

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | SATURDAY | 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 31.8°C
Min: 23.8°C
RH: 75%
Rain: 10.2mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Thundershowers likely.
Max/Min temp. 32/23 °C



WORLD | 7
Retired generals oppose Trump, to back Biden



SPORTS | 8
Kohli fined ₹12 lakh for slow over rate



CORONA COUNT
CASES (+83,898)
58,96,544
DEATHS (+1,082)
93,357
covid19india.org

STATE GOVT BULLETINS	(+2,381)	(+7073)
TELANGANA	1,81,627	6,61,458
ANDHRA PRADESH	(+10) 1,080	(+48) 5,606

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES
3,26,42,738
DEATHS
9,90,772
COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES
213

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Man hacked to death in honour killing 14 arrested for pre-planned murder, victim's wife says her kin were against marriage

**SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL IDC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25**

The spectre of honour killings returned to the state on Friday with murder of 28-year-old Yogi Hemant Kumar, who, according to the police, was killed by the family of his wife, 23-year-old Avanti.

The two belong to different castes and had married four months ago despite opposition from Avanti's family. Avanti and Hemant had grown up in the same locality of Chandanagar in Serilingampally mandal and fell in love with each other eight years ago.

Fourteen people, including Avanti's uncle Yugender have been arrested by the Cyberabad

police for their involvement in the murder. Police said Avanti's father D. Laxma, mother Archana, Yugender, the others had been plotting ways to get rid of Hemant.

It was two years, almost to the date, on September 15, 2018, that Perumalla Pranay Kumar, who had married Amrutavarshini, was hacked to death in Miryalguda by killers hired by her father Maruthi Rao who was upset that his daughter had married out of his caste.

Addressing a press conference, Madhapur deputy commissioner of police Venkateswarulu said the plan to kill Hemant was made after Laxma agreed to Yugender's plan to hire some persons to commit the murder which would



The parents of Yogi Hemant Kumar console their daughter-in-law Avanti, after her husband was killed, at the Osmania General Hospital mortuary — **P. SURENDRA**

require ₹10 lakh. "This killing was executed in a pre-planned man-

ner. It is an honour killing," Venkateswarulu said.

A distraught Avanti told mediapersons outside the Osmania General Hospital mortuary on Friday, as she and her in-laws awaited completion of the post-mortem on Hemant's body, that her father and uncle and the others were against her marriage.

"After our wedding, the Chandanagar police counselled both our families. After that, things quietened down. Little did I know that while staying quiet my family was hatching a plan to kill my husband. If there was a problem, since it was I who married against their wishes my family could have killed me. Why kill my husband," Avanti asked.

■ **Page 2: Killers forcefully took away couple**

SPB, with 40,000 songs, six national awards, dead

**DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 25**

Renowned playback singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam, known in nearly every household as SPB and Balu, passed away at 1.04 pm on Friday at MGM Healthcare Hospital in Chennai, where he was under maximal life support.

He was 74. He is survived by his wife, a daughter and a son, S.P. Charan. SPB's body would be laid to rest with police honours, a Tamil Nadu government press release said.

From the hospital, his body was taken to his home, where fans poured in to pay tributes and police had a tough time regulating the crowds, particularly in ensuring the maintenance of physical distancing.

The singer's last rites would be held at a family farmhouse on the outskirts of Chennai on Saturday morning and the cortege would leave from home on Friday night, sources said.

Balasubrahmanyam was admitted on August 5 follow-

ON PAGE 4

A GOLDEN VOICE FALLS SILENT



S.P. Balasubrahmanyam

ing mild Covid-19 symptoms.

His condition worsened and he was on life support for Covid-19 and pneumonia since August 14. On Thursday his condition deteriorated, triggering a spate of 'get well' messages from his fans and well-wishers all over the world on social media.

He was in the hospital for a total of 52 days. He had tested negative for Covid-19 on September 4. At the time of admission, the singer had said in a video message that the infection was "very mild" and he would return home in two days.

Born in Nellore in Andhra Pradesh in 1946, he made his debut as a playback singer on December 15 with *Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna*, a Telugu movie, and went on to win the national award for best singer six times and state awards in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka several times.

The nation honoured the legendary singer, who also directed music in many films and acted in 74 movies, with the Padma Bhushan in 2011 and the Padma Shri in 2001.

Fans noted he could could whistle, mimic any sound or voice and had the ability to blend stammer, laughter, cough or give a voice form to any emotion in his songs.

■ **Page 4: Condolence messages pour in for SPB**

Bars, pubs, clubs open for public

**BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25**

The state government on Friday evening announced that it was allowing reopening of bars, clubs, and tourism bars "with immediate effect." Permit rooms will not be allowed to reopen until further orders.

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, in his orders, laid down eight conditions for the establishments to follow. These include that there should be mandatory thermal screening at the entrance, and the managements must ensure proper queue management.

The orders mandated crowd management in parking lots, provision of hand sanitiser and wearing of masks by bar staff and crew. The orders prohibited gatherings inside the premises.

■ **Page 2: No musical events, dance floors**

KBR PARK, HYD URBAN FORESTS TO OPEN TODAY

**DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25.**

The KBR National Park in Banjara Hills will be opened for public from Saturday, forests minister A. Indrakaran Reddy announced on Friday. All the other urban forest parks in and around the city and 15 elsewhere in the state too will be open from Saturday.

He said the Nehru Zoological Park will be opened for the public from October 6, Zoo Day. The zoo and all parks were closed in the Covid lockdown.

Indrakaran Reddy said forest department officials were instructed that visitors have to follow Covid hygiene protocols. He told them to clean parks.

■ **More reports on Page 5**

India loses case on Vodafone retro tax

₹22,100 cr demand dismissed in global court

New Delhi, Sept. 25:

British telecom giant Vodafone Group plc on Friday won an arbitration against the Indian government over a demand for ₹22,100 crore in taxes using retrospective legislation.

An international arbitration tribunal ruled that India's demand in past taxes were in breach of fair treatment under a bilateral investment protection pact.

"The award is confidential, but Vodafone can confirm that the tribunal has found (it) in Vodafone's favour," Vodafone Group said in a statement. "We are studying the lengthy documents and can make no further comment at this time."

It was not immediately known if the Indian government will abide by the arbitration award. Sources said the tax demand was on the UK-listed company and Vodafone's India venture faced no liability. Vodafone India was later on merged with Aditya Birla Group's telecom company Idea.

Sources with direct knowledge of the matter said the government of India's liability will be restricted to about ₹75 crore.

Before the arbitration tribunal, Vodafone had challenged India's usage of a 2012 legislation that gave it powers to retrospectively tax deals like Vodafone's \$11-billion acquisition of 67 per cent stake in the mobile phone business owned by Hutchison Whampoa in 2007. It challenged the demand of ₹7,990 crore in capital gains taxes (₹22,100 crore after including interest and penalty) under the Netherlands-India Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).

Tax authorities had in September 2007 served notice to Vodafone International Holdings BV (VIH-BV) for its alleged failure to deduct withholding tax from consideration paid to the Hutchison Telecommunications International Ltd. However, Vodafone challenged this in the

Supreme Court, which set it aside tax notice in January 2012, saying that the transaction was not taxable in India and so the company had no obligation to withhold tax. In May that year, Parliament passed the Finance Act 2012 that amended various provisions of the Income-Tax Act, 1961, with retrospective effect to tax any gain on transfer of shares in a non-Indian company which derives substantial value from underlying Indian assets. In January 2013, the company was served a tax notice of ₹14,200 crore after including interest on the principal amount. A year later, Vodafone challenged the tax demand.

Sources said the company in April 2014 served the notice of arbitration after out-of-court dispute resolution talks failed. Vodafone has always maintained that there is no liability and that it will vigorously defend any allegation that it is liable to pay tax. —PTI

Bihar polls from October 28

**VINEETA PANDEY and
NAYEAR AZAD | DC
NEW DELHI/PATNA, SEPT. 25**

The Assembly elections in Bihar will be held in three phases starting from October 28, chief election commissioner Sunil Arora announced on Friday. This will be the first election to be held under the shadow and spread of Coronavirus that has claimed over 92,000 lives and infected over 58 lakh people in India.

In Bihar, which is still recovering from floods in several areas, over 1.74 lakh cases were detected and its daily fresh cases continue to be over 1,000. However, since the Assembly's term expires on November 29, the Election Commission has tried to wind up the poll process after Dasara but before Diwali and Chhath by holding the polls in three phases.

Voting for 243 Assembly seats in Bihar will be held on October 28, November 3 and November 7, and the results will be declared on November 10. The EC warned candidates and parties against use of the social media for hate speeches and mischievous purposes.

The EC is yet to decide on

Nizamabad MLC bypoll to be held on October 9

**NARENDER
PULLLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 25**

Byelection for the Legislative Council from Nizamabad local Authorities constituency will be conducted on October 9 and counting of votes will be done on October 12.

The Election Commission of India issued a notification in this regard on Friday. Under the Covid-19 guidelines issued by the state government and the ministry of home affairs, the polling process will be completed by October 14.

■ **Full report on Page 3**

Farmers intensify agitation over farm Bills

**DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI,
SEPT. 25**

Farmers blocked roads in several parts of the country on Friday, protesting against the three agri-marketing Bills passed on Sunday by Parliament.

The most widespread protests were in Punjab and Haryana, and demonstrations were reported from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka as part of the 'Bharat bandh' call given



Farmers protest against the farm Bills passed by the Centre at Ambala on Friday. — PTI

by farmer unions. In Telangana, the Congress and Left parties held demonstrations in Hyderabad and elsewhere in the state. TRS rallies to

highlight the recently amended revenue Acts saw leaders criticising the farm Bills. Over 30 organisations had given a separate Punjab bandh call, which appeared to be near total. A tractor was set on fire by protesters in Punjab's Barlana.

A three-day rail roko that began on Thursday is also underway in Punjab, with farmers squatting on the tracks at many places in Punjab and the railways suspending many trains. Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal drove

a tractor while his wife and former Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal sat beside him in Muktsar district.

Prominent Punjabi singers like Harbhajan Mann and Ranjit Bawa took part in a farmers' protest in Nabha.

In the capital, hundreds of farmers, on foot, two-wheelers and tractors, were stopped at Delhi's border with UP, their agitation disrupting traffic in Noida and Ghaziabad.

■ **More reports on Page 5**

SUDDEN | DEATH

Villagers see bad omen; pesticide suspected to be cause

Siberian pelicans found dead in AP

**K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VIZIANAGARAM, SEPT. 25**

Hundreds of pelicans from Siberia have been found dead in and around Chellamnaiduvalasa of Seethanagaram mandal in Vizianagaram district, about 130 km from Visakhapatnam.

The bird deaths were occurring for about a week, locals said. It is suspected that pesticide poisoning could be the reason.

The villagers, shocked at the unusual death of these winged guests, alerted veterinary department offi-

cials to protect the remaining birds. Villagers see the death of the birds as a bad omen. Villagers said thousands of Siberian birds arrive in their village in the last week of June for the nesting season. The birds leave between November and December along with their offspring.

The locals never harm the birds; rather they protect them from poachers and predators. They have also punished a few people for harming the birds in the past. Tourists usually visit the village for a glimpse of

● **CHELLAMNAIDUVALASA village elders said more than 300 birds were found dead near the trees and a few other places**

the birds in November.

Chellamnaiduvalasa village elders said more than 300 birds were found dead near the trees and a few other places in the village during the last few days. They fear that the birds may have contracted some infection and died.

A veterinary team, led by surgeon Ch. Lalitha, head

of the animal disease diagnostic centre, visited the village and conducted a post-mortem on a few dead birds. It sent samples to the Animal Biological Research Institute at Vijayawada to find out the reason for the deaths. The birds usually perch on tamarind trees where they build nests.

"Prima facie we suspect the birds might have consumed pesticide in the agriculture fields close to Swarnamukhi river. The birds feed on snails that are largely found in the fields,"

Dr Lalitha said. Telikunchi and Telineelapuram are the two other villages in Srikakulam district where a large number of pelicans and painted storks from Siberia arrive every year. There were no reports of bird deaths there.

"Only open billed storks arrived in Telikunchi and there is no sign of birds at Telineelapuram," said divisional forest officer Sandeep Krupavaram. Sources said a few storks died in Telineelapuram two years ago and the reason was not known.

A Covid-19-designated State hospital, which is run by Sri Padmavathi Medical College for Wo-men (SPMC) and is attached to Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences (SV-IMS) here has been embroiled in a controversy after a video shot inside the hospital premises, shows a dead person being relieved of his jewellery. This has gone viral on social media.

SVIMS-SPMC hospital has treated more than 3,407 patients till the second week of September and achieved a success rate of 87 per cent. Also, more than 1,79,266 RT-PCR tests were conducted at VRDL, which is attached to the hospital.

For all its achievements on the corona front, it is now at the receiving end after the CC cameras in ICU captured

workers stealing the gold ring of a Covid-19 deceased patient. The video has created ripples in political circles with many slamming the government authorities for not keeping a tab on activities in the hospital.

Sources told this newspaper that a middle-aged man hailing from Chowdepalli in Punganur mandal, who had tested positive for Covid-19, admitted about 10 days back. His health deteriorated on Thursday and he passed away on the same day. Family members noticed that a gold ring and a mobile phone of the deceased were missing.

They alleged that when they tried to lodge a complaint with the hospital's security, they were turned away. They later approached the higher ups, who ordered a probe.

The enquiry revealed that an outsourced worker had stolen the gold ring.

ANOTHER FIR FILED ON AP FORMER A-G

**DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 25**

The AP police on Friday booked a fresh case of cheating, criminal conspiracy and breach of trust against former advocate general Dammalapati Srinivas, his wife Nagarani and brother-in-law Nannapaneni Seetharamaraju and a few others.

Acting on a complaint from a retired lecturer, Kode Rama Mohan Rao, the Mangalagiri Rural police filed an FIR against on September 22 under sections 120b, 420, 406 and 506 of Indian Penal Code.

The AP High Court already stayed an FIR registered by the Anti Corruption Bureau against the former advocate general and others in a case relating to the Amaravati land scam.

According to the complainant, he was induced to buy two flats in a proposed housing complex.

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Adhika-Ashwayuja Suddha Dasami till 7.03 pm
Star: Uttarashadha till 7.28 pm
Variyam: 11.42 pm to 1.23 am (Sunday)
Durmuhurtam: 6.09 am to 7.44 am
Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am
HJRI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 8, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.06 am
Zohar: 12.17 pm
Asar: 4.27 pm
Maghrib: 6.15 pm
Isha: 7.22 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.08 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.05 AM
MOONSET TODAY 1.10 AM MOONRISE TOMORROW 2.42 PM

COUNTER POINT



How to get noticed? Let's stage a dharna at NCB office!

IN BRIEF

Four arrested in robbery cases

Hyderabad: The North Zone Task Force arrested four persons for involvement in five cases — two of attention diversion, one each of robbery, chain-snatching and attempted chain-snatching. The accused were identified as Bollam Vamshi, 19, Kodanda Mohan, Musthically Tarun and Chinthakuntla Ramakrishna, all 21 years old. Police said Vamshi, a resident of Gandhinagar, ran a hardware shop but took to crime to earn easy money. The gang targeted passers-by in lonely areas. They were arrested near Rasoolpura

Fake JNTU exam schedule circulated

Hyderabad: Amidst opposition against the JNTU-H's decision to hold regular as well as supplementary exams beginning mid-October, an exam schedule that was being circulated among students on social media platforms is fake and not released by the university, JNTU-H authorities said. *Deccan Chronicle* reached out to JNTUH registrar Dr Manzoor Hussain about the purported timetable. He said that the circular had nothing to do with the university. While he cannot confirm, this could be the schedule of an autonomous college that is free to follow its own schedule, away from the university, Dr Hussain said.

CONG ASKS SEC FOR INFO ON USE OF EVMs

MADDY DEEKSHITH I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

The state Congress expressed surprise over the State Election Commissioner (SEC) not sharing inputs about the pros and cons of conducting the GHMC elections using EVMs and paper ballots. The SEC issued notice on September 21 and has sought the opinions of political parties on the matter by September 30. Congress leaders said the SEC could seek expert views, not only from within the government but also of expert agencies like the ICMR. The Congress said that with the SEC will have to give time to identify more polling stations which it has mandated to ensure physical distance during voting. Considering these factors, the SEC should schedule the polls in the first week of February, well in time for the end of the term of GHMC and the Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations. Former minister Marri Shashidhar Reddy, chairman of the TPCC election commission coordination committee, said that the SEC could have consulted the ECI, which is fully geared up to conduct the Bihar Assembly elections. He said there have been a lot of discrepancies in the enumeration of BC voters in the past and reservations were tailored to suit the requirement of the TRS.

Covid occupancy in pvt hosps drops 60%

Fall in hospitalisation due to early diagnosis, treatment

KANIZA GARARI I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

A 60 per cent drop in occupancy of Covid-19 beds has been noted in private hospitals for a week. With people coming in early for diagnosis, and treatment protocols being better understood by doctors, hospital admissions have seen a drastic drop.

Besides, home and hotel quarantine facilities have been developed for mild and asymptomatic cases. Treatment via video counselling is proving effective in these cases.

Dr T. Narsinga Reddy, national vice-president of the Indian Medical

● **BUT COVID-19** patients with co-morbid conditions like heart diseases, diabetes, transplants, cancers and other degenerative disorders are being admitted in hospitals.

● **Mortality** has also been noted in this group as they are developing recurrent severe diarrhoea which is causing complications in the body.

Association, said, "Earlier, fear led to patients with mild cases being hospitalised. Now, there is a shift as people are confident of getting treated at home."

But Covid-19 patients with co-morbid conditions like heart diseases, diabetes, transplants, cancers and other degenerative disorders are being admitted in hospitals.

Dr Rahul Medakkar, chief executive officer of Continental Hospitals, said, "The major challenges are faced by those who are suffering from co-morbid conditions as the virus is leaving a long-term impact on the lungs and other organs. There are complications in these cases and the treatment is prolonged."

Post-Covid-19 inflammation in these patients takes time to control.

Those who require oxygen support for long are either contracting pneumonia or have developed lung fibrosis. Mortality has also been noted in this group as they are developing recurrent severe diarrhoea which is causing complications in the body.

According to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the SARS CoV-2 particles, detected up to 120 days in the body and can cause persistent inflammation. Extreme increase in inflammatory markers reduces functionality of the immune system, leading to multi-organ failure causing death.

Will film on Satyam Raju affect Sebi, ED probe: HC

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

The Telangana High Court on Friday asked Netflix Entertainment India Ltd whether telecasting the 'Bad Boy Billionaires' docu-series on Satyam Computers former chairman B. Ramalinga Raju would not prejudice the cases filed by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Enforcement Directorate against him that were yet to be decided, and the appeals filed by Raju that were pending before the courts.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Annireddy Abhishek Reddy was dealing with

● **NEERAJ KISHAN** Kaul, counsel for Netflix, said many books like 'Corporate Frauds' and 28 articles on the Satyam issue were in the public domain. The docu-series producers had also communicated with Raju.

Netflix India's plea challenging the ex-parte orders issued by the trial court on Raju's petition requesting that the telecast be stopped.

Neeraj Kishan Kaul, counsel for Netflix, said many books like 'Corporate Frauds' and 28 articles on the Satyam issue were in the public domain. The docu-series producers had also communicated with Raju. Counsel asked how Raju

could approach the trial court before the docu-series was telecast or he had watched it. "Based on the trailers, how he could confirm that it would tarnish his reputation," Kaul asked.

He said that the trial court did not give Netflix an opportunity and had issued ex-parte orders. "The Supreme Court has said that in only the rarest cases should pre-publication Injunction orders be given. But this issue is already in the public domain," Kaul said in the course of arguments which went on for more than two hours.

Netflix said the docu-series was an assimilation of information available in public domain. For further arguments, the case was posted to Monday.

Bus service after 6 months



Commuters travel in an TSRTC bus, which resumed services after six months on Friday.

— R. PAVAN

Journalists seek Covid-19 cover

BALU PULIPAKA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

The Indian Journalists Union (IJU), the largest representative body of working journalists in the country, will mark October 2 as a protest day against the indifferent attitude of the state and Union governments in creating a safety net for working journalists from the pandemic.

The IJU has for long been demanding that journalists, who are on the frontline to disseminate authentic information and expert opinions to the people, be provided ₹50 lakh insurance cover paid for by the state, free treatment to those who contract the Coronavirus, and other benefits on par with other frontline workers involved in combating Covid-19.

IJU president K. Sreenivas Reddy and secretary-general Balwinder Singh Jammu said the

● **THE IJU** called upon working journalists to stage dharnas, hunger strikes and demonstrations on October 2 at state and district headquarters, cities and towns.

decision to observe a protest day was taken at the IJU national executive committee meeting on September 19. The IJU, they said, was concerned about the loss of large number of jobs in the newspaper industry, illegal and arbitrary dismissals of journalists without following the due process of law, and cases filed against journalists whose reportage was critical of the state or Union governments.

They called upon working journalists to stage dharnas, hunger strikes and demonstrations on October 2 at state and district headquarters, cities and towns by following Covid-19 protocols.

STATE RECORDS 2,381 FRESH COVID CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

On Thursday, the state registered 2,381 new cases of Covid-19 and 10 deaths. The total number of cases stands at 1,81,627 and the toll at 1,080, according to the state Covid-19 bulletin issued by the state health department on Friday.

There are 30,387 active cases in the state. According to experts, there has to be a focus on reducing active cases which will require proper contact tracing.

With every six symptomatic cases there are 200 asymptomatic cases and these patients are spreading the virus. The high-risk zones continue to be Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits with 386 cases, Ranga Reddy 227, Malkajgiri 193, Karimnagar 119 and Nalgonda with 132 cases.

Whistleblower exposes 'Dr' degree fraud

PULI SHARATH KUMAR,
KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 25

The district president of the of Loksatta Udyama Samstha (LUS), N. Srinivas issued a warning to persons securing fake honorary doctorate certificates on Friday.

He said that criminal cases will be lodged with the police against these persons and has asked them to remove the 'Dr' tag before their names immediately.

Addressing the press in Karimnagar, Mr Srinivas alleged that some universities—Global peace university, International peace university, Indian virtual university, Universal Tamil University, Kings University and many others based in foreign countries and in other states in India are selling these fake doctorate certificates. These universities do not have recognition from the University Grants Commission (UGC). Mostly it is the vulnerable unemployed youth who are getting trapped.

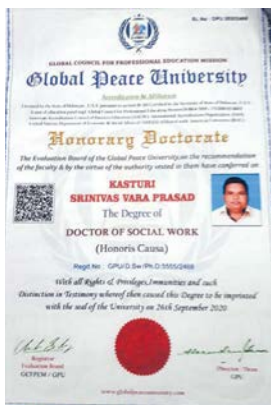
He said, "These certificates can be purchased for as low as ₹30,000 to ₹3 lakhs. In old Nizamabad in the last four years, we have seen a legislator, a police constable, a realtor, teachers, engineers, academicians, rowdy sheeter, leaders of political parties and representatives of voluntary organisations purchase these so-called doctorate certificates from these fake universities. They add the 'Dr' tag to their names and deceive the people."

One Kasturi Srinivas Varas Prasad had applied for a doctorate to these universities.

Speaking to the press, he said that he had learnt that some political leaders secured a doctorate certificate from some universities present in the other states. He searched their websites and approached them via



Kasturi Srinivas Varas Prasad shows the fake doctorate certificate purchased from Global Peace university to the media in Karimnagar on Friday.



phone for an honorary doctorate."

He said, "The concerned university officials informed me to pay ₹40,000. After negotiating on the amount, they agreed to send me a certificate for ₹20,000 via mail. They also asked me to participate in the convocation held on September 26."

We will lodge complaints with the DGPs of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala and other states.



Nizamsagar project

Nizamsagar project gets 6.34 tmc water

NARENDER PULLOOR I DC
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 25

Compared to last year, the water level in the Nizamsagar project increased to 6.34 tmc on Friday.

Inflows into the river Manjeera over the last few days increased the water level of the project to 1,394.25 feet as against its full reservoir level of 1,405

ft. Gross storage capacity of Nizamsagar project is 17,803 tmc.

Rains in the catchment areas improved water flows in river Manjeera, which increased the water level in Nizamsagar project.

Around 2,026 cusecs water is reached the project on Friday. Last year on the same day the water level was 1,385.00 ft and

storage of water was 2.37 tmc. Local streams also improved water flows into the Manjeera.

Singur project in Sangareddy district across the river Manjeera also got copious inflows from upstream areas.

The water level in the project on Friday was 1,711.61 feet as against its full reservoir level of 1,717.93 ft. Gross storage

capacity of the dam is 29.91 tmc and presently it has 20.61 tmc of water. Ironically, Singur had merely 0.49 tmc of water with 1,670.6 feet water level on the same day last year.

Singur is a balancing reservoir for Nizamsagar and after its FRL, the floodwaters may reach downstream to the Nizamsagar project.

Fire NoC is must for all jr colleges

HARLEEN MINOCHA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

Even as a sword hangs over the grant of affiliation to 68 junior colleges over the fire no-objection certificate (NoC), the home ministry on Friday issued directions to all private junior colleges to seek the mandatory clearance.

As per Government Order 26, issued on Friday, all junior colleges housed in buildings up to 15-metre height shall follow fire safety norms like ensuring two water-expelling extinguishers for every 200 square metres with a minimum of four extinguishers per compartment/floor.

The extinguisher should be available within a 15-metre radius. A first aid

● **AS PER** Government Order 26, issued on Friday, all junior colleges housed in buildings up to 15-metre height shall follow fire safety norms like ensuring two water-expelling extinguishers for every 200 square metres with a minimum of four extinguishers per compartment/floor.

hose reel, (one for every 1,000 square metres) and a 10,000-litre terrace tank over the respective tower terrace are essential.

Two fire brigade inlets are also mandatory for all junior colleges, the government order said.

For the purpose of affiliation by the concerned

authority, junior colleges will have to submit a self-certification report to the secretary of the Board of Intermediate Education, marking a copy to the jurisdictional divisional fire officer. The TS Disaster Response Fire Service will conduct surprise inspections and if any deviations from self-certification reports are noticed the Board of Intermediate secretary will be recommended to cancel the affiliation of the defaulter, said the government order.

The home department said in the government order that these relaxations have been made keeping in view the prevalent situation in terms of Covid-19 and saving the careers of the students enrolled in such colleges.

IN BRIEF

IFTU general secy Pasha dead

Khammam: Mukhtar Pasha, National General Secretary of the Indian Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) died due to Covid-19. Pasha, was involved in the struggles of the people in the district. He was also known for his commitment and discipline. Pasha tested positive for Covid-19 positive and was undergoing treatment in a hospital, but his condition deteriorated and he died.

3 SARPANCHES, 3 GP SECRETARIES SUSPENDED

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, SEPT. 25

Collector R.V. Karnan issued orders on Friday for the suspension of three sarpanches and three gram panchayat secretaries from their posts for misuse of power and funds.

Pravara Kumar, sarpanch of Acharlagudem under Nelakondapalli mandal, B. Kishan sarpanch of Gangabanda gram pachayat under Kusumanchi mandal and Laxminarayana sarpanch of Basvapuram under Tallada mandal were suspended.

Madhu, secretary of Garlapadu under Bonakal mandal, Venkateswarlu, secretary of Rajeswarapuram under Nelakondapalli mandal and the secretary of Chinakorukundi under Kallur mandal were suspended for misuse of funds and powers.

SCCL FILLS UP TWO VACANT DIRECTOR POSTS

DC CORRESPONDENT KOTHAGUDEM SEPT. 25

The Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has filled up the two vacant director posts on Friday. D. Veera Reddy, is selected as the director for projects and planning and D. Satyanarayana Rao director for electrical and mechanical.

Mr Veera Reddy worked as the general manager for the Longwall coal projects at Andriala in Madrid, Spain. Mr Satyanarayana works as the general manager for the underground mines of the SCCL.

A committee headed by Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar along with energy department secretary Sandeep Kumar Sultania, SCCL MD N. Sridhar, Coal India official Sekar Saran and coal secretary, Government of India P.S.L. Swamy conducted the interviews and selected the directors.

Five persons were invited to attend the interview for the project and planning post and four for the electrical and mechanical post.

The SSCL management recalled famous singer S. P. Balasubrahmanyam association with the company.

SP sang, 'Jai Singareni, Jai Singareni, Jai Sirulavalli, Jai Kalpavalli and Jai Jai Kannathalli,' on the Foundation Day of the company in 2003. Songwriter and communication officer SCCL Ganasankar Pujari said, "The song rendered by Balu sir lifts our spirit even today. The magic, beauty and melody of the song is perpetual. His demise is a great loss to the music world". The company offered its deep condolence to the family of the singer.

● **D. VEERA REDDY, is selected as the director for projects and planning and D. Satyanarayana Rao director for electrical and mechanical.**



Farm workers plant paddy saplings in farm lands in Kallur mandal in Khammam district.

Farm land the new asset in Khammam

For ₹20 to ₹30-L people can own 1 acre

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC KHAMMAM, SEPT. 25

The introduction of the Dharani portal that gives clarity on survey numbers and purification of land records, the implementation of Rythu Bhima, free power and Rythu Bandhu are all factors that account for an increasing interest in owning farm lands.

The demand for farm lands is witnessed not only on the lands surrounding Khammam town but also in Konigerla, Kusumanchi, Tirumalayapalem, Nelakondapalli, Madhira, Errupalem, Penuballi, Wyra, Tallada, Enkoor, Penuballi, Vemsoor, Kallur, Mudigonda and Bonakal mandals.

The increasing plot rates in Khammam town is forcing people to buy farm lands that are safe at present. The price of a piece of land in Khammam is ₹20 to ₹35 lakh and the people will get one or two acres of farm land.

● **GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, teachers, businesspersons and traders are showing interest in owning farm lands. They consider it the best investment rather than keeping money in banks in the form of fixed deposits.**

The land price on the roadside in Kusumanchi and Tirumalayapalem mandals is ₹80 lakh to ₹1 crore per acre. The price of land per acre ranges from ₹20 to ₹35 lakh away from the road. The lands under irrigation ayacut are from ₹18 to ₹20 lakh.

Government employees, teachers, businesspersons and traders are showing interest in owning farm lands. They consider it the best investment rather than keeping money in banks in the form of fixed deposits. Moreover, the interest rates in banks have reduced drastically.

The land prices in a 10-kilometre radius of Khammam town are between ₹1 crore and ₹2 crore. Teachers who bought farm land are doing farming after retirement. They have chosen it as an activity to keep them busy. They are going for horticultural crops and investing some more money in it. Some of them are leasing out their lands.

Apart from it, realtors are also buying lands for ventures and there is a demand for house sites in rural areas. These realtors are keeping the people of small towns in view and making the farm lands lay outs after converting them into residential areas.

The area of Sthambadri urban development authority is spread over nearly ten mandals and the land prices are high there. The banks are giving loans by mortgaging farm lands and the same money is used to buy other lands.

NEW MACHINE AT NIMS FOR COVID-19 TESTS

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 25

A high-end Cobas 8800 machine was inaugurated at the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences which will facilitate in performing 3,000 RT-PCR tests for the Coronavirus in a day.

The machine, used globally, was installed by the TS government in the Molecular Lab and Centre of Excellence at NIMS. Health minister Etala Rajendra who inaugurated the machine said it could be used for HIV and hepatitis tests.

The machines uses nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal samples to detect the presence of SARS-CoV-2. High volume and quality testing is required to control the spread of infections.

● **THE MACHINE, used globally, was installed by the TS government in the Molecular Lab and Centre of Excellence at NIMS. Health minister Etala Rajendra who inaugurated the machine.**



● **JOJI REDDY alleged that five persons are running the racket. They threaten patients' visiting the government hospital and tell them that doctors are not available and that the hospital lacks facilities.**

commissions to those who bring them, patients. The organisers of the ambulance also play a role in the business. Government hospital officials are aware of the issue, but, have yet to take action as they expect commissions from the private hospitals, he added.

The TD leader demanded that the health department and health minister, Etala Rajendar initiate a probe against the persons involved in the racket and take immediate action along with issuing suspension orders.

TD alleges govt hosp staff diverting patients

PULI SHARATH KUMAR, KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 25

Telugu Desam (TD) Karimnagar parliament segment president Ambati Joji Reddy on Friday alleged that economically weaker patients visiting the government hospital are being diverted to the private hospitals in the district. Mr Ambati said that some of the government hospital staff, officials and doctors are involved in this racket and has sought a probe against these persons.

Mr Joji Reddy alleged that five persons are running the racket. They threaten patients' visiting the government hospital and tell them that doctors are not available and that the hospital lacks facilities needed for proper treatment. "For the past several months this is being followed, and the private hospitals' management has earned lakhs of rupees. Some doctors rendering services in the government hospital are running private hospitals and are responsible for this illegal business, he said."

Private hospitals give between 30 to 50 per cent

Bills to benefit corporates: Farm bodies

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC ADILABAD, SEPT. 25

Farmers bodies, strongly opposing the recent act and two amendments enacted by the Central government, say that the acts are interlinked to aimed to benefit corporates in the name of helping the farmers and bailing them out from the clutches of middlemen.

BJP leaders and activists took out rallies in support of the farmers bill saying that the bill will help the farmers and provide good prices for their produce and they can sell it anywhere in the country where they get a good price instead of selling locally.

While farmers bodies and opposition parties who took out rallies in protest against the farmers' bill in erstwhile Adilabad district, say that the bill goes against the interests of the farmers and benefits traders.

"The BJP government should have taken the steps to strengthen the market yards and created infrastructure such as strengthening godowns and storage capacity and legislative safeguard for the MSP for produce if the ruling government really wanted to benefit the farmers," said B. Kondal Reddy of Rythu Swarajya Vedika.

He said that corporations will take over the farming field over a period of time and the farmers will be forced to work as an agriculture labourers at the companies by giving their lands to the companies following losses incurred thanks to provisions in the farmers' bill.

Farmers' bodies say that the Farmers' Bill and amendment of the essential commodities act are interlinked and in favour of corporate companies and creating grounds for contract farming.

Many farmers' bodies are of the opinion that the bill will create an atmosphere where traders can dictate the terms to the farmers.

PM trying to reduce farmers to coolies: MLA

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC WARANGAL, SEPT. 25

Farmers in Maripeda of Mahbubabad district took out a massive rally in support of the state government's new Revenue Act on Friday.

Dornakal MLA D.S. Redya Naik took part in the rally wherein about 800 tractors and bullock carts participated.

The Dornakal MLA said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has been working towards the development of the agriculture sector and to bring in profits for farmers but the central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is trying to reduce farmers to coolies.

The CM brought the new revenue act to resolve the numerous problems faced by the people in regards to lands and properties across the state.

He alleged that the BJP government is trying to push the farming sector into crisis with the new agriculture bills. "We demand the Central government withdraw the

● **BJP GOVERNMENT is trying to push the farming sector into crisis with the new agriculture bills. The Central government should withdraw the bills.**

farm bill. If not, a huge rally will reach New Delhi with the demand. We will gather the support of all parties in the nation to fight against the new bills," said Mr Naik.

A similar rally was held at Rayavaparthi in Jangaon mandal by the farmers. Taking part in the rally, minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao said that the new revenue act brought by the CM is a role model in the country.

Mr Dayakar Rao performed palabhishekham to a flexi of the CM before launching the rally in Rayavaparthi.

Interacting with the farmers, Mr Dayakar Rao said that the Telangana government is working towards the upliftment of farmers, but the Central government is working towards benefiting corporate sectors with the new agriculture bills.

of the middlemen but the ground reality is different.

The amendment of the essential commodities act indirectly helps traders to keep stocks of essential commodities as they wish and they can increase the prices by creating an artificial shortage of the essential goods and services in the market.

Doubts are expressed that corporate companies will enter into the farming sector on a large scale after the farmers give up agriculture due to losses with no strong institutional support for their products and being isolated from local market yards.



Farmers along with left parties CPI, CPI-M and CPI (ML) New Democracy activists take out a tractor and bike rally in Khammam on Friday protesting against the new agriculture Act. CPI district secretary Potu Prasad, CPI-M district secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao and New Democracy district president Gokinepalli Venkateswara Rao participated in the rally.

LEGENDARY | SINGER

His favourite dish was 'Aava pettina Arati Kura' from E. Godavari

Bhadradri remembers S.P. Balasubrahmanyam

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM/BHADRACHALAM, SEPT. 25

The people of Khammam and Bhadrachalam recalled their association with famed singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam on Friday.

The singer had visited Bhadrachalam during the Godavari Pushkaralu from July 14 to 26 in 2003 and was staying in the ITC-Bhadrachalam guest house.

The cook asked the singer what he would like to eat for lunch. The legendary singer immediately said make 'Aava pettina Arati Kura' (curry made with mustard powder and banana), a famous dish in East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh.

The cook did not know how to make the curry and



Kona Anand Kumar seen with SP Balasubrahmanyam and his wife in Bhadrachalam in 2003.

● **MANY DEVOTEES felt they witnessed Lord Rama when SPB sang the song 'Ramaaaa...with a long pause.**

informed the ITC officer present on duty. The officer said that his mother would make the curry and he would bring the dish for SP Balasubrahmanyam. It was Kona Anand Kumar, the brother of the ITC official who brought the dish for

SPB. After lunch, Anand informed the singer that his mother had made the curry. Anand said, "Balu sir thanked my mother and told me the taste was wonderful. I then asked him if he could pose for a photograph with me. While shooting the

photo, SP Balasubrahmanyam asked me jokingly, "Will you get me another dish for the photo and laughed."

During the Godavari Pushkaralu, which took place 10 years ago SP Balasubrahmanyam ren-

dered numerous devotional songs — 'Andari Banduvaiah, Bhadradri Ramaiah' from the sand beds of the River Godavari.

His songs and the devotees' chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' reverberated through the holy town that day. Many devotees felt they witnessed Lord Rama when SPB sang the song 'Ramaaaa...with a long pause'.

The Deccan Chronicle correspondent was also present for the programme on that day.

G. V. Narasimha Rao said, "The demise of Balu is extremely painful for us."

Nizamabad MLC byelection to be held on October 9

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 25

Byelection for the Telangana Legislative Council from Nizamabad local Authorities constituency will be conducted on October 9 and counting of votes will be done on October 12.

The Election Commission of India issued a notification in this regard on Friday. Under the Covid-19 guidelines issued by the state government and the ministry of home affairs, the polling process will be completed by October 14.

Following the disqualification of sitting MLC R. Bhupathi Reddy, who turned a TRS rebel, the byelection is necessitated.

The EC had issued notification for byelection on March 12 and set March 23 as the last date for withdrawals of nominations.

In a surprise move, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's daughter and former Nizamabad MP K. Kavitha is in the MLC byelection fray as the TRS nominee, Mohan Reddy (Congress) and P. Laxminarayana (BJP) are also in the fray.

Byelection polling should have been conducted on April 7, but due to the public health emergency, the polling process was postponed.

The EC has extended the polling process for 60 and 45 days further on its May 22 and July 6 notifications. Following inputs from the Chief Electoral

Officer of Telangana state, the EC has given nod to complete the byelection process.

Model Code of Conduct immediately came into force in the Nizamabad local Authorities constituency. As per the Covid-19 guidelines, all persons related to the election process should wear face masks during the MLC byelection process.

Thermal scanning and sanitisers will be provided during the election process. To maintain social distancing, huge halls will be utilised during the polling and counting of votes. It is also directed that more vehicles would be used for polling and security personnel to protect from the Coronavirus.

S. P. BALASUBRAHMANYAM | 1947 - 2020

A golden voice falls silent

ANUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN | DC CHENNAI, SEPT. 25

The celebrated playback singer, who enthralled movie fans with over 40,000 songs in 16 languages and lent his voice to several matinee idols on screen, strode the world of film music for more than five decades. Remarkably, his voice never lost its timbre with age and he was busy almost up to the day he was admitted to a hospital in Chennai.

A winner of six national awards, Shripathi Panditha-dradyula Balasubrahmanyam, more readily identified by three letters SPB by the film fraternity and millions of fans, was born in Nellore in 1946. His father Sambamurthy was a Harikatha artiste who had also acted in plays. Though SPB developed an interest in music at a very young age, he was also interested in academics. He enrolled in JNTU, Anantapur, to pursue his engineering and for some reasons had to drop out of college. He joined as associate member of the Institution of Engineers, Chennai, and pursued his passion of music and started performing in music competitions. He was adjudged the best singer at a competition by musicians S.P. Kodandapani and Ghantasala who were on the jury panel. Kodandapani later became his mentor and the rest is history.

Balasubrahmanyam made his debut as a playback singer on December 15, 1966, with the song *Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna* composed by his guru Kodandapani in a Telugu movie. After recording a Kannada song, he made his debut in Tamil with the number *Athaanodu Ippadi Irundhu*. *Eththanai Naalaachu*, a duet with L.R. Eswari in M.S. Viswanathan's composition for the film *Hotel Ramba*, but unfortunately the film was never released. A duet with P. Susheela, *Iyarkai Ennum Ilaya Kannni* in the 1969 film *Shanti Nilayam*, featuring Gemini Ganesh and Kanchana was a big hit.

Industry pundits recall that SPB was personally selected by the iconic star M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) to sing a song for his production venture *Adimai Penn*, featuring him and late CM Jayalalitha and directed by K. Shankar. The song was *Aayiram Nilave Vaa*, which took SPB to dizzy heights.

A time soon came when he was singing for the likes of MGR, Sivaji Ganesan and Gemini Ganesan in M.S. Viswanathan's compositions on par with top playback singers like T.M. Soundararajan and P.B. Srinivas. He also recorded songs with all top women singers like P. Susheela, S. Janaki, Vani Jayaram and L.R. Eswari. Thus began the SPB era. In Telugu, he was

singing for N.T. Rama Rao, Akkineni Nageswara Rao, Krishna and Sobhan Babu. Balasubrahmanyam's association with Ilayaraja began even before the maestro came to the industry. In their early days, SPB used to sing in towns and villages all over south India and Ilayaraja, then an unknown harmonium and guitar player, accompanied him and played in his concerts. Donning several hats as a singer, music director, actor, voice artiste and film producer, SPB worked predominantly in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi and Malayalam. He won six national film awards for best male playback singer for his works in four different languages — Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Hindi — besides 25 Nandi Awards from Andhra Pradesh for his work in Telugu cinema and numerous other state awards from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka governments. Without a background in classical music, he had to toil in rendering the famous songs in *Sankarabharanam* which were in high classical notes after KVM chose him over ace playback and classical singers like K.J. Yesudas and Balamuralikrishna.

He had successful collaborations with Ilayaraja and S. Janaki and the trio's songs were a huge hit from late 1970s and throughout 1980s. SPB and Raja won national awards together for their collaborations in films like *Saagara Sangamam* in 1983, *Swathi Muthyam* in 1986 and *Rudraveena* in 1988.

SPB's rose to prominence in Bollywood started right from 1989 when he sang for Salman Khan for the film *Maine Pyar Kiya*. Besides winning many awards, Balasubrahmanyam continued as the "romantic singing voice" on the soundtracks of Khan's films for almost a decade. SPB was identified as Salman Khan's voice in the '90s and he consolidated his position as an Indian playback singer.

In the '90s, he worked with other composers like Vidyasagar, S.A. Rajkumar, Deva and M.M. Keeravani and his collaboration with AR Rahman turned out to be a bigger hit. ARR and SPB joined hands right from the former's debut film *Roja*, *July Maadham*, *Pudhiya Mugam*, *Kizhaku Cheemayile*, *Duet* and *Minsara Kanavu*, and the last one fetched him the sixth national award for *Thanga Thamarai Magale*.

SPB directed music in 46 films in four south languages. Some notable works are *Padamati Sandhya Ragam* and *Thurpu Velle Railu*. SPB has always been a lucky mascot for Rajinikanth's intro songs. The ace singer's last few renderings include *Petta's Marana Mass* and *Chumma Kizhi* from *Darbar* composed by Anirudh. SPB also acted in 76 films, making him a multi-faceted singer.

For someone with no formal training in classical music, the heights SPB scaled were not something that even well-trained singers could reach



SPB with legendary Ghantasala

'Balu', fondly called by many of his friends such as Ilayaraja, was born on June 4, in Nellore in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh

He made his debut as a playback singer on December 15 with *Sri Sri Marayada Ramanna* in a Telugu movie, composed by his guru Kodandapani



Susheela and SPB recording one of their memorable duets

He won his first national award for the Telugu movie *Sankarabaranam* for his song *Omkaara Naadanu*

'80s: SPB had successful collaborations with Ilayaraja and S. Janaki and the trio's songs were a huge hit from late 1970s and throughout 1980s.



SPB with other musicians and actors

His duet with P. Susheela, *Iyarkai Ennum Ilaya Kannni* in film *Shanti Nilayam*, featuring Gemini Ganesh and Kanchana was a big hit. The song *Aayiram Nilave Vaa*, in *Adimai Penn*, starring MGR took SPB to dizzy heights



SPB performing on stage



SPB won his second national award for the Hindi movie *Ek Duuje Ke Liye*



SPB bagged two national awards for his songs in the Telugu movies *Sagara Sangamam* and *Rudraveena*

SPB gets the Padma award from Prez Prathiba Patil



SPB receiving a memento from Prime Minister Modi

TOP 10 TELUGU HITS OF SPB

1. *Omkaara Nadanu Sandhana* (1979, Sankarabharanam)
2. *Vedam Anuvuvuna* (1983, Saagara Sangamam)
3. *Sirimalle Neeve Virajallu Kaave* (1977, Pantulamma, Telugu)
4. *Abhinava Thaaravo Naa Abhimana Thaaravo* (1978, Sivaranjani)
5. *Gajje Ghallu Mantunte* (1976, Siri Siri Muvva)
6. *O Bangaru Rangula Chilaka* (1975, Thota Ramudu)
7. *Medante Meda kaadu* (1968, Sukha Dukhalu)
8. *Thanivi theeralede Naa Manasu Nindalede* (1972, Gooduputani)
9. *Ravi Varmake Andani Oke Oka* (1979, Ravanude Ramudaithe)
10. *Nenoka Prema Pipasini* (1978, Indra Dhanassu)

SPB has also given voice for various stars including Kamal Haasan, Rajinikanth, Salman Khan, Vishnuvardhan, Nagesh, Gemini, Arjun, Raghuvaran and Karthik in various languages. He also dubbed for Ben Kingsley in the Telugu-dubbed version of the film *Gandhi*.



SPB AS AN ACTOR
Films in three languages. Notable films as an actor include *Keladi Kannani*, *Sigaram*, *Thiruda Thiruda*, *Kadhalan*, and *Naanayam*. He was also part of some TV serials and shows.

SPB HAS ALSO BEEN A MUSIC DIRECTOR
films in four south languages. Some of the notable works among them are *Padamati Sandhya Ragam* and *Thurpu Velle Railu*.

The singer was presented with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan

SPB won the sixth national award for song *Thanga Thamarai* in the Tamil movie *Minsara Kanavu*

SPB bagged the national award for his Kannada song in the movie *Sangeetha Sagara Ganayogi Panchakshara Gavai*

HIS COLLABORATION WITH A.R. RAHMAN
turned out to be a huge hit. ARR and SPB joined hands right from the former's debut film *Roja* through *July Maadham*, *Pudhiya Mugam*, *Kizhaku Cheemayile*, *Duet* and *Minsara Kanavu*



IN THE unfortunate demise of Shri SP Balasubrahmanyam, our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with his family and admirers. *Om Shanti*

NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister

Prime Minister Modi presenting a memento to SPB on Sankranti to mark the golden jubilee of his singing career in New Delhi on Jan. 16, 2016.

SURESH KAVIRAYANI | DC

1 JANAKI FIRST SPOTTED
BALU: S.P. Balasubrahmanyam wanted to study engineering and join government service. That was the wish of his father. Balu, as he was affectionately known, was not interested in singing for films, and had not learnt music though he used to participate in singing competitions. When he was studying engineering in Anantapur, he participated in a competition in Gudur, where the chief guest was the famous playback singer S. Janaki. Balu won the first prize, and Janaki asked him to try singing in films as she found something special in his voice. He replied that he did not know music. To this, Janaki said she too did not know music but was singing in films. That's the first time that SPB's talent was spotted by the film industry.

2 KODANDAPANI THE GOD-FATHER | Balu followed her advice, reached Madras (now Chennai) and tried singing but was rejected as his voice was considered not mature enough. He was hardly 18 at that time. After two years, he participated in a singing competition in Madras, organised

by the Andhra Social Cultural Club. The judges were the renowned playback singer Ghantasala and popular music directors Pendyala Nageswara Rao and Susarla Dakshinamurthy. After the first day, an elderly person who had watched the competition came up to Balu and asked him if he would sing in films. Balu again replied, "No, I am not interested." The elderly man repeated his question and Balu asked him who he was. The old man replied: "My name is Kodandapani." Having composed music for a couple of films by that time, Kodandapani asked Balu to come to his studio and introduced him to producer Bhavanarayana. The producer also felt that Balu's voice was not mature enough. Balu returned to his hometown. One and a half years later, Kodandapani called Balu again and got him to sing for 'Maryada Ramanna' in 1967. That was not to be his debut, however. Producer and writer M.S. Reddy asked Balu to sing for the dubbed film, 'Kala Chakram', which was released first, in 1966. He sang all the

songs in that film, and Maryada Ramanna released only later.

The six crucial turns in Balu's life



Veteran singer P. B. Srinivas kisses SPB.

songs in that film, and Maryada Ramanna released only later.

3 SEPARATE VOICES FOR NTR
AND ANR | Balu sang more than 40,000 songs in about 14 languages. He was one of the busiest singers of his time, and used to sing for top actors of the generation like N.T. Rama Rao, A. Nageswara Rao, Krishna, Sobhan Babu, Krishnam Raju and the next

generation of actors like Chiranjeevi, Balakrishna, Venkatesh and Nagarjuna. For all the actors he sang with his own voice, but when it came to ANR and NTR he used to change his voice to match that of the actor. Even for comedy actors like Allu Ramalingiah and Raja Babu, Balu used to change his voice.

4 13 HINDI SONGS IN ONE DAY
Balu's first Hindi film as a

playback singer was *Ek Duuje Ke Liye* (1981). L.V. Prasad produced the film which was the remake of the Telugu 'Maro Charitra'. Balachander directed the Hindi remake too. Both Balachander and Prasad wanted Balu to sing all the songs in the Hindi version, but music directors Lakshmikanth-Pyarelal were reluctant. After SPB sang a solo, they liked his voice and continued with him. At one time, SPB recorded 13 songs for them in a day. He was among the best known playback singers in Mumbai at that time, as Mohammad Rafi, Kishore Kumar and Mukesh had all passed away. SPB got the national award for his song in *Ek Duuje Ke Liye*.

5 SANKARABHARANAM GOT HIM INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION | In Balu's long and illustrious career, *Sankarabharanam* was a milestone. K. Viswanath was the director and he initially wanted veteran classical singer Mangalampalli Balamurali Krishna to render the songs which were based on Carnatic Music. Music director K.V.

Mahadevan, however, kept his faith in Balu. The songs were a huge hit and are considered classics today. The film released in 1980 and changed Telugu cinema. SPB won a national award for his song in the film. The songs of the film are considered to be among among Balu's best. The film was screened in international film festivals. He and K. Viswanath continued their collaborations in films like *Sagara Sangamam*, *Siri Vennela*, *Saptapadi* and *Struthilayalu*.

6 THE ONLY CONTROVERSY WITH KRISHNA | In Balu's career of more than 50 years, he was never involved in any controversy either professionally or on the personal front, but for one. Balu sang for Krishna in many films but there was a break in between when the actor picked new singers. Producers and music directors requested both of them to put their differences aside and work together. Lyric writer Veturi Sundarama Murthy mediated between the two. Later, Balu went to Krishna's studio and met him there. From then on, he sang for Krishna.

Condolence messages pour in for SPB

From Page 1

After his demise was announced by the hospital, condolence messages poured in from all over with President Ram Nath Kovind leading the nation in paying tributes to the musical genius, who had sung over 40,000 songs in several languages during a career spanning over half a century. The President said: "In the passing of music legend S.P. Balasubrahmanyam Indian music has lost one of its most melodious voices."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a post on Twitter: "Our cultural world is a lot poorer. A household name across India, his melodious voice and music enthralled audiences for decades."

Governors Tamilisai Soundararajan of Telangana state and Biswabhusan Harichandan (AP), Chief Ministers K. Chandrasekhar Rao and Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy were among those who condoled the death of SPB. Describing SPB as 'brother', Dr Soundararajan wondered if the man born in Telugu soil and earned fame in Tamil Nadu had been called by the heavens to sing there.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami described the singer as God's gift to the Indian musical world in the 20th century.

SHORT TAKES

92 IPS OFFICERS TRANSFERRED IN MP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 25

Madhya Pradesh government on Friday effected a major reshuffle of police officers ahead of upcoming by-elections in 28 Assembly constituencies, schedule of which may be declared on September 29.

As many as 92 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers were transferred in the reshuffle exercise.

The reshuffle in the police department comes hours after the Election Commission announced that a decision on holding by-elections to vacant Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies in different states would be taken on September 29.

Congress has taken strong exception to the decision by the Shivraj government to go in for large scale transfer of police officers immediately after Election Commission indicated to announce schedule of by-elections in 28 assembly constituencies in MP after four days.

"The Election Commission indicated the schedule of by-elections in 28 assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh would be announced on September 29. That means the model code of conduct for polls has come into force informally in the state. The state government violated the model code of conduct by effecting a massive reshuffle in the police department. We have lodged a complaint with the Election Commission seeking revocation of the transfer orders", Congress spokesman here J.P. Dhanopia said.

The BJP, however, denied any violation of election rules by the state government by shuffling the police officers.

"First of all, the Election Commission has not announced the schedule so far and hence, model code of conduct is not in force in Madhya Pradesh now. Besides, model code of conduct is only enforced in districts where assembly by-elections are held. Congress is trying to mislead the people," BJP spokesman here Rajneesh Agrawal said.

● **CONGRESS HAS** taken strong exception to the decision by the Shivraj government to go in for large-scale transfer of police officers.

TIGRESS FOUND DEAD IN MP RESERVE FOREST

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 25

A 3-year-old tigress was found dead in Badhavgarh reserve forest in Madhya Pradesh, a senior forest officer said on Friday.

The decomposed body of the big cat was found in Damokhar buffer range in Bandhavgarh tiger reserve late on Thursday.

"A patrol party of forest officials spotted the carcass of the tigress in a drain in Damokhar buffer range. The body had several injury marks and was infested by maggots. The veterinary doctors suggested that the carcass may be 2-3 days old", field director of Bandhavgarh tiger reserve Vincent Raheem said.

Prima facie, the cause of death may be due to territorial fights since pug marks of another tiger were found at the spot, he added.

However, the exact cause of death could be ascertained after postmortem, he said.

This was the fourth such incident in Bandhavgarh tiger reserve in the last five months. Three tigers died in territorial fights in the reserve forest in April.

CBI begins probe into Life Mission's deal with Dubai's Red Crescent

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 25

In a development that has annoyed the ruling LDF in Kerala, the Central Bureau of Investigation on Friday initiated a probe into Life Mission's financial dealings with Dubai-based Red Crescent.

The CBI probe comes close on the heels of the state Cabinet on Wednesday asking the state Vigilance and Anti Corruption Bureau to

probe the Life Mission allegations.

The BJP and the Congress had alleged that the state government had ordered the vigilance probe to buy time.

The Central Bureau of Investigation filed an FIR in a special court in Ernakulam on Friday in connection with the allegations related to the financial deal.

The case was registered on the basis of a complaint filed by Congress MLA Anil

Akkara who alleged that corruption to the tune of ₹9 crore was involved in the construction of 140 flats in Wadakkancherry (his constituency) under the Life Mission project.

The project had run into a controversy after one of the key accused in the gold smuggling case reportedly said that ₹1 crore found in her bank locker was the "commission" she received for clinching the construction project for Unitac Builders.

Challenges Nitish face include Coronavirus, unemployment

Polls are crucial for BJP after setback in Jharkhand and Maharashtra

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, SEPT. 25

The Assembly elections in Bihar, the first amid the Coronavirus pandemic, will be held in three phases in October and November.

Primary challenges faced by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar led NDA would be the Coronavirus crisis, unemployment, law and order scenario and flood situation. He is trying to retain power in Bihar for the fourth term this year.

The ruling NDA and the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan are the two major political alliances contesting against each other. The NDA is trying to reach out to its voters with "Vikas" (development) and "15 years of good governance versus 15-years of jungle raj" narrative against the Opposition parties.

Bihar election is crucial for the NDA especially BJP as it suffered massive electoral setbacks in two states — Jharkhand and Maharashtra in 2019.

"Our party workers are excited after the dates were announced by the election commission. We are confident that the NDA will win more than 220 seats but the grand alliance will be completely wiped out after the polls as they neither have a leader nor policies for the development of the state", BJP spokesperson Nikhil Anand said.

Bihar BJP in-charge Bhupendra Yadav in a



A worker removes a hoarding of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna on Friday, as per model code of conduct following announcement of Bihar Assembly election dates.

tweet said that "the results of the Lok Sabha will be repeated during the Assembly elections this year. The NDA is going to win this election with a three-fourth majority".

Nitish Kumar-led NDA had come to power in Bihar after defeating 15 years of Lalu-Rabri regime in 2005.

During 2015 Assembly elections the JD(U) along with RJD and Congress had formed a grand alliance and defeated the BJP with a huge margin. However, in July 2017 after the CBI registered corruption cases against RJD chief Lalu Yadav and his son Tejashwi Yadav, Nitish Kumar returned to

NDA and formed a government with the support of BJP.

In 2019, Lok Sabha polls the BJP in alliance with JD(U) and LJP had clinched 39 out of 40 seats in the state.

Meanwhile, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav in his reaction said that his party's contest in the

elections is with BJP. He said that "people are not happy with Nitish Kumar and they will get rid of this government after the polls".

Tejashwi Yadav and his elder brother Tej Pratap also led a massive protest against farm bills, which were passed in parliament recently.

Kerala up in arms over farm Bills

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 25

Farmer organisations affiliated to the Left parties held protests across Kerala on Friday against farm Bills passed by the Parliament and to express solidarity with the nationwide agitation called by the Kisan Coordination Committee.

A satyagraha was organised by Left-led farmer organisations in front of the Kerala Raj Bhavan here. All India Kisan Sabha national vice-president S. Ramachandran Pillai who inaugurated the protest, accused the Centre of systematically bringing in big corporates into the farm sector.

The farm Bills were passed without detailed discussions in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha

and without discussing the matter with the states and farmers' organisations.

Kisan Sabha national secretary and chairman of the joint Kisan Council Sathyan Mokeri lashed out at the Centre for passing the 'anti-farmer' Bills.

The Kisan organisations organised satyagraha in front of Central government offices in 253 centres across the state.

The Kerala Cabinet on Wednesday had discussed a proposal on challenging the farm Bills in the Supreme Court.

The proposal is being vetted by the state law department.

The state government says the Centre passed the Bills without even discussing with the states and it is against the federal principles of the country.

Coronavirus toll may cross 1-lakh mark in a week

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

India's death figures due to coronavirus continue to rise on a daily basis taking overall fatalities to 92,290 till Friday with 1,141 new deaths recorded in the last 24 hours. Going by this rate, the toll may cross one lakh mark in another week or so.

The total number of Covid-19 cases in the country has crossed 58.18 lakh with 86,052 new case. India registered the highest number of tests in a single day with nearly 15 lakhs tests conducted in the last 24 hours.

Over 47.56 lakh patients have recovered so far out of which 81,177 patients recovered in the last 24 hours and the national recovery rate now stands at 81.74%.

Of the total new cases detected, 75% are found to be concentrated in ten states/UTs. Maharashtra had more than 19,000 new cases while Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka contributed more than 7,000.

Similarly, 73% of the new recovered cases have been reported from ten States/UTs — Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Delhi, Kerala, West Bengal and Assam. Maharashtra continues to lead with more than 17,000 new recoveries. Andhra Pradesh contributed more than 8,000 to the single day recoveries.

Meanwhile, top medical journal The Lancet in its editorial said India is facing a dangerous period with regard to Covid-19.

"The rapidly growing case numbers, alongside the continuing relaxation of restrictions, are creating an atmosphere of fatalism mingled with false optimism that undermines effective use of non-pharmaceutical interventions such as masks and physical distancing. The epidemic in India is far from over, with a potentially huge burden of mortality and morbidity to come unless public health measures are used and adhered to. Without clear and honest communication of the risks of Covid-19 to the population, stemming the epidemic will be impossible," the editorial said.

Questioning the transparency of data provided by government, The Lancet said that the Indian government reports a case fatality rate which is much lower than the reported rate in other countries, but it is difficult to know if the numbers are comparable.

It added the authorities are presenting the current situation in India with a "too positive spin" which not only clouds reality but also hampers vital public health initiatives.

"Perpetuating unrealistic claims or failing to honestly

TARUN GOGOI IN ICU AFTER DROP IN OXYGEN LEVEL

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, SEPT. 25

The Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Randeep Guleria on Friday reviewed the health condition of former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi who has been admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) at the Guwahati Medical College Hospital (GMCH), following a drop in his oxygen saturation level. He had tested Coronavirus positive last month.

Informing that Guleria reviewed the health of veteran Congress leader through a video conference, Assam health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told reporters that Guleria expressed satisfaction with the line of treatment of GMCH. He suggested some additional tests for Gogoi. He will also send a faculty from AIIMS to look after the former chief minister and if necessary he would be shifted to AIIMS, the minister said.

Assam health minister, principal secretary of the health department Samir K. Sinha, Lok Sabha MP and Gogoi's son Gaurav Gogoi also attended the video conference.

According to reports, the 85-year-old leader, who was admitted at a private cabin of the hospital, was shifted to ICU to monitor his health effectively. His condition was stated to be stable now.

Assam Congress president Ripun Bora also visited the hospital on Thursday to enquire about the health condition of veteran Congress leader.

Gogoi, who was chief minister for three consecutive terms from 2001 till 2016, had tested Covid-19 positive on August 26, following which he was admitted to the GMCH. The Assam government has constituted an eight-member team of doctors to monitor his health parameters regularly.

report negative news creates uncertainty among the public and health-care professionals, discouraging people from taking preventive action or taking public health messages seriously. India has the expertise in medicine, public health, research, and manufacturing to lead the nation through the Covid-19 pandemic. To capitalise on these attributes, the country's leaders must respect scientific evidence, expert commentary, and academic freedom, and not provide false optimism," the editorial said.

Maha Deputy CM pays tribute to Pt. Upadhyay, deletes tweet later

- **REMEMBERING UPADHYAY**, Pawar wrote in Marathi, 'Tributes to the founder of Jana Sangh and senior leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay on his birth anniversary.'
- **CHIEF MINISTER** Uddhav Thackeray also offered floral tribute to Upadhyay at his private residence 'Matoshre'.

paid tribute to Upadhyay.

Remembering Upadhyay, Pawar wrote in Marathi, "Tributes to the founder of Jana Sangh and senior leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay on his birth anniversary."

However, after an hour, the tweet was deleted by Ajit Pawar, which raised several eyebrows. And Ajit Pawar's explanation for deletion of the tweet also insinuated that it was done on the instructions of his uncle

and NCP chief Sharad Pawar.

When asked why he wrote tribute to Upadhyay and then deleted it, he said, "We speak good about people who are no more and that is why I had tweeted. But in politics, we have to listen to our seniors." However, he did not elaborate on it further.

Meanwhile, Thackeray offered floral tribute to Upadhyay at his private residence 'Matoshre'.

Modi likely to address UNGA today

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address the United Nations General Assembly during the General Debate on Saturday. He is presently scheduled as the first speaker.

Since the UNGA this year is being held in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is being conducted mostly virtually.

Prime Minister's address will therefore be via a pre-recorded video statement broadcast at the UNGA hall

in New York.

Some of the priority issues for India during 75th session of United Nations General Assembly are to promote strengthening of global action on counter-terrorism and India will push for more transparency in the process of listing and delisting of entities and individuals in sanction committees.

India is seeking inclusive and responsible solutions for international peace and security, effective response to international terrorism, NORMS (New Orientation

for a Reformed Multilateral System), technology for all and streamlining of peace-keeping.

Being one of the largest troop-contributing countries, India wants to engage intensively in finalising of mandates for UN peace-keeping missions.

While looking at promoting its role as a net health service provider, India will highlight contribution to global cooperation against Covid-19 by aiding more than 150 countries and as a pharmacy to the world.

MODI, SUGA REITERATE COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE COOPERATION

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 25

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held a telephonic conversation with the new PM of Japan Suga Yoshihide during which the two leaders reiterated their commitment to promote cooperation. During their 25 minute conversation, PM Suga expressed

commitment to work with India towards achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

"Had a very good conversation with PM Suga Yoshihide. We exchanged views on the progress in our relationship in the last few years, and the future direction of our Special Strategic and Global Partnership," Modi said.

DECCAN Chronicle

26 SEPTEMBER 2020

Dig in for the long haul: Chinese not going soon

We may be in for a very long haul in eastern Ladakh and perhaps across the entire LAC: the standoff with China that began in May isn't ending anytime soon, and the nation had better get used to it. While the two countries agreed, at the sixth round of the corps commanders' talks on Monday, to stop sending more troops to the frontline, there is no real way each side can verify what the other is doing, besides satellite imagery which is often misleading. India and China also agreed, in a "candid and in-depth exchange of views", to "refrain from unilaterally changing the ground situation" and "avoid taking any action that may complicate the situation". Such pious sentiments, issued a day after the talks, are all very well, but appear completely out of sync with the reality on the ground. It should be noted that even if China and India don't send any additional troops to the LAC, the People's Liberation Army has 50,000 soldiers there, with heavy artillery, tanks, armoured carriers, and the Indian Army has a matching number of troops and equipment. The important thing is that there wasn't an iota of progress on the disengagement process: with the Chinese side refusing to budge on withdrawal of its forces from the Finger area and elsewhere, and go back to its pre-April 2020 positions — despite the 14-hour-long negotiations, attended for the first time by a MEA joint secretary.

After foreign ministers S. Jaishankar and Wang Yi agreed in Moscow on a five-point action plan to reduce tensions, Monday's agreement not to engage in "escalatory behaviour" is perhaps the first significant step forward, but one has to wait and see if it holds for a reasonable period. To reiterate, one can only hope for small steps at a time. The two armies have to remain dug in across the harsh terrain in sub-zero temperatures through the winter, and perhaps beyond. India's only advantage is that having occupied the Kailash range's strategic heights overlooking the Spanggung Gap's entry points in Chushul on August 29-31, the PLA can't take it by surprise as it did in May-June. The Chinese side is demanding that India withdraw from these heights, which New Delhi has rightly rejected, saying as the first transgressions were by China. The PLA is preventing Indian Army patrols, it has to make the first move to disengage.

There are fears if the Chinese can't be forced to leave soon, the change in the LAC's alignment might become permanent, to India's disadvantage. That is why the Army must be in readiness, prepared to retaliate for any Chinese action, including by firing if required, and remain watchful for mischief elsewhere on the LAC, such as Arunachal Pradesh. The Chinese are masters at the long game, in tiring out their opponents, and India needs a lot of patience. It will be costly too, as our economy is weaker than China's, and the additional spending on defence is something we can ill afford, especially now. But it must be done, we have no alternative.

Deano transformed cricket

Tragic as the death of the Victorian cricketer Dean Jones in India is, his emotional ties to the subcontinent may have been destined to end this way. The Australian batsman helped transform the modern game by showing the way in a more energetic mode of playing as batsman, bowler or fielder in the limited-overs game in which each run seems to matter more towards defining victory or defeat. A positive attitude towards batting in a team's cause and raw courage in standing up to the challenge of pace like that of the West Indies in their heyday enabled him to leave a grand imprint on the game, especially in an epochal World Cup victory in India under Allan Border in 1987 that reshaped the history of Australian cricket.

Not many foreigners of Dean Jones' time took to the subcontinent. A liberal-minded Jones was different and he sought out assignments in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan as a commentator. After a gaffe on air in likening a bearded South African batsman's appearance to that of "a terrorist", Jones reconciled to only being a part of studio cricket shows. In his 'Professor Deano' persona, he used his head for figures to present cricket in quirky and engaging fashion and carved a niche in the field of the "talking heads" of sport.

A brave Jones may have died deaf very early in his career as he dominated the opening parts of Tied Test II at Chepauk in Chennai in September 1986 when he compiled a mammoth 210 in 503 minutes of sapping heat and humidity, besides the discomfort of the foul smell emanating from the polluted Cooum River flowing nearby. Jones was so dehydrated that he was thrown into a bathtub filled with ice cubes in his hotel room to cool him down and then dragged to a hot shower to make him feel "human" and fit to resume batting, but only to be put on saline drips in a hospital that night. Alas! a stroke took him in his Mumbai hotel room at the relatively young age of 59.

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ADITYA SINHA
Editor

K. SUDHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234

Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasgiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208

Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904

Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Avthalipally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433

Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemmudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580

Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/48/50/51; Adv: Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325

Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-43460500; Fax: 080-22960552.

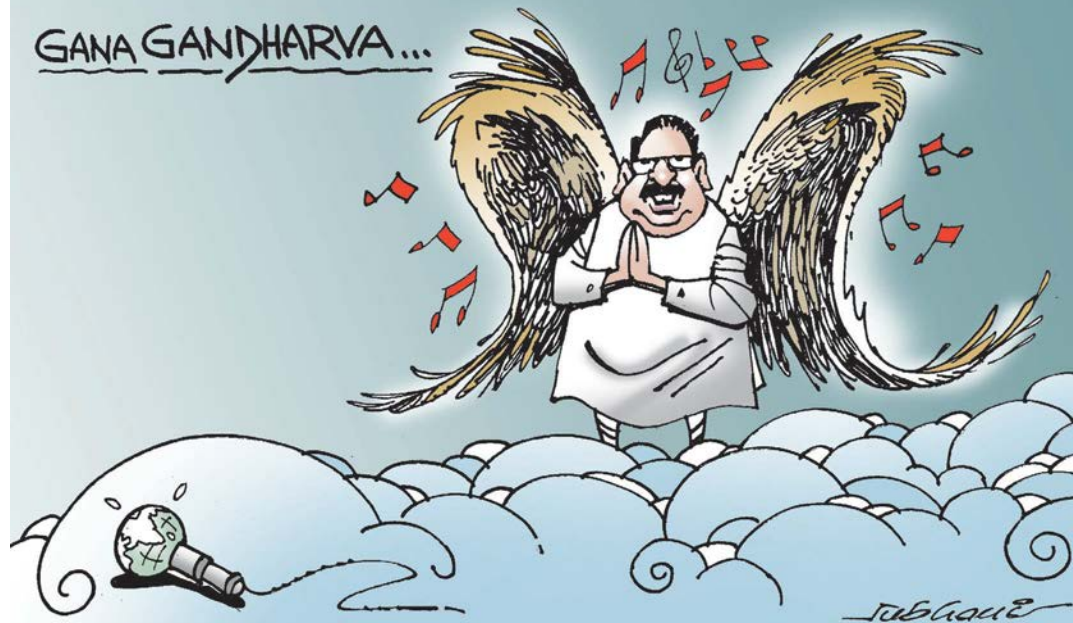
Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255

Kochi: No.3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloorkadavanthara Road, Ennakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph's Press, TC 15/1040, Cotton Hill, Thycud (PO), Thiruvananthapuram 695 014

Kozhikode: Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001, Fax : 0495 4019 018
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Subhani



Can fury over farm bills trigger wider Opp. stir?



Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near

For the first time in India, a motion of no-confidence was moved against the deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha earlier this week. It's another matter that it was rejected. To save the two agriculture bills — on which Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears to have staked so much — from possibly falling in the Upper House, Harivansh, as the presiding officer, appeared to shabbily disregard the rules, leading to the Opposition parties expressing their mistrust in him.

Mr Harivansh stubbornly refused the Opposition's demand for a formal vote to test whether the government actually had a majority to pass the intended legislation. It's quite clear that to press for a vote is no longer your right even inside the Parliament of India. All these years formal voting has been permitted the minute any member in either House has demanded a "division".

On this occasion, however, the deputy chairman chose to impose voice voting when the House was in a state of turmoil caused by stiff opposition to the rules being imposed by him even by parties that normally vote with the government. The deputy chairman no doubt acted to help the intended legislation sail through on the strength of lung power. It's clear that if the presiding deity is with you, that's practically nine-tenths of the law.

These were truly "historic" bills, to quote the PM, in the sense that they will make history. The laws that these will bring about have the intent of deepening capitalism in

agriculture by slowly strangulating the long-standing MSP regime — evidently a bad old "socialist" construct — through which the government offers an assured minimum price to farmers to prevent them from going to the wall. The path will be cleared for businessmen to do all the food-grain procurement to bring farm produce to cities at prices that the market dictates.

The effect of these laws may take time to come to fruition. For the time being, the government has hastily announced even an increase in the MSP to placate farmers who are on the warpath. But when the desired results begin to kick in with the passage of time, Indian agriculture, which has been described as a "gamble on the monsoon", will also carry the additional feature of being a gamble on the market. The fate of approximately 50 per cent of the population that subsists on agriculture — about 70 million people — will be determined eventually by how the stock market, the money market and the foreign trade market are faring.

Naturally, bedlam ensued of a kind not seen before in the Rajya Sabha. To hide the shame, the live telecast of Rajya Sabha TV was abruptly cut. The microphones of the Opposition members were switched off. It was a blatant effort to ensure that people do not get to see the methods being deployed on the government's behalf in Parliament. It was darkness at noon that was on display.

If China or North Korea had a multi-party system and a real Parliament,

this is what might have been expected. But they don't. So that makes us a special category of "democracy", a foretaste of the New India that is being promised as India ostentatiously lays claim to being the "vishwa guru".

Before Mr Harivansh announced a voice vote, it seemed that the ruling party's opponents might just have the upper hand in terms of numbers as some of the government's regular allies from among the Opposition parties were switching sides on this particular vote since it concerned millions of farmers, and they didn't wish to be seen ranged against the growers of food, whose condition is pitiable at the best of times.

Year after year, we have seen gripping images of farmers casting away the healthiest-looking onions and tomatoes — fruits of their toil — on the roads instead of selling them to traders at ridiculous market-determined prices because the MSP regime does not cover such crops. What if the MSP went and rice and wheat now had to be flung away in the wind by our agriculturists?

A defeat for the government on the agriculture bills in Parliament topping a farmers' agitation gripping Punjab. Haryana and several other parts of North India would have been a signal event, coming on top of the news of 24 per cent negative rate of growth, the worst among all countries of the world, shooting Covid-19 figures (again the worst in the world), and China sitting on our territory in Ladakh, barely 200 km out of Leh. The looming defeat

Mr Harivansh stubbornly refused the Opposition's demand for a formal vote... It's quite clear that to press for a vote is no longer your right even inside the Parliament of India

had to be prevented at any cost, and Mr Harivansh offered his services, although he is not from the BJP-RSS stable.

What is important is that the no-confidence move against the deputy chairman was signed by as many as 12 non-NDA parties, including several that have loyally supported the Narendra Modi government for a long time, behaving as a loyal Opposition. These decided to make common cause with the government's (and the BJP's) inveterate opponents — the Congress, the Left parties, the RJD and AIADMK, and lately the Trinamul Congress.

The flash unity and loss of faith has come on the heels of the Akali Dal, the BJP's oldest remaining ally (the Shiv Sena departed last year), withdrawing its Cabinet minister from the Modi government. Although the Akalis have not quit the ruling alliance at the Centre, and it is still unclear if they will so, for many years the two parties have had a fairly tense relationship as partners.

What is fundamental to the unusual Akali Dal decision to withdraw itself from the Union Cabinet, catching the BJP wholly unawares, and the unprecedented events in Rajya Sabha, is the spontaneity seen in the protest of farmers in various parts of North India.

The government is doing its best to head off a nationwide action by farmers by offering unrealistic promises and announcing a hike in MSP for certain crops. But it is clear as day that the continuance of MSP runs against the logic of the two laws cleared by Parliament. Not for a long time in the country have we seen a coming together in protest by a robust constituency even as legislation was in the making. The test of the Opposition will be if it can translate its actions in the legislature with channelling a wide variety of people's grievances on the ground.

LETTERS

RTC BUS SERVICES

Many people were suffering without public transport for six months. Autorickshaw drivers were fleecing commuters (RTC buses back on roads after 6 months, DC, Sept. 24). Let people take precautions while travelling by covering their face with masks and minimizing risks while attending other works.

John Yapral

J&K REALITY BITES

The editorial (*Reality bites from J&K, but is gout listening?*, DC, Sept. 25) was praiseworthy. It contains facts giving good suggestions for the future of Jammu and Kashmir. About Covid pandemic, every point mentioned is suggestive. All those in the government who sincerely want to curb the pandemic must think on each point and give relief to the people living in cities and villages.

Farkhunda Ali Khan Vanasthalipuram

LOST A COLOSSUS

It is heart wrenching to hear of the death of the legendary S.P. Balasubrahmanyam. SPB is a colossus by his contribution to the music world. A singer, writer, composer, dubbing and mimicry artiste, actor, producer and anchor. He trained throughout his life. Music and SPB thrived together in the last six decades. His death is a huge loss.

G. Thirupathaiah Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

Delhi-Moscow direct Telex opened

BEIRUT, Sept. 25. King Hussein and Guerrilla chief Yasser Arafat have agreed to an immediate ceasefire throughout Jordan, the King announced on Amman Radio.

Sudanese President Jaafar Al-Nimeiry, head of Cairo by the Arab heads of state, read a statement on the radio from Mr Arafat confirming the ceasefire agreement.

Field Marshal Al-Majali ordered army, security and militia units to strictly respect the ceasefire and to give all possible assistance to the Red Cross to facilitate its humanitarian mission."

Saeed Naqvi

Wide Angle



BJP impunity in House stems from Opp. fear of exposure

With 303 seats in a House of 540 members, and only 37.36 per cent of the popular vote, the BJP can rush through bills with lightning speed, pummeling any effort at debate. How does this happen? After all, 237 members on the Opposition benches is not a negligible number.

The BJP's impatience with the Constitution is obvious but blame also lies with the Gandhi trio on two counts: neither have they been able to pull together a coalition with any punch, nor have they moved out of the way so that others can.

The salience given to the Gandhis by the media keeps them in the public eye as wishful thinkers with a determination to revive the Congress. This comes across as a massive roadblock in the way of any Opposition unity. They know that such a revival is impossible but harping on the belief serves a purpose: it obstructs opposition unity and sustains their relevance to no useful end. The media is content with the simplicity of the Tweedledum versus Tweedledee narrative.

In recent times, a story that has waffled out of the Gandhi enclosure is one of differences between them. Sonia Gandhi, with reliable retainers like Ahmed Patel is averse to rocking any boat. Status quo, uncomfortable

though it be, is about the best she sees for the brood in the given circumstances. Her listless politics is also a function of her indifferent health.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's status quoism derives from her personal anxieties, family problems and an inability to cope with responsibilities. Ask Kishori Lal Sharma, appointed years ago to nurse the "family burroughs" of Rae Bareilly and Amethi, and he will guardedly spill the beans. The poor fellow's Stan Hardy (as in Laurel and Hardy) moustache greyed waiting for Priyanka to address the "Congress volunteers". But Priyanka, like Godot, never showed up.

Rahul Gandhi, meanwhile, is being more assertive about beliefs he has long held and which approximate to the line Rajiv Gandhi enunciated at the 1985 Congress Centenary in Mumbai chastising the "power brokers". Is Rahul Gandhi looking for that kind of a platform?

In 1969, when his grandmother, Indira Gandhi, split the Congress away from the "power brokers", the regional satraps, the capitalists were, in a sense exposed. They eventually joined up with the RSS, Socialists in the Bihar movement of 1974 under the leadership of arch-Gandhian, Jayaprakash Narayan.

The 1969 split had a Left-Right

dimension to it because it was in the context of the Cold War. In the post Cold War world "Inequality" has emerged as the principal affliction of democracies where people's demands are dismissed as "populism". Crony capitalism thrives but no political party is allowed to find its feet if it intends to harness the discontent of the people who have borne the brunt of, say, the extended lockdown in India. There is a huge Left-of-Centre space for the Opposition to occupy. It does not have to be terribly ideological. All it has to do is to make available to the people social benefits such as health, education, housing, et cetera. Surely Rahul is aware of this opening.

Politics these days is at a standstill because of the lockdown, of course, but also because of what I call the "Eulalie" syndrome. This light-hearted diversion comes from Wodehouse. The resourceful Jeeves has come to the assistance of his master, Bertie Wooster, at a particularly challenging moment. Roderick Spode, the Earl of Sidcup, has become a permanent social menace in a country house which is Bertie's favourite haunt. How to cut down Spode's bombast? That is Bertie's challenge. Jeeves provides the panacea. Bertie has to sneak upto Spode and whisper, "I know all about Eulalie." Bertie fol-

lows Jeeves' advice. The result is electric. Spode becomes white as a sheet and collapses in the chair like a deflated balloon. It turns out that before Spode began to float in London's high society, he owned a store called Eulalie which sold lingerie known for its bras with bold designs. Eulalie, then is harmless blackmail. But the blackmail which has become the staple in contemporary politics is brutal.

After the BJP's stunning victory in UP in 2017, the Opposition, armed with data on electoral fraud, sought Sonia Gandhi's permission to hold a press conference. She refused to get involved in "controversies". Likewise, she backed away from "snoogate" which had both Modi and Amit Shah in difficulties.

Take a look at Lucknow. Jockeying has begun for the 10 Rajya Sabha seats from UP. Conventional wisdom concedes eight to the BJP and one to the SP. One would have expected the Opposition to jointly keep the BJP out on the solitary remaining seat. But individual party leaders are in an almighty state of funk just in case the Enforcement Directorate comes knocking at their door.

Even though the Opposition has a comfortable majority in the UP Upper House, the BJP rammed through nearly a hundred bills with-

out any vote. A petrified Akhilesh Yadav is hiding behind columns to avoid political leaders who are pressing him to approach the Supreme Court. What if Yogi Adityanath sets the dogs on him? In fact, Lucknow would appear to have been a rehearsal for the real show in Parliament.

In uniformed cities like New Delhi these examples of the ruling party's impunity, away from the media's critical glare, enhance an impression of the BJP's invincibility. Forgotten are dismal economic figures and a simple catalogue: the party is not in power in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Odisha, West Bengal, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Delhi. Just as your eye settles on these facts, *India Today* thrusts before you its poll results: Modi's approval ratings are 78 per cent. Like the Priest in Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, you walk away nodding your head, "What is the truth?" The climax, of course, is the audacity of ramming through bills in Parliament. Slowly what is being brought into focus is a need for a new Constitution.

The writer is a senior journalist and commentator based in New Delhi

IN BRIEF

Fire breaks out at Huawei office

Beijing: A huge fire broke out in southern China on Friday at an unfinished Huawei research facility, sending massive plumes of smoke over the industrial city of Dongguan. The blaze started at a Huawei building on Alishan Road, where the company is developing a research base, according to the city government. It was extinguished after 140 firefighters were called to the scene, the local fire brigade said in a separate statement. Footage broadcast online by state media channel CCTV showed dark clouds of smoke billowing out of a blue and white building near Songshan Lake. Huawei's spokesperson said the company could not yet provide details on the fire.

THAILAND SUES FACEBOOK TWITTER

Bangkok, Sept. 25: Thailand's government lodged complaints with police on Thursday against Facebook and Twitter, alleging they failed to comply with court orders to block content judged illegal under Thai law.

Minister of Digital Economy and Society Buddhipongse Punnakanta said at a news conference that it was the first time his ministry has taken such action against the social media companies under Thailand's Computer Crime Act.

It has prosecuted website and account owners and users in the past. The ministry filed the complaints at the police Technology Crime Suppression Division, where Buddhipongse said the companies had failed to meet 15-day deadlines issued by the courts to block hundreds of accounts. He said the targeted sites were banned because they contained illegal content related to online gambling, pornography, drugs or the monarchy, a highly sensitive subject.



French Prime Minister Jean Castex and French interior minister Gerald Darmanin arrive at the scene where several people were injured near the former offices of the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* following an attack by a man wielding a knife in Paris on Friday.

— AFP

Terror probe opened after 2 stabbed in Paris

Paris, Sept. 25: French terrorism authorities are investigating a double-stabbing outside the former Paris offices of a satirical newspaper where a dozen people were killed in 2015, and two suspects have been arrested in Friday's violence, authorities said.

France's counterterrorism prosecutor said authorities suspect a terrorist motive because of the place and timing of the stabbings: in front of the building where *Charlie Hebdo* was based until the Islamic extremist attack on its cartoonists and at a time when suspects in the 2015 attack are on trial across town.

Prosecutor Jean-Francois Ricard said that the chief suspect in Friday's stabbings was arrested, along with another person. Ricard said the assailant did not know the people who were

stabbed, two workers in a documentary production company who had stepped outside for a smoke break.

The suspects' identities have not been released, and it is unclear exactly what prompted the attack. An investigation was opened into "attempted murder in relation with a terrorist enterprise," according to an official at the terrorism prosecutor's office. French Prime Minister Jean Castex said the lives of the two wounded workers are not in danger. He offered the government's solidarity with their families and colleagues.

Associated Press reporters at the scene saw police flood the neighborhood in eastern Paris near the Richard Lenoir subway station, which remained cordoned off hours later. Children were sequestered in nine schools while police scoured the area, but were

later released, according to the Paris school district.

"All the team at *Charlie Hebdo* offers support and solidarity to its former neighbors and colleagues at PLTVfilms and to the people hit by this odious attack," *Charlie Hebdo* tweeted.

The prime minister noted the "symbolic site" of the attack, "at the very moment where the trial into the atrocious acts against *Charlie Hebdo* is under way." He promised the government's "unfailing attachment to freedom of the press, and its determination to fight terrorism."

The two people confirmed injured worked for documentary film company Premieres Lignes, according to founder Paul Moreira. He told *BFM* television that the attacker fled into the subway, and the company's staff members were evacuated. — AP

Retired generals, admirals endorse Biden in US polls

4-star officers who served under Don also back Dem US Prez candidate

Washington, Sept. 25: More than 200 retired generals and admirals endorsed Joe Biden for president in a letter published on Thursday, saying he had the character and judgment to serve as commander-in-chief instead of President Donald Trump, who has failed "to meet challenges large or small."

Some of the officers who signed the letter supporting Biden had retired only in the past few years, including Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, who served as vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Trump before he retired in August 2019; Vice Adm. Gardner Howe, a Navy SEAL leader who also retired last year; and retired Adm. Paul Zukunff, who oversaw the Coast Guard until 2018.

The list of signatories featured 22 retired four-star military officers, among them Navy Adm. Samuel Locklear, who oversaw all US forces in the Pacific from 2012 to

2015, and Adm. Harry Ulrich, who commanded U.S. naval forces in Europe during President George W. Bush's administration.

The retired top brass signed the letter backing Biden along with nearly 300 other former national security officials and diplomats.

William Webster, the former director of the CIA and the FBI, was among the signatories, along with five former defense secretaries: William Perry, William Cohen, Chuck Hagel, Leon Panetta and Ash Carter.

"My own personal view is that I have a duty to be involved in civic matters of the nation that I'm a citizen" of, retired Adm. Steve Abbot said of his decision to sign the letter.

Abbot served as commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet and commander of Naval Striking and Support Forces in Southern Europe, and he later became Bush's acting homeland security adviser. — AFP

DESPITE TRUMP ATTACKS, BOTH PARTIES VOW ORDERLY ELECTION

Washington, Sept. 26: President Donald Trump's refusal to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he loses drew swift blowback on Thursday from both parties in Congress, and lawmakers turned to unprecedented steps to ensure he can't ignore the vote of the people.

Amid the uproar, Trump said anew he's not sure the election will be "honest." Congressional leaders, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, rejected Trump's assertion that he'll "see what happens" before agreeing to any election outcome. Many other lawmakers — including from Trump's own Republican Party — vowed to make sure voters' wishes are followed ahead of Inauguration Day in January.

And some Democrats were taking action, including formally asking Trump's defense secretary, homeland security adviser and attorney general to declare they'll support the Nov. 3 results, whoever wins.

Asked as he departed the White House for a campaign rally if the election is only legitimate if he is the winner, Trump said, "We'll see." The president said he wants to "make sure the election is honest, and I'm not sure that it can be."

Trump's attacks on the upcoming vote — almost without modern precedent in the US — are hitting amid the tumult of the campaign, as partisan tensions rage and more Americans than ever are planning to vote by mail because of the coronavirus pandemic. — AP

China to produce 1b vaccine doses

Beijing, Sept. 25: China's Covid-19 vaccine development programme is in a "leading position" and Beijing is on track to produce over 600 million doses by the end of the year, officials said on Friday.

China has been bullish about the development of its coronavirus vaccine as scientists around the world race to halt the deadly pathogen which has caused global chaos and killed almost a million people.

Health officials told

● **BRAZIL HAS** postponed Rio de Janeiro's famed carnival for next year, the latest spectacle hit by the pandemic as governments across the globe struggle to contain a surge in coronavirus infections.

● **BRAZIL NOW** has the world's second highest death toll after the United States — nearly 1,40,000 fatalities — and is still battling to bring the virus under control.

reporters at a press conference on Friday that China expects to produce 610 million vaccine doses by the end of this year, with annual production capacity to reach at least one billion doses next year.

Eleven Chinese vaccines have now entered clinical trials, with four in Phase Three trials that are "progressing smoothly", said Wu Yuanbin from the Ministry of Science and Technology.

"At present, China's

Covid-19 vaccine research and development work is overall in a leading position," said Wu.

We've seen that the vaccines' safety is good and there have been no serious adverse reactions." Hundreds of thousands of essential workers at ports, hospitals and other high-risk areas have already been given an experimental vaccine since July, officials said, claiming that the programme had also gained the support of the World Health Organisation (WHO). — AFP

FINANCIAL Chronicle

KARIMNAGAR | SATURDAY | 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	37,388.66 2.28
Nifty 50	11,050.30 2.27
S&P 500*	3,267.82 0.65
Dollar (₹)	73.61 0.39
Pound Sterling (₹)	94.01 0.03
Euro (₹)	86.01 0.19
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,551.71 353
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.78 -0.16
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.038 0.046
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.659 -0.005

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Hetero launches patient pack of Favivir 800/200

Hetero on Friday launched the first-ever 'Patient Compliant Pack' of Favivir 800/200 for the treatment of mild-to-moderate symptomatic Covid-19 patients in India. Favivir 800/200 will be available in a patient-friendly pack containing 16 tablets of Favipiravir 800mg and 2 tablets of Favipiravir 200mg, priced at ₹2,640. Favipiravir 800 mg has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India.

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Centre used states' ₹47,272cr GST funds to close fiscal gap

CAG says Centre violated GST Act through unauthorised use

New Delhi, Sept. 25: The CAG has found that the Union government in the very first two years of the GST implementation wrongly retained ₹47,272 crore of GST compensation cess that was meant to be used specifically to compensate states for loss of revenue.

In its audit report of government accounts, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) flagged that the amount was to be credited to the non-lapsable GST Compensation Cess collection fund for payment to states for loss of revenue due to implementation of GST since 2017, but the government did not do so, and thus violated the GST law.

"The GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017, provides for levy of cess for the purpose of providing compensation to the states for loss of revenue arising due to

BREACH OF TRUST

● CAG said the Centre used this money for "other purposes" which "led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year".

● According to CAG, the Finance Ministry accepted the audit observation and stated in February 2020 that the proceeds of cess collected and not transferred to Public Account would be transferred in the subsequent year.

implementation of GST for a period specified in the Act," CAG said.

As per the Act and the accounting procedure, the entire cess collected during the year is required to be credited to a non-lapsable Fund (the GST Compensation Cess Fund) which shall form part of the Public Account and shall be used for the purpose mentioned i.e., for providing compensation to states for loss of revenue.

CAG said out of the ₹62,612 crore GST Compensation Cess collected in 2017-18, ₹56,146 crore was transferred to the non-lapsable fund.

In the following year (2018-19), ₹54,275 crore out of ₹95,081 crore collected was transferred to the fund.

The short transfer in 2017-18 was ₹6,466 crore and in 2018-19 it was ₹40,806 crore, CAG said adding the Centre used

this money for "other purposes" which "led to an overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year".

The short-crediting was a violation of the GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017. The issue of compensation cess is driving a wedge between the Centre and states at the GST Council, the highest decision making body of the GST regime that had subsumed 17 different central and state taxes such as excise duty and VAT.

States have not been paid their promised compensation for letting go their powers to levy taxes on goods and services since last fiscal. The Centre says a slowdown in the economy has meant that not enough money is being collected by way of cess that is levied on luxury and sin goods. — PTI

Centre plans \$4.6b sops to boost battery factories

New Delhi, Sept. 25: India plans to offer \$4.6 billion in incentives to companies setting up advanced battery manufacturing facilities as it seeks to promote the use of electric vehicles and cut down its dependence on oil, according to a government proposal seen by *Reuters*.

A proposal drafted by NITI Aayog, a federal think tank chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said India could slash its oil import bills by as much as \$40 billion by 2030 if electric vehicles were widely adopted.

The proposal is likely to be reviewed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his cabinet in the coming weeks, said a senior government official, who was not authorised to

comment on the matter and declined to be identified. NITI Aayog and the Indian government did not respond to requests for comment.

The think tank recommended incentives of \$4.6 billion by 2030 for companies manufacturing advanced batteries, starting with cash and infrastructure incentives of ₹900 crore (\$122 million) in the next financial year

which would then be ratcheted up annually.

"Currently, the battery energy storage industry is at a very nascent stage in India with investors being a little apprehensive to invest in a sunrise industry," the proposal said.

India plans to retain its import tax rate of five per cent for certain types of batteries, including batteries for electric vehicles, until 2022, but will increase it to 15 per cent thereafter to promote local manufacturing, the document said.

Though keen to reduce its oil dependence and cut down on pollution, India's efforts to promote electric vehicles have been stymied by a lack of investment in manufacturing and infrastructure like charging stations. — *Reuters*

CFOs' optimism falls to record low levels

New Delhi, Sept. 25: The optimism level among chief financial officers (CFOs) about India's financial and macro-economic conditions during the third quarter this year has witnessed a decline of 15 per cent and touched record low level, according to a survey.

Dun & Bradstreet Composite CFO Optimism Index showed a decline of 15 per cent on quarter-on-quarter basis to 74.2 during Q3 2020, bringing the index to a record low.

The survey covered nearly 350 chief financial officers (CFOs), who were asked a set of questions

regarding the financial performance of their companies and the overall macroeconomic scenario for the corporate sector in the forthcoming period.

"The steady rise in total infected cases and the spillover effects of the lockdown measures have undermined the optimism levels," said Arun Singh, Global Chief Economist, Dun & Bradstreet.

Further, the lack of space for demand stimulus coupled with subdued consumer demand have constrained the pace of economic activity, the Dun & Bradstreet economist said. — PTI

HEALTH, HYGIENE ITEM LAUNCHES JUMP 18-FOLD

New Delhi, Sept. 25: FMCG companies introduced total 1,897 products in health and hygiene segment in March-August, registering over 18-fold jump as compared to the preceding six months, said a report from data analytics firm Nielsen.

The companies introduced products in categories including liquid toilet soaps, antiseptic liquids, analgesic between March-August 2020, the report noted.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, between September 2019 to February 2020, only 102 products were introduced in health & hygiene space. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

Messi blasts Barca for Suarez sack

Madrid: Lionel Messi bid an emotional farewell on Friday to Luis Suarez, the day after the Uruguayan striker had said tearful goodbyes to Barcelona after the club sent him to Atletico Madrid. "Today I went into the dressing room and the awful truth hit me," Messi posted on *Instagram*, before renewing his criticism of club management. "You deserved to be sent off as what you are: one of the most important players in the history of the club," Messi wrote. "And not to be fired in the way they did it. The truth is that at this point nothing surprises me anymore," the post added. Messi has a long-running feud with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu which intensified after Barcelona were humiliated 8-2 by Bayern in a Champions League quarterfinal in August. Messi tried to force his exit from Barcelona but finally accepted that he would have to see out the final year of his contract. — *AFP*

Gurpreet, Sanju adjudged best

New Delhi: Indian men's team goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and women's squad's mid-fielder Sanju were on Friday declared the winners of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) Footballer of the Year awards for the 2019-20 season. This is the first time Gurpreet has received the award, and in the process he became the second goalkeeper after Subrata Paul in 2009 to be named the AIFF Player of the Year. Gurpreet was elected as the winner on the basis of votes from Indian Super League and I-League club coaches. — *PTI*

Bottas revs to the top at Russian GP

Sochi: Valtteri Bottas topped the times for Mercedes ahead of Renault's Daniel Ricciardo in Friday morning's crash-hit opening free practice at this weekend's Russian Grand Prix. The Finn, who is 55 points adrift of Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton in the title race, clocked a best lap in one minute and 34.923 seconds. This left him half a second clear of the Australian on the smooth-surfaced circuit and six-tenths ahead of third-placed Max Verstappen of Red Bull. Defending six-time champion Hamilton, who is one win short of equalling seven-time champion Michael Schumacher's career record 91 victories, remained in the Mercedes team garage for much of the session after flat-spotting his tyres and did not clock a truly competitive lap time. He was classified down in 19th. — *AFP*

Milan, Spurs in Europa play-offs

Milan: AC Milan midfielder Hakan Altintop scored twice to give his team a 3-2 home victory over Norwegian club Bodo/Glimt in Europa League qualifying. There were no major upsets as Tottenham, Celtic, Wolfsburg, PSV Eindhoven and Sporting Lisbon all advanced to the play-off round. With Zlatan Ibrahimovic sidelined with the Coronavirus, Lorenzo Colombo also scored for the seven-time European champion. After scoring four goals against Southampton in the Premier League on Sunday, Son Heung-min netted again for Tottenham in a 3-1 win against Shkndija in North Macedonia. Erik Lamela and Harry Kane also had a goal each. — *AP*

Prithvi is big Shaw

Youngster's half-century sets up win for Capitals

Dubai, Sept. 25: Delhi Capitals beat Chennai Super Kings by 44 runs to register their second consecutive win in the Indian Premier League here on Friday.

Sent into bat, DC made 175 for 3 and then restricted CSK to 131 for 7 to maintain their winning run.

Young Prithvi Shaw struck a fluent half-century and shared a 94-run opening stand with Shikhar Dhawan to guide Delhi Capitals to a powerful position.

Shaw made 64 off 43 balls in the company of Dhawan (35 off 27 balls, 3 fours, 1 six) to provide a superb start to DC's innings after being put into bat.

The duo started slowly, scoring just 36 runs of the first six overs of power-play before opening up to stitch 94 runs for the opening wicket in 10.4 overs.

Shaw got into his stride, hitting two consecutive boundaries off Deepak Chahar.

The Mumbai youngster didn't appear to rush things and played some attractive shots.

Once CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni introduced the spin duo of Piyush Chawla and Ravindra Jadeja in the seventh over, both Shaw and Dhawan went on the offensive.

Chawla, who was taken apart by Sanju Samson in their previous game against Rajasthan Royals, came in for some rough treatment as did Jadeja who went wicketless in his four overs (0/44).

Dhawan after playing second fiddle for a while, joined the party and hit a couple of attractive boundaries and slogged Jadeja's first ball for a six over mid-wicket.

The DC openers hammered 58 in the next 4.4



Delhi Capitals batsman Prithvi Shaw plays a shot en-route to his half century during the IPL match against Chennai Super Kings at Dubai International Cricket Stadium in UAE on Friday.

— *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw st M. S. Dhoni b Piyush Chawla 64, Shikhar Dhawan lbw Piyush Chawla 35, Rishabh Pant not out 37, Shreyas Iyer c M. S. Dhoni b Sam Curran 26, Marcus Stoinis not out 5. **Extras:** (LB-5, W-3) 8. **Total:** (for 3 wickets, in 20 overs) 175. **FoW:** 1-94, 2-103, 3-161. **Bowling:** Deepak Chahar 4-0-38-0, Sam Curran 4-0-27-1, Josh Hazlewood 4-0-28-0, Piyush Chawla 4-0-33-2, Ravinder Jadeja 4-0-44-0. **Chennai Super Kings:** Murali Vijay c K.

Rabada b Nortje 10, Shane Watson c Hetmyer b Patel, Faf du Plessis c Pant b Rabada 43, Ruturaj Gaikwad run out 5, Kedar Jadhav lbw b Nortje 26, M. S. Dhoni not out c Pant b Rabada 15, R. Jadeja c Mishra b Rabada 8, Sam Curran not out 0. **Extras:** (LB-1, W-4) 5; **Total:** (For 7 wickets, in 20 overs) 131; **FoW:** 1-23, 2-34, 3-44, 4-98, 5-113, 6-130, 7-131. **Bowling:** K. Rabada 4-0-26-3, Axar Patel 4-0-18-1, A. Nortje 4-0-21-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-42-0, Amit Mishra 4-0-23-0.

Wasn't at my best before match: KL

Dubai, Sept. 25: Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul, who made a scintillating century against Royal Challengers Bangalore, said he was lacking in confidence heading into the team's second IPL fixture.

Rahul starred with an unbeaten 132 off 69 balls as KXIP outplayed RCB by 97 runs here on Thursday.

"I have actually been not so confident (hitting it this well). I had a chat with Maxi (Glenn Maxwell) yesterday, he said how are you feeling, I said that I am not feeling completely in control of my batting, he said you must be joking, you are hitting really well," Rahul said at the post-match presentation.

He had already spoken about his fears leading up to the IPL, considering he was coming back after a five-month long break due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "Quite honestly I was nervous but I knew if I spend time in the middle, hit a few balls from the middle of bat, it will all settle down.

"I try to do (the same routine as I did when I was a

I have actually been not so confident (hitting it this well). I had a chat with Maxi (Glenn Maxwell) yesterday, he said 'how are you feeling,' I said that I am not feeling completely in control of my batting, he said you must be joking, you are hitting well.

— **K. L. RAHUL** after his match winning knock of 132 runs against RCB

player) but as a captain you have shortened time and you are running around and doing a lot of things," Rahul said.

He is captaining in the IPL for the first time.

"I still try to maintain the same routine. Once I am in the middle and during the toss is the only time I feel like a captain and otherwise I try to balance being a player and the captain.

It's as complete a team performance as it can get. We had few different plans going into this game," he further added. — *PTI*

Virat slapped with ₹12 lakh for slow over rate

Dubai, Sept. 25: Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli has been fined ₹12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League match against Kings XI Punjab here.

RCB were thrashed by 97 runs in the match on Thursday night.

"As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Mr. Kohli was fined ₹12 lakh," the IPL said in a release.

The Indian batting mainstay had a forgettable outing at the Dubai International Stadium.

While he dropped two catches of centurion KL Rahul, which proved to be costly, Kohli also could not contribute anything substantial with the willow.

Kohli dropped Rahul twice — once in the 17th over at deep square-leg when he was batting on 83 and then again in the 18th over when he was on 89.



Virat Kohli

The lapses helped KXIP score an imposing 206 for 3, with Rahul doing the bulk of scoring.

KOHLI TAKES BLAME FOR RCB FLOP SHOW

Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli took the blame for his team's flop show against Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League.

Without hesitation, Kohli took the blame for dropping Kings XI Punjab skipper KL

Rahul catch, which contributed significantly to their defeat on Thursday.

Kohli felt had he not dropped two catches off the blade of Rahul, who remained unbeaten on 132, KXIP would not have been able to go past the 200-run mark.

"I have to stand in front and take the brunt of it, not the best day in the office, couple of important chances of KL when he was set and that cost us 35-40 runs at a later stage. Maybe if we restricted them to 180 we wouldn't have been under pressure from ball one of the chase," said Kohli.

KXIP posted 206 for three and RCB were bundled out for 109 in 17 overs.

"We know exactly where we went wrong and I have to put my hand up and say a couple of chances went down. There are days when these kind of things happen on the cricket field, they happen and we have to accept them," Kohli added. — *PTI*

KKR & SRH look to open account

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 25: Skipper Dinesh Karthik's tactical nous will once again be put to test when Kolkata Knight Riders take on a depleted Sunrisers Hyderabad in their second IPL fixture here on Saturday.

Much was expected from a revamped Kolkata Knight Riders set-up but it seemed Karthik did not learn from his past mistakes and made some inexcusable decisions that led to their complete capitulation against Mumbai Indians.

Once again, the batting position of their biggest hitter Andre Russell became the talking point in their 49-run loss to Mumbai Indians.

The Jamaican, who was their highest run-getter last season with 510 runs from 249 deliveries and the tournament's highest strike rate of 204.81, was seen at No 6 but by then the task had become extremely difficult.

Eoin Morgan also could not do much as the asking rate had shot past 13 by the time he came to bat at No.5.

In bowling too, there was a tactical blunder by holding back their ace spinner Sunil Narine till the last over of power play.

On a day, their biggest buy Pat Cummins failed miserably, Narine was given a go only when his IPL "bunny" Rohit Sharma was well set.

It really defied logic to see such a defensive strategy by a team now coached by Brendon McCullum who is known for his aggressive mindset. Known to put up a balanced side on the park, Hyderabad lacked strength and experience in their middle-order, failing miserably against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Needing just 43 runs from last five overs, SRH lost their last seven wickets for

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 17
- Kolkata won: 10
- Hyderabad won: 7

MEETING IN 2019

- Kolkata Knight Riders beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6 wickets at Kolkata.
- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 9 wickets.

FOR THE RECORD

- Dinesh Karthik has won 17, lost 19 and tied one in 37 matches as captain in IPL. He won two and lost three in five matches as skipper for Kolkata Knight Riders against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

- Andre Russell who claimed 295 wickets at an average of 25.97 in 303 innings of 331 matches, needs just five wickets to become the ninth bowler to take 300 wickets in Twenty-20.

— *S. PERVEZ QAISER*

32 runs to lose the game by 10 runs. If that was not enough, injury to their all-rounder Mitchell Marsh has compounded their misery.

Skipper David Warner, after being run out in an unfortunate manner at the non-striker's end, will be keen to get into the act, while it remains to be seen whether Kane Williamson has recovered from his injury to bolster the batting department.

SRH bowling has always been impressive and it seems the think tank may bring in Mohammed Nabi to bowl alongside his fellow mate Rashid Khan while Bhuvneshwar Kumar will spearhead the pace attack. — *PTI*

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	2	2	0	0	4	+1.100
Kings XI Punjab	2	1	1	0	2	+2.425
Mumbai Indians	2	1	1	0	2	+0.993
Rajasthan Royals	1	1	0	0	2	+0.800
Chennai Super Kings	3	1	2	0	2	-0.840
Royal Challengers Bangalore	2	1	1	0	2	-2.175
Sunrisers Hyderabad	1	0	1	0	0	-0.500
Kolkata Knight Riders	1	0	1	0	0	-2.450

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

‘Anil sir’s advice worked for me’

Dubai, Sept. 25: Kings XI Punjab's young spinner Ravi Bishnoi says head coach Anil Kumble has advised him to always stay calm and back his skills as a bowler.

The 20-year-old Bishnoi snared three wickets in an emphatic 97-run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Indian Premier league (IPL) on Thursday night.

"Anil sir has always asked me to back strength in my bowling and skill. He asked me not to try too many things and try to be cool and calm in the middle," Bishnoi said at the post-match press conference.

The India U-19 World Cup player returned impressive

figures of 3-32 in his four overs against a side that boasts of the likes of Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers.

When asked, he sounded confident about bowling against the top players.

"Since we had a long camp before the IPL, I was preparing myself mentally as skill level is the same for everyone here. So being mentally strong and brave was my main focus.

"I told myself not to bowl lose deliveries which would allow them to attack me," further added the leg-spinner.

"We prepared well in our camp before the tournament here. We were focusing on mental strength and not bowling lose balls," he added. — *PTI*

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Kolkata Knight Riders vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

Australia Women vs New Zealand Women: First T20 from 9.20 am on Sony Six, HD

England Women vs West Indies Women: Third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Brighton vs Manchester United from 5 pm; Crystal Palace vs Everton from 7.30 pm; West Brom vs Chelsea from 10 pm; Burnley vs Southampton from 12.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Spanish Premier League: Alaves vs Getafe from 4.30 pm; Valencia vs Huesca from 7.30 pm; Elche vs Real Sociedad from 10 pm; Real Betis vs Real Madrid from 12.30 am (Sunday). All matches on LaLiga page on Facebook

Italian League: Torino vs Atalanta from 6.30 pm; Cagliari vs Lazio from 9.30 pm; Inter Milan vs Fiorentina from 12.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

FORMULA ONE

Russian Grand Prix: Practice 3 from 2.25 pm; Qualifying from 5.25 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

TENNIS

ATP Hamburg European Open: Semifinals from 5 pm on Sony Six, HD

BASKETBALL

NBA Western Conference Finals (Game 5 of best-of-7): Denver Nuggets vs Los Angeles Lakers from 6.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Six, HD

UFC FIGHT NIGHT

Israel Adesanya vs Paulo Costa and other bouts starting from 7.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 1, 2, HD



LeBron James (top centre) of Los Angeles Lakers shoots against the Denver Nuggets during the first half of the NBA Western Conference Finals play-off match in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Thursday. The Lakers won 114-108.

— *AP*

LeBron, Anthony star as Lakers feast on Nuggets

Orlando, Sept. 25: Anthony Davis and LeBron James combined for 60 points as the top-seeded Los Angeles Lakers seized control of their Western Conference finals series with a 114-108 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Thursday.

James finished with 26 points, nine rebounds, and eight assists and Davis had 34 points as Lakers held on to beat the Nuggets and take a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series in the NBA's

quarantine bubble in Orlando, Florida.

Game five is Saturday in Orlando. The Lakers have wrapped up both their previous series in five games.

Canadian forward Jamal Murray led the Nuggets with 32 points and eight assists, while Jerami Grant finished with 17 for Denver. Serbia's Nikola Jokic was held in check most of the game and finished with a disappointing 16 points. He missed all four field goal attempts in the fourth.

James took it upon himself to guard Murray with the game on the line.

Denver has dug another big hole in these playoffs and if they are going to advance to the NBA finals they will have to come back from a 3-1 deficit for the third straight series.

Denver lost game four in each of their first two series against Utah and the Los Angeles Clippers before making a pair of historic comebacks.

— *AFP*

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