vice-versa, state and district-wise.

These are pertinent questions, central to designing and implementing relevant policies. However, it is worth considering whether such questions need to be raised in Parliament for their answers to be made available. Is that time not better spent discussing the government's

plans to implement those relevant policies or its performance on their execution and implementation? To use its time better, the government should conduct a detailed analysis looking at the kinds of data that are often requested in starred and unstarred questions, and should make arrangements to release this information in a systematic, structured, and regular manner as a part of its open data initiative, so that minimal time and effort is put into seeking this information. This will not only benefit the MPs and other policymakers, but also those working in industry, research, academia, the media and the non-profit sector.

It is possible that the facts are being sought not as inputs in data-driven policymaking, but instead for the purpose of signalling that the MPs are concerned about their constituencies in specific states, or to initiate debate and demand accountability. However, given that followups to starred questions are limited, generating such debate is quite unlikely. It is also possible that the data in question is already available, but the MPs do not have the time or resources

required to obtain and compile this information. In that case, it is even more important to give systematic support for policy analysis to MPs.

Ultimately, the output of Parliament will depend upon the quality of the discussion that is undertaken within its chambers. The spirit of Question Hour, as envisioned by the Lok Sabha itself, is to be a mechanism for the government's accountability. It is an opportunity to understand and discuss how the government is working on the ground, and to scrutinise the functioning and performance of elected representatives by other elected representatives. We can make better use of this opportunity by focusing on these activities, rather than seeking statistics that should be available and accessible in the first place. When, eventually, Question Hour returns to Parliament, this is the higher standard that we should hold it accountable to.

The writer is a graduate of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a PhD student at Oxford University



quick  
BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,794.74	0.42
Nifty 50	11,971.05	0.31
S&P 500*	3,488.24	-0.67
Dollar (₹)	73.30	0.08
Pound Sterling (₹)	94.55	1.10
Euro (₹)	86.08	0.43
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,367*631	0.00
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	43.02	0.57
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.900	-0.004
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.717	-0.010

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

WPI inflation hits  
to 7-month high  
of 1.32% in Sept.

Spiralling prices of food items, especially vegetables, pushed up the wholesale inflation to a seven-month high of 1.32 per cent in Sept. and cements the likelihood that the Reserve Bank will continue with status quo on interest rates. The Wholesale Price Index-based inflation was at 0.16 per cent in Aug. The WPI-based inflation seems moving in sync with CPI-based retail inflation, which rose to 7.34 per cent in Sept.

■ Firm raises annual revenue forecast  
Infosys profit  
jumps 26.6%VIBHUTI SHARMA  
BENGALURU, OCT. 14

Infosys Ltd on Wednesday raised its annual revenue growth forecast, after the Indian software services firm posted a better-than-expected quarterly profit, buoyed by growth in client demand for its digital services during the pandemic.

The company revised its annual revenue forecast to between 2 per cent and 3 per cent in constant currency terms, from an earlier expectation of revenue being flat to up 2 per cent. Bengaluru-based Infosys, which provides services such as cloud, data and analytics to companies across the world, said it will also roll out salary increases and promotions across all levels effective January 1.

"Infosys results today ... signifies how important it has become for enterprises to invest in IT to weather any disruptive situation—be it pandemic or an economic recession," Forrester analyst Ashutosh Sharma said.

Infosys reported quarterly operating margin of 25.4 per cent, up from 21.7 per cent last year, following rivals Tata Consultancy Services that posted a 2.2 per cent rise in operating margin to 26.2 per cent while Wipro saw its margin rise to 19.2 per cent for the period.

Consolidated net profit for Infosys in the September quarter climbed 26.6 per cent to Rs 4,845 crore (\$661.35 million). Analysts



## TO ROLL OUT SALARY HIKES FROM JAN.

New Delhi, Oct. 14: India's second-largest IT services firm Infosys on Wednesday said it will roll out salary hikes and promotions across all levels from January 1.

Infosys is also giving 100 per cent variable pay, along with a special incentive for the second quarter. The firm has 2,40,208 employees as of the September quarter.

"Recognising the continuing stellar commitment from our employees during these times, we are paying out variable pay for the quarter at 100 per cent. We will pay a one-time special incentive in Q3 for our junior employ-

ees," Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh said during a virtual briefing.

The salary hike process will restart now and will be effective on January 1, 2021, he added.

"We restarted promotions in the last quarter at our junior levels, and this will now be expanded to all our levels," Parekh said.

Infosys had earlier said it was suspending promotions and pay hikes amid the epidemic-led slowdown in business.

Infosys COO Pravin Rao said the quantum of salary hikes will be identical to those seen in previous years. —PTI

on average had expected a profit of Rs 4,519 crore, according to Refinitiv data.

The company's upbeat profit this quarter comes in contrast to peers TCS and Wipro, which saw their profit drop 7.1 per cent and 3.4 per cent, respectively.

Revenue for Infosys climbed to Rs 24,570 crore from Rs 22,629 crore in the quarter. This compares with analysts' estimate of Rs 24,191 crore. During the quarter, Infosys had a gross addition of 96 clients. —Reuters

Labour codes  
could come in  
force from  
April '21: Secy

New Delhi, Oct. 14: All four labour codes are likely to be implemented in one go from April 1, the beginning of the next fiscal year, labour secretary Apurva Chandra said on Wednesday.

Parliament in its just concluded session passed three labour code bills: the Industrial Relations (IR) Code; the Social Security Code; and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (OSH).

The Wage Code Bill, 2019 was passed by Parliament last year.

Last month, labour minister Santosh Gangwar had said that efforts would be made to implement the all four labour codes by December this year.

Talking to reporters, Chandra said, "We have started work on firming up draft rules of the recently passed three labour codes in Parliament. We are trying to notify draft rules by middle of November to seek feedback. We will give 45 days time for feedback."

He further said that the four codes are likely to be implemented from April 1, with notification of firmed-up rules. Initially, draft rules under a law is notified with a stipulated time period (45 days) to receive feedback. Thereafter, these rules are finalised and implemented for bringing the law into force. —PTI

RBI lists eligible cases  
for loan restructuringFC BANKING BUREAU  
MUMBAI, OCT. 14

The central bank has clarified that loan accounts which have remained standard without any defaults as of March 1, 2020, will be eligible for restructuring under the resolution framework for Covid-19 related stress.

The scheme was announced by the RBI on August 6. "Borrowers should be classified as standard, but not in default for more than 30 days with any lending institution as on March 1, 2020. The actual debt that may be considered for resolution will be outstanding as on the date of invocation," said the Reserve Bank in a clarifications issued late Tuesday.

The RBI said that all the farm credit exposures of all lending institutions, including NBFCs, except for loans to allied activities, viz., dairy, fishery, animal husbandry, poul-

Loans that are not standard as of March 1 are excluded

Farm credit for allied activities, viz., dairy, fishery, poultry and bee-keeping, are excluded

Loan against property included if it's not personal loan

Similarly, investment exposures that are credit substitutes like corporate bonds and commercial papers are also eligible for resolution, the RBI said.

Similarly, restructuring of under-implementation project loans involving deferment of date of commencement of operations (DCCO) are excluded from the scope of resolution framework and that such accounts will continue to be governed by the Feb. 7, 2020, and the other relevant instructions.

Also, in case of multiple lenders to a single borrower whose resolution is undertaken, all lending institutions will have to enter into an intercreditor agreement.

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Also, in case of multiple lenders to a single borrower whose resolution is undertaken, all lending institutions will have to enter into an intercreditor agreement.

## GST: Tamil Nadu gets nod to raise `9,600 cr

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, OCT. 14

Tamil Nadu has joined the list of states that have accepted Option-1 suggested by the Centre to raise funds to meet the revenue shortfall arising from GST implementation. The Ministry of Finance on Wednesday granted permission to Tamil Nadu to raise an additional amount of Rs 9,627 crore through open market borrowings.

On Tuesday, Centre had granted permission to had

issued permission to 20 states to raise Rs 68,825 crore through open market borrowings.

With Tamil Nadu also joining the list, permission has been granted 21 states to mobilise Rs 78,542 crore so far. Apart from TN, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura,

Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Union territories Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir have also settled for Option-1.

Punjab, West Bengal, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Telangana are some of the states opposing the Centre's options.

The borrowing permission issued to the 21 states is over and above the borrowing permission of around Rs 1.10 lakh crore to meet the revenue shortfall arising out of GST implementation.

## COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



**Aries:** Illnesses may worsen. Unexpected money may come in. Focus on things you can do rather than being frustrated by unfulfilled dreams. Friends are likely to call.



**Taurus:** The home front will be problematic. Take care while shopping for an expensive appliance. A friend's behaviour may hurt and anger you.



**Gemini:** Domestic problems may get complicated if you don't handle them well. A letter will get an interesting response. Accept a late invitation if romance is on your mind.



**Cancer:** New entrants into the real estate market may be discouraged. Communication may come from abroad about a pending application.



**Leo:** Someone in your household may fall sick. Spinsters may develop new connections. Expect guests. Those looking to own a house may be disappointed.



**Virgo:** Plans to go abroad for higher studies may fall through. Immature decisions may stall academic progress. A project will be completed. You may consider a new line of work.

## You share your b'day with

Dominic West is an English actor, director, and musician. His film credits include John Carter, The Square. West now plays the role of Dr Chris Cox in the Sky One series Brassic.



**Libra:** A relationship may end but your love life will surge. Though delayed, money will be forthcoming. You are managing two spheres well but the weight needs to tilt towards loved ones.



**Scorpio:** A lover may refuse to do your bidding. Differences with spouse cannot be ruled out. Repaying a loan may be problematic. A gift or surprise is likely.



**Sagittarius:** Students can expect positive results. Travel, potentially overseas, is indicated. Don't let friends influence you into spending a lot of money. Stick to your budget.



**Capricorn:** Work projects will be approved. Home atmosphere may be a little claustrophobic for the married. Demonstrate your affection for your mate.

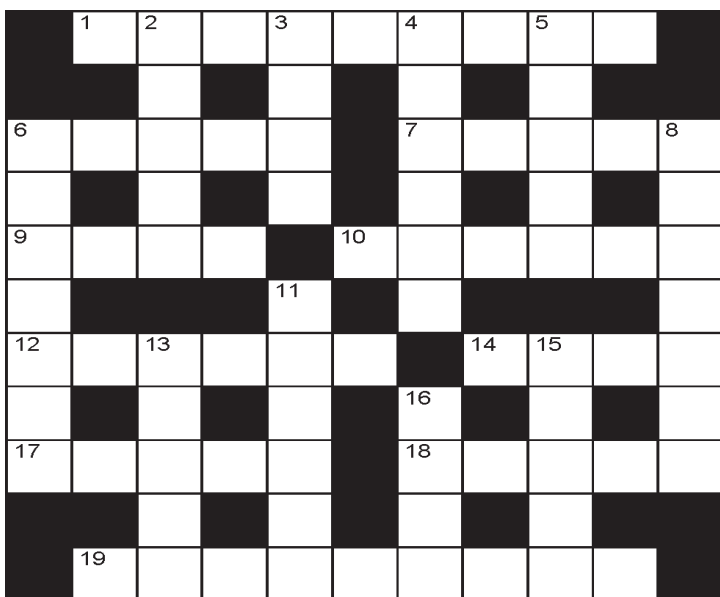


**Aquarius:** Do not rely on home remedies. Take steps to unload pressure on yourself. Change orthodox ways of thinking. Take time off for yourself.



**Pisces:** Undertake a full workout. The day is free from worry but lacks interest. Family members put you in an awkward position. You may find it difficult to change your old social life.

## QUICK CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Liked better (9)
6. Chairman's hammer (5)
7. Defect (5)
9. Competed (4)
10. Stole a look (6)
12. Cord decoration (6)
14. Rear part (4)
17. Thrill (5)
18. Weaving willow (5)
19. Soapstone (anag) (9)

## Down

2. Theatrical entertainment (5)
3. Matted fabric (4)
4. Beam (6)
5. Fit out (5)
6. Old formal dance (7)
8. Small fish (7)
11. Mutinies (6)
13. Barrel part (5)
15. Make parallel (5)
16. Lone performance (4)

## YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Airborne, 7. Droop, 8. Torch, 9. Untidy, 10. Hear, 12. Task, 14. Bushel, 17. Nerve, 18. Gruff, 19. Twinkled.

Down: 1. About, 2. Rapids, 3. Opts, 4. Norse, 5. Adjusting, 6. Shortlife, 11. Cudgel, 13. Strew, 15. Hound, 16. Mean.

## Word Mine

Z  
A U E  
E R C T I

TODAY'S RATINGS: 2 AVERAGE: 3 GOOD: 4 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid.

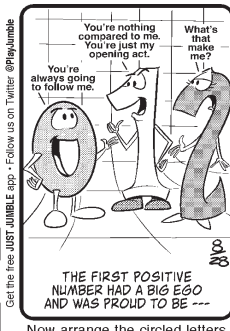
There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

## Jumble

ONZEO  
KNASC  
NAUTBE  
UOESDX

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Yesterday's Jumbles: OBESE CAGEY UNCORK STODGY  
Answer: When Brian, Dennis and Carl Wilson roughed out on the beach, they were being — "BOYS-TEROUS"



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli &amp; craig boldman



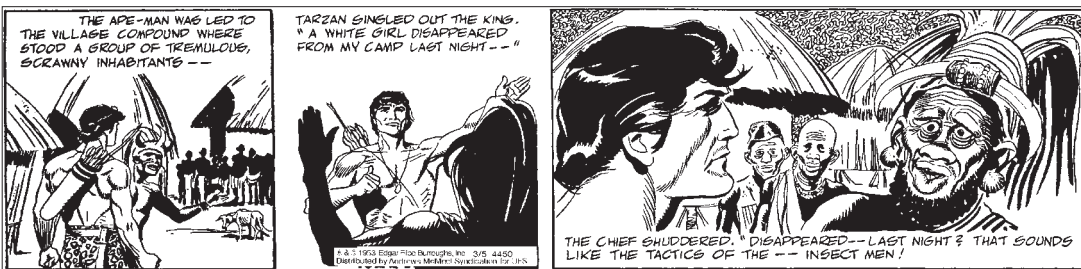
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



bridge  
PHILLIP  
ALDER

THE  
POSSIBLE  
PLAY AND  
DIFFICULT  
DEFENSE

Mark Twain wrote, "Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities. Truth isn't." In truth, today's deal contained several possibilities. South was in three no-trump. West led the heart four: six, queen, eight. East returned the heart two: jack, king, seven. West played a third heart. Declarer led a diamond to her queen, then played a diamond to the king. East won with the ace and led her last heart, after which South claimed the balance for plus 600.

What do you think of the bidding, declarer play and defense? North should have raised straight to three no-trump. Don't use Stayman with 4-3-3-3 distribution. West guessed well to lead a heart. I would have chosen the ineffective spade 10. East knew that her partner had only four hearts. (South wouldn't

North		South	
♠	A J 4 2	♠	A K 6
♥	A 7 6	♥	A 7 6
♦	A 9 8	♦	A 9 8
♣	7 4 2	♣	A J 3
Dealer: South		Vulnerable: Both	
NT	Pass	NT	Pass
NT	Pass	NT	Pass
NT	Pass	NT	Pass
NT	Pass	NT	Pass
Opening lead: ♥ 4			

have opened one no-trump with a singleton.) So, there was a strong case for East's shifting to the club 10 at trick two, which would have worked beautifully here. Also, West knew that the hearts were 4-4. So, after winning the second trick, she should have switched to the club king. This defense would have defeated the contract also.

Declarer knew that to get home she had to drive out the diamond

ace. But she was worried that she might lose one diamond and four hearts. So, declarer held up the heart ace until the third round. But when East returned the heart two at trick two, it announced that she had started with four hearts. If hearts were 4-4, holding up couldn't help. Declarer should have taken the second trick and played on diamonds.

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## SHORT TAKES

## Joshna enters quarters in Egypt

**Cairo:** India's leading squash player Joshna Chinappa, playing her first tournament in six months, has reached the quarterfinals of the CIB Egyptian Open here.

The world number 11 was pushed to the limit by 38th ranked Farida Mohamed who staged a valiant comeback after losing the first two games to level the match.

In the decider, the Indian managed to see off the Egyptian for a 11-7, 11-6, 7-11, 10-12, 11-9 win in the third round.

Joshna meets world number two Nour El Sherbini in the quarterfinals.

India's highest-ranked male player, Saurav Ghosal, lost his third round match against Egypt's Mezan Hashem 8-11, 9-11, 8-11.

It was the first event too for Ghosal since March when the COVID-19 outbreak led to a nationwide lockdown. — PTI

## NZ cricket great Reid dies at 92

**Auckland:** New Zealand's oldest surviving Test cricketer and former captain John Reid has died here at the age of 92, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday.

Reid, regarded as one of the world's best all-rounders during his heyday in the fifties and early sixties, captained New Zealand in 34 Tests including, most notably, the country's first three victories.

"He was, and will remain, a household name in this country, having helped pave the way for everything that has come in his wake," New Zealand Cricket chief executive David White said in a statement offering his tributes.

The NZC release, however, did not specify the cause of Reid's death. Born in Auckland, and educated in Wellington, Reid played 246 first-class games and scored 16128 runs at 41.35, including 39 centuries, while taking 466 wickets at 22.60. — PTI

## Another 1st round exit for Murray

**Cologne, Germany:** Andy Murray suffered another first-round elimination, this time at the Cologne Indoors at the hands of out-of-form veteran Fernando Verdasco.

Verdasco exploited Murray's fragile serve to win 6-4, 6-4 in a match which finished after midnight German time.

Verdasco, at 36 one of the few players older than the 33-year-old Murray in the tournament, broke Murray's serve four times once to love and three times to 15. Murray lost in the second round of the U.S. Open and in the first round of the French Open. He used wild cards for both of those Grand Slam tournaments and again in Cologne for his first loss on an indoor hard court since the 2015 tour finals.

Verdasco will take on top-seeded Alexander Zverev in the second round after the German player had a bye in the first round. — AP

## Golfer Johnson tests Covid +ve

**North Las Vegas:** Dustin Johnson became the most prominent player to test positive for the coronavirus since golf resumed in June, forcing him to withdraw from the CJ Cup at Shadow Creek. The PGA Tour said in a statement that Johnson notified officials he was experiencing Covid-19 symptoms and was given another test that came back positive.

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Royal Challengers Bangalore vs Kings XI Punjab from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

## BADMINTON

**Denmark Open:** Matches from 5.30 pm on Star Sports 2 HD, 3

## TENNIS

**St Petersburg Open:** Matches from 3.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

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## DELHI DELIGHT

## Capitals beat Royals by 13 runs to regain top spot

**Dubai, Oct. 14:** Delhi Capitals beat Rajasthan Royals by 13 runs in an Indian Premier League game on Wednesday.

Batting first, Shikhar Dhawan (57 off 33 balls) and skipper Shreyas Iyer (53 off 43 balls) scored half-centuries but Delhi lost momentum towards the end to be restricted to 161 for seven.

Jofra Archer (3/19) and Jaydev Unadkat (2/19) were impressive with ball for Rajasthan.

In reply, Rajasthan Royals scored 148 for 8 in 20 overs with debutant Tushar Deshpande taking 2 for 37. Ben Stokes top scored with 41 off 35 balls for the Royals.

Earlier, Dhawan and Iyer hit stroke-filled half-centuries but Delhi Capitals lost momentum towards the end to be restricted to 161 for seven.

Earlier, DC had a disastrous start to their innings after opting to bat as they lost Prithvi Shaw off the first ball of the match with a gem of a delivery from Archer that jagged back in after pitching and crashed into the middle stump after getting an inside edge.

To make matters worse for DC, Ajinkya Rahane was holed out to Robin Uthappa off Archer at mid-on an over later.

But then skipper Iyer (53 off 43) joined hands with Dhawan (57 off 33) and the duo initially played cautiously before opening up

● **Shikhar Dhawan (57 off 33 balls) and skipper Shreyas Iyer (53 off 43 balls) scored half-centuries to take Delhi to 161/7. In reply, the Royals could manage just 148 for 8.**

to take DC forward.

They shared 85 runs for the third wicket off 55 balls to keep DC's momentum going after the early jolts.

Dhawan looked in great nick from the onset, often finding the boundary with his trademark pulls and shots square off the off side.

In the process he scored his 39th fifty in the IPL off just 30 balls but soon after reaching the feat he departed while trying to force the pacer, caught at short third man by Kartik Tyagi off leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal.

His runs came off 33 balls which had six boundaries and two hits over the fence.

After Dhawan's dismissal, Iyer took the onus on himself and upped the ante with some lusty hits and in the process got to his fifty off 40 balls in the 15th over bowled by Jaydev Unadkat, that yielded 17 runs, including two sixes.

But soon after, Iyer departed, caught by Archer at long-off off Kartik Tyagi as he went for another big hit. — PTI



Ravichandran Ashwin (left) of Delhi Capitals celebrates the wicket of Rajasthan Royals captain Steve Smith in an Indian Premier League match at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. — BCCI

## SCORECARD

**Delhi Capitals:** P. Shaw b Archer 0, S. Dhawan c Tyagi b Gopal 57, A. Rahane c Uthappa b Archer 2, S. Iyer c Archer b Tyagi 53, M. Stoinis c Tewatia b Archer 18, A. Carey c Archer b Unadkat 14, A. Patel c Tyagi b Unadkat 7, R. Ashwin (not out) 0. **Extras:** (lb-2, w-6, nb-2) 10. **Total (for 7 wkts, in 20 overs) 161.**

**ForW:** 1-0, 2-10, 3-95, 4-132, 5-153, 6-157, 7-161

**Bowling:** Archer 4-0-19-3, Unadkat 3-0-32-2, Tyagi 4-0-30-1, Stokes 2-0-24-0, Gopal 4-0-31-1, Tewatia 3-0-23-0.

**Rajasthan Royals:** B. Stokes c sub (Lalit Yadav) b Deshpande 41, J. Buttler b Nortje 22, S. Smith c & b Ashwin 1, S. Samson b Patel 25, R. Uthappa b Nortje 32, R. Parag run out (Patel) 1, R. Tewatia (not out) 14, J. Archer c Rahane b Rabada 1, S. Gopal c sub (Lalit Yadav) b Deshpande. **Extras:** (b-1, nb-1, w-3) 5. **Total (for 8 wkts, in 20 overs) 148.**

**ForW:** 1-37, 2-40, 3-86, 4-97, 5-110, 6-135, 7-138, 8-148.

**Bowling:** K. Rabada 4-0-28-1, T. Deshpande 4-0-37-2, A. Nortje 4-0-33-2, R. Ashwin 4-0-17-1, A. Patel 4-0-32-1.

## IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	8	6	2	0	12	+0.990
Mumbai Indians	7	5	2	0	10	+1.327
Royal Challengers Bangalore	7	5	2	0	10	-0.116
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	4	3	0	8	-0.577
Sunrisers Hyderabad	8	3	5	0	6	+0.009
Chennai Super Kings	8	3	5	0	6	-0.390
Rajasthan Royals	8	3	5	0	6	-0.844
Kings XI Punjab	7	1	6	0	2	-0.381

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

## IT WAS CLOSE TO PERFECT GAME FOR US: DHONI

**Dubai, Oct. 14:** Relieved and ecstatic in equal measure, Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni lauded his team's "close to perfect" show in the triumph over Sunrisers Hyderabad on Tuesday that infused fresh life into its faltering IPL campaign.

"Ultimately what really matters is you getting two points. Today I felt we did a very good job even in batting," said Dhoni after the match.

Before Tuesday's game, Dhoni had likened his side to a sinking ship with too many holes to plug, listing batting as the main worry.

"There was some purpose with the bat and the batsmen assessed the situation very well.

"The fast bowlers did the job, the spinners came into play and it was one game that was as close to being perfect." — PTI

## Gayle set for IPL 2020 debut

**Sharjah, Oct. 14:** Kings XI Punjab will be hoping that Chris Gayle fires on his much-awaited return and they, for once, put up a complete performance in their must-win game against a high-flying Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Thursday.

The inability to produce an all-round show and close out games they should have won has led to KXIP losing six out of their seven matches.

But KXIP can take confidence from the fact their only win in the tournament has come against RCB, who look a much more potent squad since their last meeting on September 24.

Though the Sharjah wicket has been slowing gradually, the smaller ground dimensions are ideal for someone like Gayle to go on a six-hitting spree.

However, it certainly won't be easy for the 41-



## NUMBERS GAME

**HEAD TO HEAD**  
**OVERALL:** ● Matches: 25. ● Punjab: 13. ● Bangalore: 12

**MEETING IN 2019**

● Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Kings XI Punjab by 8 wickets in Mohali  
● Bangalore beat Punjab by 17 runs in Bangalore

**MEETING IN 2020**

● KXIP beat RCB by 97 runs in Dubai.

**FOR THE RECORD**

● Lokesh Rahul's unbeaten 132 in the first meeting against Royal Challengers Bangalore in Dubai was the highest ever individual score in the IPL.

● Virat Kohli, who hits 494 fours in 176 innings of 184 matches, needs six fours to become only the second batsman to hit 500 or more fours in the IPL.

— S. PERVEZ KAISER

year-old to get going from ball one, having not played earlier in the competition.

He would have played the last two games but could not due to food poisoning. Having recovered fully, it will be interesting to see who he replaces in the side.

Benching a yet to fire Glenn Maxwell is one option or the team can bring Gayle at the expense of an overseas bowler and replace him with the available Indian talent.

KXIP are languishing at the bottom of the table despite having the top-two leading run-getters of the tournament in skipper K.L. Rahul (387 at strike rate of 134.84) and his opening partner Mayank Agarwal (337 at 48.14).

They run into a RCB squad which has grown in confidence by leaps and bounds since their last meeting. — PTI

## DENMARK OPEN | BADMINTON

## Srikanth sails into Round 2

**Odense (Denmark), Oct. 14:** Indian ace Kidambi Srikanth on Wednesday outclassed England's Toby Pentty in straight games to enter the Denmark Open second round here and likened his return to international badminton after a coronavirus-forced hiatus to "an adventure".

The former world number one, who had claimed four Super Series titles in 2017, beat Toby 21-12, 21-18 in 37 minutes, as the sport finally got going after a seven-month-long break.

"I started off well, but he was good in the second game. I'm playing after a long time. It's like an adventure. This situation is something new. I've never been away for this long, and I'm happy with the way it went," he told Badminton World Federation.

The fifth seed will face either fellow Indian Subhankar Dey or Canada's Jason Anthony Ho-Shue in the next round.

"The last time I played was at the All England where I lost in the first round, so I've not had much of match practice. But I think I'm slowly getting back.

"It will definitely take some time, as there are no tournaments after this one. There will be a pause in the

● **The former world number one, who had claimed four Super Series titles in 2017, beat Toby 21-12, 21-18 in 37 minutes.**

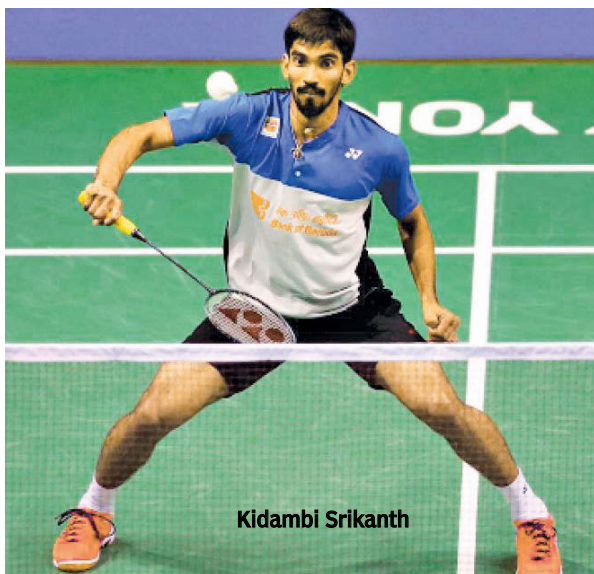
season, so it might take time to get used to the match feeling."

Srikanth spent the early part of the lockdown at his home town, where he was unable to train at his normal level. It was an opportunity for him to reflect on life outside badminton.

"I was trying to enjoy whatever came my way. You couldn't go out, do anything, so you had to say at home. People started to like what they have. That's something very important.

"After the All England I went back to my home town (Guntur), and was there for four months. I returned to Hyderabad in the first week of August, so I trained for that month thinking of the Thomas Cup," he said.

"I wasn't able to train at top intensity at all. At my place, there aren't many facilities, so I couldn't train at the highest level. But when I came back to Hyderabad I had to take time to get back to my past intensity." — PTI



## JAPAN SWIM CHAMP SETO SUSPENDED FOR AFFAIR

**Tokyo, Oct. 14:** Japan's top Olympic swimmer Daiya Seto has been barred from competitions and official training until the end of the year as punishment for an affair exposed by a tabloid.

The star athlete was caught on camera in September by a gossip magazine, which chronicled the married 26-year-old's movements as he picked up his girlfriend, took her to a "love hotel", then went to pick up his daughter from nursery.

Seto apologised for his "irresponsible behaviour" in a statement on Tuesday, saying he accepted the sanctions from the Japan Swimming Federation, which include events at home and abroad.

It means that Seto — the

reigning world champion in the 200m and 400m individual medley — will miss a national competition in December.

But he will still be allowed to take part in the Games next summer and can also practise in private, the swimming federation said.

Seto will also have to complete the Japan Olympic Committee's "integrity education" programme among other courses, according to his management. "I intend to sincerely give my full attention to swimming... So that I may regain the trust of my family, whom I hurt deeply with my irresponsible behaviour, and regain the acceptance of my family as well as all of you as a swimmer," Seto said. — AFP

## Neymar hat-trick fires Brazil past Peru

**Montevideo, Oct. 14:** Neymar scored a hat-trick to become the second highest scorer in Brazil's history as the Copa America champions won 4-2 away to 10-man Peru in a World Cup qualifier on Tuesday.

The goals took Neymar to 64 international strikes, two more than Ronaldo but still well behind Pele's record of 77.

Elsewhere, Joaquin Correa scored the winner 11 minutes from time as Argentina labored to a 2-1 victory over Bolivia to maintain their clean record after two matches.

Peru twice took the lead through Andre Carrillo and a heavily deflected strike from Renato Tapia, but two controversial Neymar penalties, an injury time third and a close range strike from Richarlison maintained the Selecao's winning start to qualifying for



Brazil's Neymar (left) celebrates with teammate Roberto Firmino after scoring a goal against Peru during a qualifying match for the Fifa World Cup Qatar 2022 at the National Stadium in Lima, Peru, on Tuesday. — AP

Qatar 2022. Carrillo opened the scoring on six minutes with a dipping volley from 20 yards after latching onto

Marquinhos's weak clearance.

**FARCICAL EQUALISER**  
Lionel Scaloni's

Argentina earned a second narrow victory in a row following Thursday's 1-0 win over Ecuador. Marcelo Moreno

Martins had given hosts Bolivia a deserved lead but Argentina scored a fortuitous equaliser through Lautaro Martinez.

Lionel Messi, who had an otherwise quiet game, and Martinez then combined to tee up Correa to thrash home the winner.

**ECUADOR DOMINATE URUGUAY 4-2**

Ecuador totally dominated Uruguay in a 4-2 victory in Quito.

They took the lead on 15 minutes as Moises Caicedo flicked home a header from an Angel Mena cross.

Both sides had a goal ruled out following a VAR review before Michael Estrada doubled the advantage on the stroke of half-time, rifling home from inside the box after a mistake by veteran Uruguay center-back Diego Godin. — AFP

## Pressure on Loew as Germany hold Swiss

**Cologne (Germany), Oct. 14:** Joachim Loew's 14-year reign as Germany head coach is under pressure after his side's run of poor results continued on Tuesday as they had to come from two goals down to limp to a 3-3 draw against Switzerland in the Nations League.

Germany have drawn four of their last five games — surrendering the lead on three occasions — to leave them second in their Nations League group behind Spain.

They squeezed past Ukraine 2-1 with a full strength side in Kiev on Saturday and after a 3-3 friendly home draw against Turkey last Wednesday, Loew's side were once again guilty of poor defending.

The 60-year-old has a German FA contract until

the 2022 World Cup. However, his popularity with German fans has plummeted, from the heights of winning the 2014 World Cup title, since Germany's debacle at Russia 2018 finals when they failed to get out of their group.

**SPAIN GO DOWN IN UKRAINE**

Substitute Viktor Tsygankov's strike gave Ukraine a surprise 1-0 win over goal-shy Spain in their Nations League clash in Kiev on Tuesday.

The 22-year-old Dynamo Kiev player had not long been thrown into the fray by coach Andriy Shevchenko when he latched onto Andriy Yarmolenko's superb through ball and fired past an exposed David de Gea in the 76th minute. — AFP