

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | SATURDAY | 10 OCTOBER 2020



NATION | 4

Lalu gets bail, but will remain in jail



WORLD | 5

Trump to address poll rally today

SPORTS | 8

Sehwag slams slipping CSK batsmen



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WEATHER

Max: 32.0°C
Min: 25.0°C
RH: 32%
Rainfall: 3 mm
Forecast: Cloudy.
 Max/Min temp.
 32/25 °C

COVID-19

COUNT

CASES

(+61,223)

69,64,098

DEATHS

(+608)

1,07,142

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,891)

TS: 2,06,639

(+5,145)

AP: 7,44,864

(+7)

1,208

(+31)

6,159

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,69,88,985

DEATHS

10,69,846

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvarti; Dakshinayana

Thithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula Ashtami till 6.10 pm

Star: Punarvasu till 1.13 am (Sunday)

Variyam: 12.48 pm to 2.27 pm

Durmuhurtam: 6.11 am to 7.45 am

Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am

HILIRI CALENDAR

Safar ul Muzaffar 22, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.08 am

Zohar: 12.13 pm

Asar: 4.19 pm

Maghrib: 6.03 pm

Isha: 7.11 pm

SUNSET TODAY 5.57 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM

MOONSET TODAY 1.02 AM

MOONRISE TOMORROW NA

COUNTER POINT

No crowd? Don't worry, continue your speech... it's live on our channel!

IN BRIEF

HAL staffer leaking info to ISI arrested

Mumbai: A Hindustan Aeronautics Limited employee was arrested for supplying Indian fighter aircraft details to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, Maharashtra police said on Friday. Police said 41-year-old Deepak Shirsat was working as an assistant supervisor and was "honey trapped" by a Pakistani national posing as a woman on social media. The Nashik unit of the state Anti-Terrorism Squad had got reliable intelligence about the man, who was in touch with ISI, a police statement said.

CBI books HDIL promoters for fraud

New Delhi: The CBI has booked HDIL promoters Rakesh Wadhawan and Sarang Wadhawan, along with former PMC Bank chairman Waryam Singh and other directors of the firm, in an alleged ₹200-crore loan fraud in Yes Bank involving Mack Star company, officials said Friday. It is alleged that loans taken for Mack Star were transferred to settle HDIL liabilities to Yes Bank without intimation to its majority stakeholder and investor Ocean Deity Investment Holdings Ltd (ODIL) in a conspiracy orchestrated by the HDIL officials. Sources in the agency said the role of former Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor, is likely to come under scanner in the case.

New GHMC Bill, farm policy on Cabinet agenda

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The state government has decided to conduct the Legislative Assembly session on October 13 and of the Council the next day. The Assembly session will commence at 11.30 am on Tuesday and the government will introduce the new Greater Hyderabad Corporation Bill 2020. The Council will meet at 11 am on Wednesday.

In this connection the state Cabinet will be meeting at Pragathi Bhavan at 5 pm on Saturday to approve the Bills to be introduced in the Legislature.

The Cabinet is also likely to discuss implementation of a regulated cropping system to be implemented in the Rabi season and procurement of paddy.

Prior to the Cabinet meeting, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao will hold a review meet-

ing with officials of agriculture and civil supplies departments and review the regulatory farm policy methods to be implemented during the summer season and purchase of produce in the villages itself.

During the meeting the government is likely to finalise the crops to be cultivated in the summer season.

In view of the Centre importing maize on a large scale, which will have an adverse impact on corn, the Chief Minister will have a detailed discussion over the matter.

The state government had procured agri produce of Rabi season from farmers by setting up procurement centres in the villages in view of the Covid-19 crisis.

As the crisis is continuing, the Chief Minister has decided to purchase fresh produce in the villages by setting up purchase centres.

TS tech unites mother with kid

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

A family in Uttar Pradesh's Handia was reunited with their lost child on Friday, thanks to the Telangana police's special facial recognition software called Darpan.

The 13-year-old boy went missing five years ago and was traced to a child welfare centre in Assam's Goalpara.

The Telangana state police, upon identifying the child, informed the station house officer of the Handia police station, who then informed the parents of the missing child. They immediately rushed to the child welfare centre and identified him.

Swati Lakra, additional DGP (Women's safety), Telangana state police, told *Deccan Chronicle* that the boy, Som Soni, was missing from his home since July 14, 2015. A case of a missing person was registered at the local police station. A few days later, on July 23, the boy was spotted roaming around by the Goalpara police who admitted him into a local child welfare centre.

Explaining the role of the Darpan software in bringing back the child,

● **THE DARPAN** software tracked the missing child by scanning photographs of missing children from FIRs across India, CCTNS and images of traced children from the Track Child portal. It matches missing and traced children

Lakra said, "We collect photographs of missing children from FIRs registered across the country and from Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), and we get photographs of traced children from the Track Child portal (<https://trackthemissingchild.gov.in/trackchild/index.php>), from child care institutions across the country and the women and child welfare department. The software runs and matches missing and traced children. The speciality of this software is that even if the child is traced 50 years later, the matrix of the face matches it to the photograph in the system."

The Telangana state police is trying to get as much data as possible now so that as more missing children across India can be traced and brought back to their families, said Lakra.

POLLUTION | WATCH

Oxygen level in Hussainsagar remained conducive for aquatic life, say experts

Lake breathes easy due to few idols: PCB

TSS SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

Fewer number of idols of Lord Ganesh being immersed in Hussainsagar this year appears to have resulted in a lesser pollution load in the lake, say officials of the Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB).

Owing to Coronavirus pandemic, only 8,903 idols were immersed in the lake this year. Last year the number was 54,938.

"This year, oxygen levels in the Hussainsagar have remained conducive for aquatic life. This particular lake is used for recreational purposes. Given that category, the

lake has remained near normal," J .Sumathi, a scientist with TSPCB, told *Deccan Chronicle*.

She said the chemical oxygen demand (COD) and bio-Chemical oxygen demand (BOD) in the lake have shown a decreasing trend.

Dissolved oxygen (DO) levels have also improved at all the six locations from where samples have been collected.

"We consider a lake polluted if standards of COD, BOD, and DO are stagnant. But if there is fluctuation in these quantities, it is an evident sign that some form of reaction is taking place in the water," the scientist stated.

Growth back by March: RBI

Reveals steps to ease rates, boost lending to real estate, small businesses

FALAKNAAZ SYED
with agency inputs
MUMBAI, OCT. 9

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), taking cognizance of elevated inflation, left key interest rates unchanged on Friday but signalled more easing ahead to support the country's economy that it sees contracting 9.5 per cent in the current fiscal.

The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), with three newly inducted external members, voted unanimously to retain the benchmark repurchase or repo rate at 4 per cent while keeping its policy stance accommodative, implying it could ease again.

The policy was over-

STATUS QUO ON KEY INTEREST RATES DUE TO ELEVATED INFLATION

4% Benchmark lending rates kept unchanged

9.5% Indian economy to contract this fiscal with downside risks

₹7.5cr: Threshold of retail bank loans to one borrower raised from ₹5 cr

● GDP may break out of contraction, enter positive zone by March quarter



We look forward to cooperative solutions for the borrowing programme in the second half of the year.

— **SHAKTIKANTA DAS**, RBI Governor

- Banks can cooperate with NBFCs and HFCs for priority sector loans
- Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system to be available in real time

whelmingly positive with a host of regulatory and development measures to ease sovereign rates, which would percolate down to borrowers and incentivise bank lending to priority sectors, such as real estate and small busi-

nesses, thereby, helping to revive the economy.

It was for the first time during the fiscal that the MPC provided GDP growth projections. In his address, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said the country's economy is like-

ly to contract 9.5 per cent in the current financial year, "with risks tilted to the downside".

Mr Das said the economic growth, which slumped to a negative 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, will turn positive only in

Rains pound Hyderabad



A car driver struggles to steer his vehicle through a waterlogged road on the usually busy Malakpet Railway Station stretch in Hyderabad after a heavy downpour on Friday caused untold hardship to people. ■ **Full report on Page 2** — P. SURENDRA

Mom whose kid was flung out traced

A. RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, OCT. 9

Khammam police have traced the mother of a premature baby who was thrown out of an autorickshaw near Jubilee Club on October 4, only to unravel a tale of woe.

The newborn was rescued by passersby and admitted to the district headquarters hospital. Her caregivers named her Chandra.

Police did not share

details with the like the name of Chandra's mother and village to which she belonged, citing humanitarian grounds.

They said the mother is very poor, has a 10-year-old girl, with a husband who does not look after the family. As such, the mother is running the family with great difficulties.

Given the situation, she delivered Chandra whose birthweight was less than 800 grams. She had no money to admit her to a

hospital for treatment. The mother's parents are poverty-ridden and unable to support their daughter in her hour of crisis.

As a result, the baby's grandmother, who had come to Khammam for her daughter's delivery, suggested that they abandon the baby with the hope that someone may rescue her and shift her to hospital.

The story came out after cops traced the autorickshaw from which the baby

was dropped and zeroed in on Chandra's mother and grandmother. Given the situation, Chandra's mother is refusing to take back her baby.

Police have decided to deal with the case on humanitarian grounds for the present, as baby Chandra is already under the care of the Child Protection Cell.

A case has, however, been registered against Chandra's mother and grandmother.

the final January-March quarter. "By all indications, the deep contractions of Q1 2020-21 (April-June) are behind us; silver linings are visible in the flattening of the active case load curve across the country," he said. Barring the risk of a second wave of infections, the economy appeared poised to begin a recovery, he said, noting foodgrain production was set for record highs and factories and cities were coming back to life.

The policy repo rate, or the rate at which banks borrow short-term funds from the Central bank, stood unchanged at 4 per cent. Most economists expect the RBI to cut rates by 50 basis points in its December policy.

RADAR KILLER 'RUDRAM-1' PASSES IAF TEST

New Delhi, Oct. 9: In a major milestone, India on Friday successfully test fired a new generation anti-radiation missile from a Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force that can destroy a wide variety of enemy radars, air defence systems and communication networks from large stand-off ranges, officials said.

The missile, Rudram-1, is India's first indigenously developed anti-radiation weapon system and it was test-fired by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), at an integrated test range in Balasore in Odisha at around 10.30 am, officials said. They said the missile, having a speed of Mach two or twice the speed of sound, is capable of bringing down a wide-range of enemy radar systems, communication networks and air defence systems within a range of up to 250 km. In a statement, the defence ministry said Rudram hit the radiation target with "pin-point accuracy" and established India's capability to develop long range air launched anti-radiation missiles.

— PTI



NOBEL PEACE FOR UN WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Niamey (Niger), Oct. 9: The World Food Programme won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for its efforts to combat hunger in regions facing conflict when Covid pandemic has driven millions more people to the brink of starvation.

The Rome-based UN agency has long specialised in getting assistance to some of the world's most dangerous and precarious places, from air-dropping food in South Sudan and Syria to creating an emergency delivery service that kept aid flowing even as restrictions grounded flights. It provided assistance to almost 100 million people in 88 countries last year. "With this year's award, the (committee) wishes to turn the eyes of the world to the millions of people who suffer from hunger," said Berit Reiss Andersen, the chair of the Nobel Committee.

■ **Full report on Page 5**



A Ganesh idol being immersed in Hussainsagar.

— DC file

SHORT TAKES

HC SUMMONS
NIRMAL
COLLECTORDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The Telangana High Court has summoned the collector of Nirmal to appear before it on October 12 to explain what prevented him from taking action against the encroachers of two water bodies in Nirmal town.

Earlier, when the court had asked the collector for a response, he had stated that action would be taken on the matter. However, the encroachers were still seen moving ahead and destroying the tanks, Chinnolla Naresh Reddy, counsel who belongs to Nirmal, told the court on Friday.

The court has summoned the collector to explain why he did not initiate action.

TWO KILLED
AS CARS
CRASH ON ORRDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

An early morning accident on Friday involving two cars on the Outer Ring Road resulted in the death of two persons and injuries to three others.

According to police, two men, identified as Viswanath, 25, and Pradeep Chandra, 24, residents of Suryapet, were driving in the wrong direction on the ORR near Kokapet and collided head on with a cab.

Pradeep, who was at the wheel, was driving from Hayathnagar towards Nagarj-unasagar and realised that he may have been heading in the wrong direction and made a U-turn and began driving in the wrong direction, the police said. Suspected to be under the influence of alcohol at that time, Pradeep ran his vehicle into an incoming cab carrying three passengers, police said.

Pradeep and Viswanath were killed on the spot while the cab driver Mohammad Ali, and his two passengers identified as Bharat and Pavan were injured. They were shifted to a hospital, the police said.

MAN ARRESTED
WITH 15 TONNES
OF UREADC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

As much as 15 tonnes of neem coated urea fertiliser, illegally procured for use as raw material for manufacture of fibre plates, has been seized by the police here in the city, who have also arrested one person for misuse of the fertiliser other than the purpose it was meant for.

The seizure and arrest were effected by officials of the Commissioner's Task Force, South Zone team, the agriculture department and Kamatipura police.

According to the police, the arrested person, Nishanth Sobti, owner of Jagadamba Industries at Chandulal Baradari, had illegally purchased 325 bags of neem coated urea totalling 15 tonnes for the manufacture of fibre plates.

Nishanth, the police said, was procuring subsidised urea from Haroon, owner of Moosani Chemicals and Fertilisers, but he did not produce any bills. The government supplies the urea to farmers on a subsidy for use in crop cultivation. Nishanth was buying the urea at the subsidised price for use in industrial process and was thus cheating the government, police said.

MANUU TO HOST MEET ON EDU POLICY

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The Maulana Azad National Urdu University (Manuu) is organising a national webinar, 'Spirit of National Education Policy-2020' on October 10.

Prof. V.S. Prasad, former vice-chancellor of Dr B.R. Ambedkar Open University, will speak on the topic 'NEP 2020 — An integrated approach to Manuu' at the inaugural session at 10.30 am on Saturday.

Prof. S.M. Rahmatullah, Vice Chancellor Manuu, will preside.

According to Prof. Saneem Fatima, dean, SC&BM and academic affairs, Manuu, and convener of the webinar, said the objective is to under-

stand the vision, to identify challenges in the implementation and to prepare a road map for the university in the light of the New Education Policy-2020.

Prof. Mohamad Akhtar Siddiqui, dean, faculty of education, JMI, Prof. Ramesh Ghanta, designated professor, Department of E&T and member, NCTE, Prof. S.M.I.A. Zaidi, Head, Dept of Education, Planning, and Administration (NIEPA) and Prof. V. Venkaiah, former vice chancellor, Krishna University will deliver lectures in four different technical sessions, according to a press statement issued by the university.

Covid doubling
time at 41 days

Curve of daily cases starts moving downward

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The doubling time of the SARS CoV-2 virus, that causes Covid-19, has plunged to 41 days from 15 days recorded in June.

The active cases are 8,94,084, which is about a third of the 25,90,832 cases in the US.

With more than 10 lakh tests being carried out in the country, control of the infection's spread is possible as more people are getting quarantined for asymptomatic cases, opting for home treatment in mild cases and approaching hospitals in case of severe infection.

The bending of the curve in India will mean that the cases in the world will also decline. Researchers from the department of mathematics of The Assam Royal Global University have compared the data of September and October of India, US and the world and found that the global situation is improving. India's reduction in new cases will mark the retardation of cases globally.

This retardation phase is expected speed up as doubling time increases but presently it is still in the exponential phase.

TS RECORDS 1,891 CASES; GOVT
HOSPS TEST 49,411 SAMPLESDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT 9

There were 1,891 new Covid-19 cases on Thursday, taking the total to 2,08,535 in the state, according to the state health department bulletin. Seven deaths were recorded, and the toll stands at 1,208.

Government hospitals tested a high of 49,411 samples out of the total of 53,086.

The number of active cases is 26,374 and 21,801

are undergoing treatment at home.

The GHMC area recorded 285 cases on Thursday, Medchal Malkajgiri 195, Nalgonda 128, Ranga Reddy 175 and Karimnagar 97.

In the precautionary guidelines, the government said those in the 20-50 age group are susceptible and requested them to to out only if essential. Wearing a mask and maintaining social distance is strongly recommended.

Increases in new cases had been observed from August 28 when 76,665 new cases were recorded. September saw a major high with more than 90,000 cases being recorded in 12 days. Since then, the number of daily cases is falling.

Dr K.K. Aggarwal, president of the Confederation of Medical Associations of Asia and Oceania, says "Our new infections have a large number of asymptomatic carriers. These identified patients have

to follow the protocols of quarantine to ensure that they do not spread the infection to others."

Analyses of data from different hospitals around the world show that SARS CoV-2 viral load in asymptomatic individuals and symptomatic patients is the same. It has been noted that asymptomatic individuals have a comparably higher potential of spreading the virus vis-a-vis symptomatic individuals. Hence, wearing masks is important.

71% STUDENTS TAKE LAW CET, PGL CET

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

Osmania University, on behalf of the Telangana State Higher Education Council (TSCHE), conducted the Lawcet 2020 and PGLCET 2020 on Friday under strict observance of Covid-19

safety protocols.

The turnout this year was considerably lower than last year. Out of 21,925 candidates who had registered for the three-year law degree course, only 15,398 appeared. For the five-year course, out of 5,694 applicants, 3,973

appeared for the Lawcet.

For the PGLCET, 2,188 candidates appeared out of the 2,691 registered candidates. The total attendance this year is 71 per cent.

A total of 30,310 candidates had registered for the two tests, the TSCHE said.



Two people walk their pet dog during a drizzle at Filmnagar on Friday. — R. PAVAN



Motorists and pedestrians struggle to wade through waterlogged roads in Hyderabad after a heavy downpour. — DC

Sudden rain catches Hyderabad unawares

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

Inundated roads, and power cuts became a common sight in parts of the city after it was lashed by heavy showers on Friday during the evening hours.

As a result of the rains, areas like Asifnagar, Banjara Hills, Gunfoundry, Ganaaka Bhavan, Navodaya Community Hall, among others were left inundated. They had received 151 mm, 127 mm, 126.3 mm, 123 mm, and 101.3 mm of rainfall respectively.

As of 8 pm the Greater Hyderabad Municipal

POWER ISSUES?
CALL HERE

● If there is any fluctuation in the voltage, if there is any interruption in the power supply, you can complain to the Special Control Room 7382072104, 7382072106, 7382072106, 7382071574 along with the 1912/100 / Local Fuse Off Call Office

Corporation had received 271 rain-related complaints. Similarly, feeders tripped in eight places.

"Our teams serviced all the complaints as and when they came in. We

had calls from places like Banjara Hills, Habsiguda, Saroornagar, Rajendranagar, and a few more. Our teams went to the spot and repaired the feeders and transformers," an official of the Telangana State South-ern Power Distribution Company Limited said.

In the wake of the sudden rains, TSSPDCL chairman and managing director G. Raghuma Reddy asked people not to touch any electric wire, if it was dangling. He appealed to the people to inform the discom for any such issues.

While GHMC and

Legislators
queue up at
special courtVUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

As the special court to try criminal cases against MPs and MLAs at Hyderabad expedited the trial following the directions of the Supreme Court and High Court, legislators and former MLAs queued up at the court on Friday for the hearing of pending against them.

Those seen at the special court were minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, Deputy Speaker Padma Rao Goud, MLAs Muta Gopal, Jagga Reddy, Seethakka, and former MLA Jupally Krishna Rao.

NGO: SPL COURT
NEEDS STAFF,
PROSECUTORSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The Forum for Good Governance, an NGO, has sought directions from the High Court to order the government to constitute a special task force and appoint public prosecutors to assist the special court constituted to try cases filed against MPs and MLAs.

The NGO said the special court was established in 2018 and 30 posts were sanctioned but it has been dysfunctional as it had no public prosecutors and no staff had been appointed.

"There are more than 300 cases against current and former MPs and MLAs, but fewer than 50 per cent cases, around 118, have been transferred to the special court," it said. The judicial officer was appointed 20 months ago but no cases have been disposed of.



From left: T. Satyanarayana and Madhavi show their baby-girl. T. Satyanarayana, cuts the umbilical cord of his child inside the labour room at the Mahbubabad government hospital on Friday.

State hosp allows hubby in
labour room during deliveryANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, OCT. 9

Mahbubabad District Government Hospital has initiated the practice of encouraging normal deliveries and the presence of the husband inside the labour room during delivery.

On Thursday night, a mother delivered a baby-girl in the presence of her husband.

In fact, the doctors even encouraged the father to cut the umbilical cord after the baby was born through normal delivery.

The parents of the child T. Satyanarayana and Madhavi from Chinna Mupparam of Nellikuduru mandal thanked the hospital staff

● HOSPITAL superintendent Dr Bheem Sagar said the system of allowing husbands inside the labour room is a western culture but it has a lot of benefits as it reduces the mental stress of the pregnant women during the process of childbirth.

for their support since the pregnant woman was admitted at 2pm on Thursday. The baby was born at 11pm the same night.

"The hospital staff motivated me a lot towards normal delivery. They even asked me to do exercises

which I did and it helped. My baby and I are healthy and comfortable," Madhavi said.

Hospital superintendent Dr Bheem Sagar said the system of allowing husbands inside the labour room is a western culture but it has a lot of benefits as it reduces the mental stress of the pregnant women during the process of childbirth. The programme will be initially implemented in district government hospitals.

"We explained the husband about our new initiative and he readily agreed to come inside the maternity operation theatre. We are also encouraging normal deliveries," Dr Sagar said.

FORMER MLA FALLS ILL DURING SARI DISTRIBUTION

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOTHAGUDEM, OCT. 9

TRS former MLA Thati Venkateswarlu of Aswaraopet fell uncon-

scious at a programme to distribute Bathukamma saris in Chandrugunda on Friday Venkateswarlu, who had participated in various programmes in Aswaraopet

constituency, was shifted to a hospital in Kothagudem. Doctors said that his sugar and blood pressure levels had increased and treatment is going on.

Graft case hearing
against Naidu put offDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The special court to try Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) cases at Hyderabad on Friday adjourned the hearing to October 21 on a case filed by Nandamuri Lakshmi Parvathi, YSRC leader and wife of former chief minister late N.T. Rama Rao.

Parvathi had filed the case against former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, alleging that the latter had acquired disproportionate assets by corrupt means.

She had filed the case before the ACB special court in 2005. When Naidu filed an appeal challenging that complaint, the then High Court in undivided Andhra Pradesh had granted a stay on the proceedings in the special court.

As the stay orders were vacated recently, the ACB special court heard the case on Friday, in order to follow the directions of the Supreme Court and the Telangana High Court to expedite the hearing of pending cases against serving and former public representatives.

Stop RGV film:
Disha's dad to HCVUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

Seeking a direction to film director Ram Gopal Varma to not make a movie on the gory Disha rape and murder; her father has approached the Telangana High Court. He said that the judicial commission of inquiry into the encounter killing of the four accused is being monitored by the Supreme Court and an inquiry into the incident is still on. It is not proper to make film in this situation.

● HE SAID that the judicial commission of inquiry into the encounter killing of the four accused is being monitored by the Supreme Court and an inquiry into the incident is still on. It is not proper to make film in this situation.

ntral authorities and found that the petitioner had made no representation to them till now. The judge asked the ASG to resolve the representation expeditiously if the petitioner chooses to make one.

The veterinarian doctor, Disha, was kidnapped, raped and killed by four persons late last year. They later burnt her body. The four accused were later arrested and killed in an alleged encounter when they were taken to the spot to recreate the crime scene.

MOINABAD CASE REPORT NEXT WEEK

Hyderabad: Former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir on Friday gave financial assistance of ₹50,000 to the family members of victim of the Moinabad rape and murder when they met him at his residence here. Shabbir

Ali, along with city Congress minorities department chairman Sameer Waliullah spoke to investigation officer Ashok Chakravarty over the phone. A report is expected in the next to three days. — INN

TECH | TALK

Doctors analyse their role era of advanced tech

Experts prefer mind over machine

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

A panel of medical experts at a webinar organised by the FICCI in collaboration with SLG Hospitals and the Telangana State Council discussed the role of technology and artificial intelligence in healthcare.

The issue in focus was whether the use of technology in medicine was a boon or bane, where panelists discussed the role of doctors in the hi-tech era.

The panelists included D.V.S. Soma Raju, Dr V. Jagan Mohan, Dr Pradeep Panigrahi (all from SLG Hospitals), Karan Verma, South Asia head, health-

● DR JAGAN MOHAN said that the advent of modern technology has deprived the new generation of medics of the kind of intrinsic training provided to new doctors in earlier days.

● MEDICAL EXPERTS discussed various impacts of technology in the healthcare sector, like dependence of freshers on hi-tech equipment, role of technology in the Covid times and the need for a balance between mind and machine.

care digital solutions, Wipro GE Healthcare, and Merve Aegit, OIS business line director, TIMEA, Elekta.

During the two-hour discussion, they discussed various impacts of technology in the healthcare sector, like dependence of freshers on hi-tech equipment, role

days.

"While there is no denying that technology is becoming integral to healthcare, and is useful at a time where doctors are being challenged in different ways, it is also not good to be highly dependent on technology," he said.

Conclusive arguments established the fact that the mind and accountability of a doctor cannot be replaced by any machines.

"Man's brain introduced and developed AI, and hence the control over technology should remain in the hands of the developer, and not the other way round," maintained Dr Panigrahi.

of technology in the Covid times and the need for a balance between mind and machine.

Dr Jagan Mohan said that the advent of modern technology has deprived the new generation of medics of the kind of intrinsic training that was provided to new doctors in earlier

SHORT TAKES

TRS LEADER FAINTS DURING SARI DISTRIBUTION

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOTHAGUDEM, OCT. 9

TRS former MLA Thati Venkateswarlu of Aswaraopet fell unconscious at a programme to distribute Bathukamma saris in Chandrugonda on Friday.

Venkateswarlu, who had participated in various programmes in Aswaraopet constituency, was shifted to a hospital in Kothagudem.

Doctors said that his sugar and blood pressure levels had increased and treatment is going on. Transport minister Puvvada Ajay called on the doctors and enquired about the former MLA's health. He said that Vankateswarlu will be shifted to Hyderabad if needed.

LECTURER DIES BY SUICIDE IN FORT WARANGAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, OCT. 9

A 55-year-old part-time lecturer, who was mentally disturbed due to financial problems after losing his job following the Coronavirus pandemic, committed suicide by consuming pesticide in Fort Warangal on Friday.

The deceased, M. Mahinder was working as a part-time lecturer in the Government Junior College in Mulugu district. He did not receive pay for the past seven months as the college remained closed due to the lockdown.

Addicted to alcohol, he picked up arguments with his wife and son demanding money. On Thursday night, he demanded money to buy alcohol but the family members refused to oblige. Mahinder came out of the house and consumed pesticide, said police.

Mills Colony inspector J. Ravi Kiran said that a case has been registered. The body has been shifted to MGM Hospital for post-mortem.

MAOISTS DITCH THE OLIVE GREEN DRESS CODE

PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, OCT. 9

To avoid being identified by the police and police informants, Maoists are ditching their olive-green dress code, for plain clothes. Moreover, they are no longer confining themselves to the forests.

The two Maoists killed, in the recent encounter at Kadamba in Kagaznagar mandal on September 19, were found wearing plain clothes.

Maoists are changing with the times. Before, one could spot them because of their olive green attire and weapons. Now, this has changed.

Police claimed that a group of Maoists took shelter in the cotton fields in an interior village near Asifabad district headquarters.

Maoists no longer move in groups and Dalam. Instead, they move with an 'action team' that comprises of one or two members as it gets difficult to identify them. They move like commoners, carrying short weapons.

With the increase in the movement of Maoists and the recent encounter at Kadamba, the police department has tightened safety measures for its officials moving in the rural and tribal areas.

Police from the Special Branch and intelligence wing move in plain clothes in the rural areas collecting information about the movements of Maoists.

News is that some police informants who were active till recent times are lying low after the Kadamba encounter.

The state committee member of the CPI (Maoist), Mylarapu Adellu alias Bhaskar, had alleged in a statement, that the police had taken the two Maoists into custody based on information provided by a police informant, and killed them in a fake encounter at Kadamba.

● **MAOISTS ARE** changing with the times. Before, one could spot them because of their olive green attire and weapons. Now, this has changed.

● **MAOISTS NO** longer move in groups and Dalam. Instead, they move with an 'action team' that comprises of one or two members as it gets difficult to identify them.



TRS MLC candidate K. Kavitha visits Bodhan town in Nizamabad district during the MLC byelection on Friday. Also seen in Bodhan MLA Shakil. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

99.63% vote registered in Nizamabad MLC bypoll

Of the 824 voters, 821 exercised their franchise in the 2 districts

NARENDER
PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 9

A total of 99.63 per cent voting was registered in the byelection to the Telangana Legislative Council from the Nizamabad local authorities' constituency on Friday.

Of the total 824 voters, 821 exercised their franchise spread over 50 polling stations in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. Interestingly, 11 Covid-19 positive voters turned up in PPE kits.

All 341 voters in Kamareddy district cast their votes and registered 100 per cent polling. In Nizamabad district, of 483 voters, 480 voters turned up under tight police security.

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) candidate K. Kavitha visited the polling stations in Kamareddy and Bodhan along with Government whip Gampa Govardhan



A Covid-19 positive voter comes out of a polling station after franchising his vote in the MLC byelection in Nizamabad on Friday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

and Bodhan MLA Shakil. Minister V. Prashanth Reddy monitored the polling process in the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation and Armoor and Bheemgal municipalities.

Medical teams were stationed at polling stations. Poll observer

Veerabramhaiah and district collector C. Narayana Reddy also monitored the polling process.

In the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation, MLAs Bigala Ganesh Gupta, Bajireddy Govardhan, A. Jeevan Reddy, MLCs D. Rajeshwar, V.G. Goud,

● **IN THE** Nizamabad Municipal Corporation, MLAs Bigala Ganesh Gupta, Bajireddy Govardhan, A. Jeevan Reddy, MLCs D. Rajeshwar, V.G. Goud, Akula Lalitha voted as ex-officio members in the local bodies.

Akula Lalitha voted as ex-officio members in the local bodies.

The TRS, Congress, BJP, MIM elected representatives reached polling stations separately while police restricted entry of the media into the polling station in Nizamabad.

Nizamabad MP D. Arvind charged that the byelection was conducted undemocratically and the code of conduct was violated only because they wanted to ensure Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's daughter K. Kavitha's victory.

BJP PROTESTS AGAINST VIOLATION OF 'CODE' IN BYPOLL

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 9

The BJP staged a protest at the MLC byelection polling station on Friday alleging violation of the model code of conduct by TRS leaders.

Nizamabad MP D. Arvind, BJP state executive committee members Dhanpal Suryanarayana Gupta, Palke Ganga Reddy, BJP district president Baswapuram Laxminarsaiah and other leaders staged a protest near the zilla parishad office. They argued with the police officials about the violation of the code of conduct.

BJP district president Laxminarsaiah brought the violation of code issue to the notice of additional deputy police commissioner Usha Vishwanath Tirunagari.

Nizamabad MP D. Arvind said that the Nizamabad urban MLA's camp office was misused, during the MLC byelection. "Money was offered to voters to favour TRS MLC candidate K. Kavitha. This, despite the TRS having a comfortable majority in the MLC elections," he said, adding that the people of Nizamabad had defeated K. Kavitha in the last Parliament elections. She is trying to enter into district politics against the wishes of people and the cadre. We the (BJP) will detach her soon from Nizamabad politics. Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has encouraged undemocratic politics in the state, particularly in Nizamabad district.

The MP also alleged that the police officials failed to initiate action against the TRS leaders on their undemocratic attitude. Few police officers are cooperating with the TRS and encouraging their misdeeds, he said. He questioned why the police officials insisted on a model code of conduct for only the BJP leaders.

● **The MP alleged** that the police officials failed to initiate action against the TRS leaders in this regard.



Kancharla Kanakaiah caught by the Task Force police from Sircilla town in Rajanna Sircilla district selling variety of rings, coloured stones and thayattu on Friday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

Two arrested for looting people with black magic

DC CORRESPONDENT
SIRCILLA, OCT. 9

The task force police nabbed two persons who were cheating the people by making them believe that they will get rid of Coronavirus with black magic and their spiritual powers here in Rajanna Sircilla district on Friday.

The accused two were identified as Kancharla Kanakaiah, resident of Pathipaka street, Sircilla town and Jagiri Parsharamulu, resident of Venkatapuram village of Yellareddypet mandal.

According to the police, the accused to earn easy money started cheating

the people in the name of black magic taking advantage of their gullibility by giving them a wide variety of rings, coloured stones and thayattu. Many people from other districts also fell victim to these two and lost money believing in superstitions and black magic.

Receiving information in a tip off, the police conducted raids at two different places and nabbed Kanakaiah and Parsharamulu and seized rings, coloured stones and other materials from their possession. The police registered a case and have started an investigation.



Jagiri Parsharamulu caught by the Task Force police from Yellareddypet mandal in Rajanna Sircilla district on Saturday.

KEEPING TO | TRADITION In the last four years, the government has spent ₹1,033 cr towards buying saris

Bathukamma sari distribution begins in Telangana

ANUDEEP
CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, OCT. 9

The distribution of Bathukamma saris to women by the state government has begun. The saris were offered, to the Goddess Bhadrakali at Warangal and the tribal deities Sammakka and Saralamma at the Medaram shrine in Mulugu district on Friday.

Minister for women and child welfare, Satyavathi Rathod, Chief Whip Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar, Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) mayor Gunda Prakash Rao, collector Rajeev Gandhi Hanumanthu and GWMC commissioner Pamela Satpathy participated in the special prayers seeking the blessings of goddess Bhadrakali to make the programme a success.

Similarly, prayers were held at Medaram by minister Satyavathi and Mahubabad MP M. Kavitha.

Speaking at the Bhadrakali temple, Satyavathi Rathod said that the saris are a small gift from the state government to encourage poor women to celebrate the Bathukamma festival with enthusiasm.

Even though it is a small gift, its intention is good. The state has spent ₹317 crores and got one crore saris with 287 different designs made.

Girls, having a white ration card and over 18 years will receive the saris.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao gave employment to the weavers during the Covid-19 times, because of which the state did not have any suicides, she said.

"Of the one crore saris, 89,28,700 saris are 6.30 meters long and 9,21,300 saris are 9 meters long. In the last four years, the government has spent ₹1,033 crore towards buying

● **BEFORE BEGINNING** distribution, the saris were offered, to the Goddess Bhadrakali at Warangal and the tribal deities Sammakka and Saralamma at the Medaram shrine in Mulugu district on Friday.

bathukamma saris," the minister said

Chief Whip Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar said that since the formation of the state, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) government has continuously pursued development and welfare programmes for the betterment of the weaker sections of the community.

City mayor Gunda Prakash Rao said that the CM has taken up the role of a big brother, father and uncle to the women of the state and provided saris to them for the Bathukamma festival.

GWMC Commissioner Pamela Satpathy said that on Friday 4,364 saris were distributed in the 24th Division and 3,555 saris in the 27th Division.



Mahbubabad MP Maloth Kavitha offers Bathukamma saris to Sammakka and Saralamma at Medaram on Friday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

PULI SHARATH
KUMAR | DC
KARIMNAGAR/SIRCILLA,
OCT. 9

Distribution of Bathukamma saris has begun in Telangana on a grand note. Minister for Backward Class, food and civil supplies, Gangula Kamalakara participated in the Bathukamma sari distribution programme at Kisannagar in Karimnagar district on Friday.

Mr Kamalakara said that to help the weaver community, the state government gave bulk orders for Bathukamma saris. In the

last five years, the government has purchased five crore saris from the weavers of Sircilla. The weavers received employment and can lead a better life.

Under the supervision of IT and textile minister, K. T. Rama Rao, the saris manufactured this year have 275 different designs and are available in 280 colours. In the coming three to four days, every household in the district will receive a Bathukamma sari. However, from October 12 onwards, the Bathukamma saris will be distributed, from the ration shops to girls

above the age of 18 years.

City mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao said that the TRS government is continuously pursuing the development and welfare activities since formation.

District collector K. Shashanka, municipal commissioner V.Kranthi, Deputy mayor Challa Swarupa Rani, RDO Anand Kumar along with others were present.

In Sircilla : District collector D. Krishna Bhaskar distributed Bathukamma saris at Vilasagar in Boipally mandal on Friday. He asked the officials to dis-



Palair MLA K Upender Reddy distributing Bathukamma saris in Rajupet village in Kusumanchi mandal in Khammam district on Friday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

TRS leaders distribute saris

RAVINDRA SESHU
KHAMMAM, OCT. 9

Leaders of the TRS have begun distributing the Bathukamma saris. In Palair MLA Kandala Upender Reddy distributed saris in Anasagaram village under Nelakondapalli mandal. Wyra MLA Lavudya Ramulu Naik gave saris to women in a pro-

gramme held in Julurpad. Sattupalli MLA Sandra Venkata Veeraliah said that the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has been taking forward the traditions and culture of Telangana through the Bathukamma programme. The MLA distributed saris to women in Kallur.

Inaugurating a programme in Khammam, minis-

ter for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar said that the government is distributing saris to one crore women in Telangana spending ₹317 crores. Kothagudem MLA Vanama Venkateswara Rao, Yellandu MLA Hari Priya Naik and Pinapaka MLA Rega Kantha Rao distributed Bathukamma saris in their respective assembly constituencies.



A woman hugs BC minister Gangula Kamalakara after receiving a Bathukamma sari in Karimnagar on Friday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

SHORT TAKES

STEADY DIP
IN ACTIVE
COVID-19 CASESDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 9

Union health ministry on Friday said that India continues to report a trend of steadily dipping active cases and after a month, for the first time, active cases have come down below the 9-lakh mark. India registered 8.93 lakh active cases on Friday after registering 8.97 lakh on September 9. Health ministry officials said the active cases at present comprise 12.94% of the total positive cases of the country “demonstrating a steady falling percentage of the total cases.

India on Friday had 69.06 lakh cases out of which 70,496 were detected in the last 24 hours. The total number of deaths is 1.06 lakh out of which 964 fatalities were recorded in just one day. According to health ministry data, 78% of the new cases are from 10 states and UTs out of which Maharashtra continues to report very high number of new cases with more than 13,000 cases followed by Karnataka with more than 10,000 cases.

BIEGUN TO VISIT
INDIA AND
BANGLADESH

Hyderabad: Deputy Secretary of State Stephen E. Biegun will travel to India and Bangladesh from October 12-16. From October 12-14, he will visit New Delhi, where he will meet with senior government officials and deliver keynote remarks at the India-U.S. Forum.

Building on Secretary Mike Pompeo's October 6 meeting with Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar and ahead of the U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue later this year, Biegun's engagements in India will focus on advancing the United States-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and how the United States and India can work together to advance peace, prosperity, and security in the Indo-Pacific and around the globe.

From October 14-16, Deputy Secretary Biegun will visit Dhaka, to meet with senior government officials and reaffirm the United States-Bangladesh partnership.

BHIMA-KOREGAON:
STAN SWAMY
ARRESTEDSHAHAB ANSARI | DC
MUMBAI, OCT. 9

The NIA on Friday filed a charge-sheet against eight people, including activists Gautam Navlakha and 82-year-old Father Stan Swamy, for their alleged involvement in inciting a mob to violence at Bhima-Koregaon.

The NIA arrested Swamy on Thursday from his home in Ranchi, brought him to Mumbai and produced him before a court which remanded him to judicial custody till October 23. The agency filed the second supplementary charge sheet when Swamy was produced before the court. Since the beginning Swamy has claimed that he has never been to Bhima-Koregaon. Those who have been chargesheeted include Fr Swamy (83), Prof Anand Telumbde (70), Gautam Navlakha (67), Prof Hany Babu (54), members of cultural group Kabir Kala Manch — Sagar Gorkhe (32), Ramesh Gaichor (38) and Jyoti Jagtap.

RAJ PRIEST SET ON
FIRE BY LAND
GRABBERS, DIES

Jaipur, Oct. 9: A priest died after being set on fire allegedly by five people who wanted to encroach on temple land in Rajasthan's Karauli district, police said on Friday.

The five accused allegedly poured petrol on Babu Lal Vaishnav and set him on fire in Bukna village on Wednesday. He was referred to the SMS hospital in Jaipur in a critical condition. Vaishnav succumbed to injuries on Thursday night.

Two accused have been rounded up and are being interrogated, SP, Karauli, Mrudul Kachhawa, said.

Police said the accused wanted to encroach upon the land of the temple. A case of attempt to murder was registered on Thursday and now it will be converted into a murder case after the death of the priest, the SP said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays tribute to Union minister and Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Ram Vilas Paswan after his demise on Thursday evening, at his Janpath residence in New Delhi on Friday.

— PTI

JD(U) list bears stamp of
Nitish's social engineering

Nitish has made a sagacious attempt to consolidate his EBC support base

Patna, Oct. 9: The list of JD(U) candidates for the Bihar Assembly elections bears the unmistakable stamp of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has made a sagacious attempt to consolidate his extremely backward castes (EBC) support base while trying to make a dent into RJD's Muslim-Yadav combine.

In accordance with the seat-sharing formula for the 243-member Assembly, the JD(U) has got 122 seats but is contesting only 115, leaving the remaining seven for the Hindustani Awam Morcha of former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, who is back in the NDA.

The EBCs, numerically large but disorganised, have found a pride of place in the list, with 19 candidates drawn from this social segment, nurtured over the years by Kumar as a bulwark against the RJD.

Kumar, as part of his social engineering, zealously courted them through welfare measures like sub-quotas for them in government jobs in an attempt to make inroads into RJD supreme Lalu Prasad's once solid OBC support base. For years the OBCs had almost voted for the RJD en bloc before Kumar parted ways with the

Lalu gets bail in Chaibasa case; in jail in another case

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 9

The Jharkhand High Court on Friday granted bail to RJD chief Lalu Yadav in a fodder scam case involving the illegal withdrawal of funds from the Chaibasa treasury. The case pertains to fraudulent withdrawal of ₹33.67 crore from Chaibasa treasury in Jharkhand during 1992-93 when he was the chief minister of undivided Bihar.

While granting bail, the court asked him to submit two personal bonds of ₹50,000 each and deposit ₹2 lakh. According to

Yadav chieftain.

Even more conspicuous is the candidature of 19 Yadavs, numerically the largest caste group in Bihar who have, by and large, stood rock solid behind the RJD.

Yadav candidates like sitting MLAs Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Poonam Yadav are old JD(U) hands.

However, new entrants

Lalu Yadav's counsel “the bail was granted after he completed half of the punishment of five years in the particular case”.

They, however, added that “Lalu Yadav will remain in prison as he has been convicted in other fodder scam cases”.

Sources said that the court on Friday heard only the petition related to Chaibasa treasury while another case related to Dumka treasury is to come up for hearing on November 9.

Lalu Yadav has been languishing in jail since December 2017. He was shifted to Rajendra Institute of Medical

Sciences (RIMS) Ranchi in March 2018 after his health condition deteriorated. However, recently he was shifted to Kelly bungalow on the hospital premises due to Covid-19.

The court's verdict has come as a huge relief for the RJD ahead of Assembly elections scheduled to begin from October 28. Talking to reporters in Patna RJD spokesperson Shakti Yadav said that, “the party has welcomed the court's verdict and hopes to see him out of jail soon. Lalu Yadav is a mass leader and always raised his voice for poor and deprived”.

Jaivardhan Yadav is the grandson of Congress veteran late Ram Lakhman Singh Yadav, a former union minister and the most formidable Yadav leader in Bihar of the pre-Mandal era.

With 18 Yadav and 11 Muslim nominees, the JD(U) also seems to have sought to make a dent into the RJDs famed MY combination, the bedrock of the party's support base.

The candidature of 12 Kurmis, who are numerically small, is hardly surprising. The community takes pride in the fact that the chief minister is from amongst them. Of strategic importance, though, is party tickets to 15 Kushwahas, numerically the largest among OBCs after the Yadavs.

Kurmis and Koeris, the caste name by which Kushwahas are more popularly known, have been seen as political comrades in arms. Their camaraderie have earned them the sobriquet Luv-Kush in the political parlance of Bihar. —PTI

returning to the NDA. Roy, who has been fielded from his pocket borough Parsa, is the father of Aishwarya Roy, who got married to the RJD supreme's elder son Tej Pratap Yadav in 2018 but was abandoned by her husband barely six months after tying the knot.

Jaivardhan, who won Paliganj for the RJD in

2015, walked into the JD(U) camp a couple of months ago. His exit seems to have made things too hot to handle for the RJD which has handed over Paliganj to the CPI(ML) as part of a hurriedly cobbled alliance.

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Modi said, “The other suggestion I have is that we can separate oxygen from the air using this same turbine...If this can be done, one wind turbine can then provide drinking water, oxygen, and energy...Can your scientists do something to innovate in that direction?”

Hitting back at Gandhi, Union minister Piyush Goyal said, “Nobody around Rahul Gandhi has the guts to tell him that he doesn't understand. He mocks Narendra Modi's ideas when the CEO of the world's leading company endorses them.”

He also tagged a news report with his tweet that says wind turbines create water from thin air.

Textile minister Smriti Irani also took on Gandhi on Twitter, referring to him as ‘Yuvraj’, and saying that he was ignorant and doesn't understand.

She tweeted, “They say ignorance is bliss, but rarely in Indian politics has an individual made a conscious effort to sustain his ignorance. It seems the real danger to the Congress flourishes unabashedly and no one seems to have the guts to tell the Yuvraj otherwise”.

1.04 lakh firearms
deposited with
police in MPRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 9

Bandits no longer rule Madhya Pradesh's badlands of Chambal. But, the legacy of gun culture left behind by them continues to thrive in the region.

The growing firearm enthusiasts in the region are a testimony to it.

Come elections, the 'proud owners' of firearms, in varying sizes and designs, stand in long queues before the local police stations to deposit their licensed weapons.

This is a common sight in the seven districts of the Gwalior-Chambal region during the poll time.

Of the 28 Assembly constituencies going to by-elections in MP on November 3, 16 fall in Gwalior-Chambal region.

A staggering number of 1.04 lakh firearms, including 12 bore guns, 315 bore rifles, revolvers and pistols, have so far been deposited in Gwalior-Chambal region in the state ahead of November 3 by-elections in 28 assembly constituencies in MP.

“Another one lakh weapons are to be deposited in the police stations in the area in coming days”, a senior police officer posted in the region told this newspaper on Friday.

“Guns have become social

status in the region. The culture traces back to Mughal era. But, the yester-years bandits of Chambal have romanticised the gun culture in the region”, the police officer said.

“The gun culture runs in the veins of the region”, Gwalior district superintendent of police Amit Sanghi said.

Of the 1.04 lakh weapons deposited in Gwalior-Chambal region, maximum number of 29,000 guns has been deposited in Gwalior district.

Similarly, 27,000 firearms have been deposited in Morena district, 22,000 in Bhind district, 10,000 in Shivpuri, a little over 8,000 in Datia district, around 4,500 in Guna district and 3,800 weapons have been deposited in Ashok Nagar district.

The weapons are deposited in the local police stations till the completion of the whole election process.

“People become emotional while depositing their weapons, their most loved possession, with the local police stations”, Giriraj Rajoria, a social activist of Morena district told this newspaper.

“The guns have become an inseparable part of the culture of people in the region. Hardly, a festival in the region is celebrated without celebratory firing”, he added.

Rahul hits out at
Modi over wind
turbines suggestionDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 9

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday took a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his suggestion that wind turbines can be used to generate clean drinking water, oxygen and energy, evoking sharp reactions from BJP leaders who said he needs to read scientific papers.

Gandhi tweeted, “The real danger to India isn't that our PM doesn't understand. It's the fact that nobody around him has the guts to tell him,” he also posted a video of the Prime Minister's views on wind turbines expressed a few days ago during an interaction with Henrik Andersen, head of Danish wind turbine-maker Vestas.

In the video, the Prime Minister is heard saying that if wind turbines could collect moisture from air, besides producing power, it could help tackle drinking water shortage.

Modi said, “The other suggestion I have is that we can separate oxygen from the air using this same turbine...If this can be done, one wind turbine can then provide drinking water, oxygen, and energy...Can your scientists do something to innovate in that direction?”

25 civilians killed
in kangaroo
court, say MaoistsRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 9

Maoists have owned up the responsibility of killing 25 people, executed in their kangaroo court, in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Bijapur in the last one month.

A press release issued by Dandakaranya special zonal committee of outlawed CPI (Maoist) said the 25 people were executed after being convicted in the ‘jan adalat’ or kangaroo court of Maoists, for spying for police and sabotaging the Naxal movement.

The press release was signed by the spokesman of the Dandakaranya special zonal committee under his Maoist name, Vikalpa.

Of those executed in the kangaroo court, 12 were ‘gopaniya sainiks’ or secret soldiers, appointed unofficially by Chhattisgarh police, five

● OF THOSE executed in the kangaroo court, 12 were ‘gopaniya sainiks’ or secret soldiers, appointed unofficially by Chhattisgarh police, five were saboteurs of the Maoist movement, and eight were police informers.

were saboteurs of the Maoist movement, and eight were police informers, the release said.

The press release said the divisional committee member and in-charge of Gangaloor area committee of Maoists Vijja Modium alias Badru was killed after being convicted by ‘jan adalat’ for spying for police.

Chhattisgarh police had earlier claimed that Badru, carrying a bounty of ₹8 lakh on his head was killed in fratricidal killing among Naxal cadres on October one over killing of civilians in Bijapur district by Maoists.



IN BRIEF

Japan gears up for typhoon

Tokyo: A slow-moving typhoon off Japan's southern coast has triggered gusts and rain across a large part of the country and could bring heavy rains to the Tokyo region early next week, though it was not expected to make landfall, officials said on Friday. Disaster officials, nevertheless, urged residents to take precautions early. Typhoon Chan-hom was south of Japan's Shikoku island on Friday afternoon with maximum winds of 126 kilometres (78 miles) per hour, the Meteorological Agency said. The agency said Chan-hom took a route farther from the Japanese coast than expected and was not expected to make a landfall.

Another hurricane to hit Louisiana

Abbeville: Boarded windows and empty sidewalks made parts of Louisiana's Acadiana region look like empty movie sets as major Hurricane Delta roared ever closer to the US Gulf coast, apparently on track to smash into the same southwestern part of the state where Hurricane Laura blasted ashore six weeks ago. Forecasters said Delta — the 25th named storm of an unprecedented Atlantic hurricane season — would likely crash ashore on Friday evening somewhere on southwest Louisiana's coast. The question was whether it would remain at devastating Category 3 strength or drop just before landfall to a still extremely dangerous Category 2 storm — with winds falling below 110 miles per hour (177 kph).

Venezuelans flee on foot as troubles rise

Pamplona: Eleazar Hernández slept on a sidewalk amid a light drizzle, temperatures that dipped close to freezing and the roar of passing trucks. The 23-year-old Venezuelan migrant was trying to make it to the Colombian city of Medellín with his wife, who is seven months pregnant. But the couple had run out of money for transportation by the time they reached Pamplona, a small mountain town over 300 miles (482 km) away from their final destination. Unable to buy a bus ticket, Hernández pinned his hopes on catching a ride on the back of a truck. It was the safest way to cross the Paramo de Berlin, a freezing plateau located at 13,000 feet (4,000 meters). "My wife can barely walk," said Hernández, who had spent four days sleeping on Pamplona's sidewalks. "We need transport to get us out of here." After months of Covid-19 lockdowns that halted one of the world's biggest migration movements in recent years, Venezuelans are once again fleeing their nation's economic and humanitarian crisis.

ANTIBODIES FOUND IN BLOOD, SALIVA OF COVID PATIENTS

Boston, Oct. 9: Scientists, including one of Indian-origin, have documented the persistence of antibodies that target the Coronavirus in the blood and saliva of patients with Covid-19 at least three months after symptom onset, a finding that may lead to alternative methods of testing for the viral infection.

The study, published in the journal Science, points to the IgG class of antibodies as the longest-lasting antibodies detectable in the patients during this time frame, and may serve as promising targets to detect and evaluate immune responses against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. According to the researchers, including those from the Harvard Medical School in the US, these antibodies could be detected at similar levels in both blood and saliva, suggesting that saliva could be used as an alternative biofluid for antibody testing. In the research, Anita Iyer and her team measured antibody responses in the blood of 343 patients with Covid-19 for up to 122 days after symptom onset, and compared these responses to those of 1,548 control individuals sampled before the pandemic.

The scientists focused only on antibodies specific to the receptor binding domain of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein which it uses to enter host cells. They estimated sensitivities of the antibody types IgG, IgA, and IgM at 95 per cent, 90 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively, for detecting infected individuals between 15 to 28 weeks after symptom onset.

RIVALS RALLY IN KYRGYZSTAN AS PRESIDENT AGREES TO QUIT

Bishkek: Thousands were out in the streets of Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek on Friday as rival factions made grabs for power and embattled pro-Russian President Sooronbay Jeenbekov said he was ready to resign to end days of post-election chaos.

There has been little evidence of central government in Bishkek since a parliamentary vote in the ex-Soviet republic on Sunday sparked protests that morphed into violent unrest.

One person has been killed and more than a thousand injured in the violence. On Friday Jeenbekov signed off on the resignation of the government in place before the election, which opposition parties say was rigged by massive vote-buying in favour of parties close to the president. — *AFP*

PAK BANS TIKTOK CITING 'IMMORAL' CONTENT ON APP

Islamabad, Oct. 9: Pakistan's telecom watchdog on Friday banned the popular Chinese video-sharing app TikTok after getting numerous complaints against its "immoral" content.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) said in a statement that a "number of complaints from different segments of the society" were made "against immoral/indecent content" on TikTok.

The regulator took the step after a "final notice" was given to TikTok to comply with the instructions for development of an effective mechanism for a proactive moderation of its unlawful online contents, it said. — *PTI*

CHINA JOINS COVAX PACT FOR GLOBAL SUPPLY OF VIRUS VACCINES

Beijing, Oct. 9: China has officially joined the World Health Organisation's (WHO) COVAX alliance to equitably distribute Covid-19 vaccines around the globe, ending speculation that it plans to supply them on its own to developing countries to improve its image dented by the pandemic since it emerged in Wuhan in December last year.

According to the WHO, countries should join the Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX Facility) by September 18 but not later than October 9 with upfront payments. "On October 8, China and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, signed an agreement, officially joining COVAX," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a statement on Friday.

"This is an important step China has taken to uphold the concept of a shared community of health for all and to honour its commitment to turn Covid-19 vaccines into a global public good," she said, apparently refuting reports that China plans to distribute the vaccines to developing countries on its own ahead of developed countries. — *PTI*

Germany empties squatters



A policeman stands inside the squatted building at Liebig Street 34 after the eviction of squatters in the east Berlin neighbourhood of Friedrichshain on Friday. — *AFP*

UN World Food Programme wins Nobel Prize for Peace

Rome, Oct. 9: The United Nations' World Food Programme won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for its efforts to fight hunger in regions of conflict and hardship around the globe. From air-dropping food in South Sudan to creating an emergency delivery service to keep aid flowing despite Coronavirus travel restrictions, the Rome-based organisation has long specialised in getting assistance to some of the world's most dangerous and precarious places.

It provided assistance to almost 100 million people in 88 countries last year.

● **IT PROVIDED assistance to almost 100 million people in 88 countries last year.**

"With this year's award, the (committee) wishes to turn the eyes of the world to the millions of people who suffer from or face the threat of hunger," said Berit Reiss-Andersen, the chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, announcing the award in Oslo. "The World Food Programme plays a key role in multilateral cooperation on making food security an instrument of peace."

The head of the organi-

sation said his entire team deserved the award. "I know I'm not deserving of an award like this, but all the men and women around the world in the World Food Programme and our partners who put their lives on the line every day," David Beasley said.

Beasley said he found out about the award from a WFP media officer. The organisation has long been headed by an American, and US President Donald Trump nominated the former Republican governor of South Carolina for the post in 2017. — *AP*

FB deletes fake profiles backing Trump

Menlo Park (US), Oct. 9: Facebook has removed 276 accounts that used fake profiles to pose as right-leaning Americans and comment on news articles, often in favour of President Donald Trump, the company announced on Thursday. The platform also permanently banned an Arizona-based digital communications firm that it said was behind the fake accounts.

The move was prompted by reporting last month in The Washington Post that a

pro-Trump group known as Turning Point Action was paying teenagers to post coordinated, supportive messages, a violation of Facebook's rules.

Facebook and Twitter have been regularly removing fake accounts — both domestic and foreign — that try to insert themselves in the US political discourse and influence the election. But social media companies face broader threats around misinformation and voter suppression that at times come

from President Donald Trump himself. The latest network Facebook removed became active before the 2018 midterm elections and went dormant until June, when the accounts began posting on topics including the

Coronavirus pandemic, criticism of the Democratic Party and its nominee, former Vice President Joe Biden, as well as praise for Trump and other Republicans.

"So sick of democrats continuing to make repub-

licans look bad! It makes me tired of politics and I just believe Republicans are much more humble when it comes to money because Democrats will do anything to screw over Americans," read one post Facebook cited as an example.

Individuals behind the accounts used stock photos to create fake profiles, many of which were removed by Facebook's automated detection software. Facebook determined that the accounts were being coordinated by

Bid to kidnap Michigan Gov.

13 charged in plotting abduction, says police

Detroit, Oct. 9: Agents foiled a stunning plot to kidnap Michigan Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, authorities said on Thursday in announcing charges in an alleged scheme that involved months of planning and even rehearsals to snatch Whitmer from her vacation home.

Six men were charged in federal court with conspiring to kidnap the governor in reaction to what they viewed as her "uncontrolled power," according to a federal complaint. Separately, seven others were charged under the state's anti-terrorism laws for allegedly targeting police and the state Capitol.

"All of us in Michigan can disagree about politics, but those disagreements should never, ever amount to violence. Violence has been prevented today," Detroit U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider said.

The six men charged in federal court plotted for months, consulting and training with members of a group that federal authorities described as a militia, and undertaking rehearsals in August and September, according to an FBI affidavit. They were arrested on Wednesday night and face up to life in prison if convicted. Four planned to meet on Wednesday to "make a payment on explosives and exchange tactical gear," the FBI said in the court filing.

The FBI quoted one of the accused as saying Whitmer "has no checks and balances at all. She has uncontrolled power right now. All good things must come to an end." Andrew Birge, the U.S. attorney in western Michigan, called them "violent extremists." — *AP*

Amid Covid, Trump plans rally in Florida

Washington, Oct. 9: Donald Trump, who is still recovering from Covid-19, has suggested he might organise a rally in Florida on Saturday, while continuing to ignore questions on whether he has yet tested negative for the disease.

On Thursday night, Trump said: "I think I'm going to try doing a rally on Saturday night if we can, if we have enough time to put it together."

"But we want to do a rally in Florida, probably in Florida on Saturday night, might come back and do one in Pennsylvania, on the following night."

At least one Trump rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, has been linked by a local health official to a spike in Coronavirus cases. Most supporters at recent Trump events have eschewed masks and social distancing measures to slow the spread of disease. On asking whether he had yet to test negative for Coronavirus — or whether he had been tested at all since his positive test last week — the president did not directly respond, instead touting the experimental drugs he had been treated with. He said he would be likely be tested on Friday. — *Agencies*

Pelosi doubts Trump's fitness to serve nation

Washington, Oct. 9: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is questioning President Donald Trump's fitness to serve, announcing legislation on Thursday that would create a commission to allow Congress to intervene under the 25th Amendment and remove the president from executive duties.

Just weeks before the November 3 election, Pelosi said Trump needs to disclose more about his health after his Covid-19 diagnosis. She noted Trump's "strange tweet" halting talks on a new Coronavirus aid package — he subsequently tried to reverse course — and said Americans need to know

when, exactly, he first contracted Covid as others in the White House became infected.

On Friday, she plans to roll out the legislation that would launch the commission for review. "The public needs to know the health condition of the president," Pelosi said, later invoking the 25th Amendment, which allows a president's cabinet or Congress to intervene when a president is unable to conduct the duties of the office. Trump responded swiftly via Twitter.

"Crazy Nancy is the one who should be under observation. They don't call her Crazy for nothing!" the president said. — *AP*

US military not informed about leaving Afghan

Washington, Oct. 9: The US military was blindsided on Thursday by President Donald Trump's assertion that all US troops will be out of Afghanistan by the end of the year, with US officials saying they are not aware of such a plan and have gotten no actual order to accelerate the more gradual pullout they've been executing.

Trump's comments, laid out in a confusing progression of comments and a tweet, alarmed Pentagon and State officials who fear that putting a definitive date on troop withdrawal could undercut negotiations to finalise a peace deal between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

They also fear a hasty withdrawal could force the US to leave behind sensitive military equipment. And they continue to stress that the Taliban has still not met requirements to reduce

violence against the Afghans, a key element of the US withdrawal plan. The Taliban welcomed Trump's announcements, which started with a tweet on Wednesday saying "we should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas". He reinforced early withdrawal plans on Thursday morning, in an interview that understated the number of troops currently in Afghanistan.

"We're down to 4,000 troops in Afghanistan. I'll have them home by the end of the year. They're coming home, you know, as we speak. Nineteen years is enough. They're acting as policemen, OK? They're not acting as troops," Trump said.

Multiple US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they know of no plan for either new deadline. — *AP*

Biden slams Don over remarks on Harris

Washington, Oct. 9: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has described President Donald Trump's remarks about Kamala Harris after a debate between her and Vice President Mike Pence as "despicable" and "beneath the office of the presidency".

Pence and Biden's running mate Harris came face to face in the vice presidential debate on Wednesday, which saw sparring over Trump's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, jobs,

China, racial tensions and climate change. Trump and Biden have separately lauded their deputies. In an interview on Thursday, Trump hit out at Harris saying, if Biden wins the November 3 US Elections, Harris will take over as president in a month's time. "She is a communist. She's not a socialist. She's well beyond a socialist. Take a look at her views. She wants to open up the borders to allow killers and murderers and rapists to pour into our country," he said.

Hours later, Biden hit out Trump for his remarks, saying the American people are sick and tired of it. "It's despicable, so beneath the office of the presidency and the American people are sick and tired of it. They know who this man is, it's got to stop," Biden said in the battle ground of State of Arizona with Harris by his side.

"This (Harris) is a person who is ready on day one to be president of the United States of America. This is a person who has more

integrity in her little finger than most people have in their whole body... He (Trump) has great difficulty dealing with strong women," the Democratic presidential candidate said. "You did a great job," he told Harris.

Responding to a query, Biden said there is no place for hate in America. "Both of us have been talking about this for some time, about how white supremacists and these militias are a genuine threat," he said. — *PTI*

PANDEMIC | DEFYING Government data says more than 45% of population took inter-country trips

637mn Chinese travel on Golden Week holiday

Hong Kong, Oct. 9: Some 637 million Chinese tourists took domestic trips during the eight-day Golden Week holiday, spending the equivalent of tens of billions of dollars at a time when China is seeking to boost consumer spending to stimulate the economy.

The holiday, which began on October 1, saw more than 45% of China's population take trips within the country and spend 466.6 billion yuan (\$69.5 billion), according to data from China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism. That marked a decline of 21% for domestic tourists from last year's Golden Week and a 30% decline for spending. Still the numbers show consumption is beginning to bounce back following the

● **THE GOLDEN Week tourism and spending figures indicated domestic consumption was recovering well, especially as consumers engaged in "revenge buying".**

battering it took earlier in the year from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Travel within the country, and sometimes even within cities, was restricted beginning with the Lunar New Year in January as China fought the spread of the Coronavirus that emerged in the central city of Wuhan. During the five-day Labour Day holiday in May, domestic tourism revenue was down nearly 60% from the previous year. "Chinese consumer confi-

dence has been significantly recovered due to the proper control of pandemic, government pro-consumption policies and stimulus and faster than expected resumption of business activities," said Jennifer Ye, PwC's China consumer markets leader. The Golden Week tourism and spending figures indicated domestic consumption was recovering well, especially as consumers engaged in "revenge buying" to make up for the previous months when they were unable to travel, she said.

With many Chinese tourists unable to travel abroad due to global travel restrictions, those who previously travelled to Hong Kong and South Korea for duty-free shopping turned

to the southern Chinese island of Hainan instead, spending 530 million yuan (\$78 million) at duty free shops during the first five days of the holiday, according to a report by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV. The Chinese province raised duty-free shopping limits on July 1, hoping to attract domestic tourists and compete with shopping hubs in Europe and other parts of Asia. China has reported no locally transmitted Coronavirus infections since August 16, and restrictions have been eased. To boost domestic tourism, local governments and online travel platforms like Ctrip and Fliggy are offering tourists discounts on attraction tickets, hotels and tour packages. — *AP*

China denies Covid originated in Wuhan

Beijing, Oct. 9: China on Friday claimed that the coronavirus broke out in the various parts of the world last year but it was the only one to have reported and acted first, refuting the widely-held view that the deadly contagion originated in Wuhan before turning out to be a pandemic.

China, besides denying the US allegations that Covid-19 has emerged from a bio-lab in Wuhan, also rejected that it emanated from a wet market in the central Chinese city

from bats or pangolins before infecting humans.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said that "the Coronavirus is a new kind of virus as more and more facts emerge as reports reveal, we all know that the epidemic broke out in various places in the world at the end of last year, while China was the first to report the outbreak, identified the pathogen and shared the genome sequence with the world." — *PTI*

DECCAN Chronicle

10 OCTOBER 2020

Second wave ahead; go easy on festivals

The government's decision to roll out a massive awareness campaign on containing the spread of Covid-19 ahead of the festival season, which will also see an election to the Bihar Assembly, is a welcome move. The focus of the campaign is not a new formula, rather the old one that all agencies including the World Health Organisation, have been advocating: wearing masks in public places, social distancing and hand hygiene. The government will use all media avenues, including social media, to spread the message.

India is second only to the United States in the total Covid-19 caseload and the daily spike in numbers these days vary anywhere between 70,000 and 90,000. The southern states, which in the initial days of the pandemic showed signs of resistance, have given in: Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have reported daily caseloads of 10,000 and above this week. There are experts who predict the numbers will see a further surge in the next two months, which is also the festival season in many states. There has been criticism that the government planned poorly during the national lockdown and no effective steps were taken nor massive awareness campaigns launched to contain the spread of the virus. Little effort was made to augment the healthcare infrastructure in the country, especially in the villages that have of late been bearing the brunt of the pandemic.

After four editions of the lockdown the government has been relaxing the controls that had been imposed on human and economic activity. Inter-state movement of people and vehicles, which was strictly banned during lockdown, has already been restored to the pre-lockdown days. Schools and educational institutions are on their way to return to normal functioning, albeit with precautionary measures. Recreational centres, including cinema halls are also being opened.

With the government allowing places of worship to function, the next weeks will see devotees flocking to their favourite pilgrim centres for celebrating their annual festivals. There have been indications that Kerala saw a sudden spurt in infection after Onam, the universal festival of the people of the state. If that is an indication, then the festivals across India could turn out to be super spreader events and only a massive campaign can help the country escape another disastrous bout of virus spread. Elections to the Bihar Assembly are scheduled to be held in November. The Election Commission of India has announced restrictions on the campaigning but an effective implementation of the same must be ensured in the state, which is one of the states hit hard by the pandemic. Experts say that the national lockdown has only postponed the peaking of the pandemic and predict that there will be a shortage of isolation beds, ventilators and intensive care units by the second week of November. The state governments and the health workers, the front-line warriors against the pandemic, are a fatigued lot, and the Union government should also design ways to strengthen them. It will only add to the impact of the awareness campaign.

Paswan's supple politics

Ram Vilas Paswan, who passed away following serious health complications on Thursday at the age of 74, is likely to be remembered for his long innings as a Union minister in governments of many hues. His identity as a Lohia socialist, with which he embarked on his political journey as a young man, as well as his identity as one born in a dalit sub-caste of Bihar, were submerged along the way.

But he fell back on the dalit factor to negotiate his way through the thicket of Bihar and national politics and to retain a place in the council of ministers of many Prime Ministers, cutting across party and ideological lines.

Unlike in some other states, the emergence of dalit political consciousness remained relatively weak in Bihar. It did not yield a vibrant political platform woven around that fundamental idea, as exemplified by Kanshi Ram and Mayawati in the case of Uttar Pradesh. Mr Paswan was not one to put his shoulder to the wheel.

The late leader of Bihar's Passi community had resigned his Cabinet position in the Atal Behari Vajpayee government to protest the communal carnage of 2002 in Gujarat, where the government was of the BJP, the PM's own party. The then state chief minister, Narendra Modi, came close to be sacked at the PM's instance. Subsequently, the senior Bihar politician showed enough suppleness to join the Cabinet of PM Modi.

When he first came to Parliament in 1977 on the Janata Party ticket, the young Lohiaite made an impression right away with his fine debating skills and careful preparation on the subjects he spoke on. That is an attitude legislators can emulate with profit.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

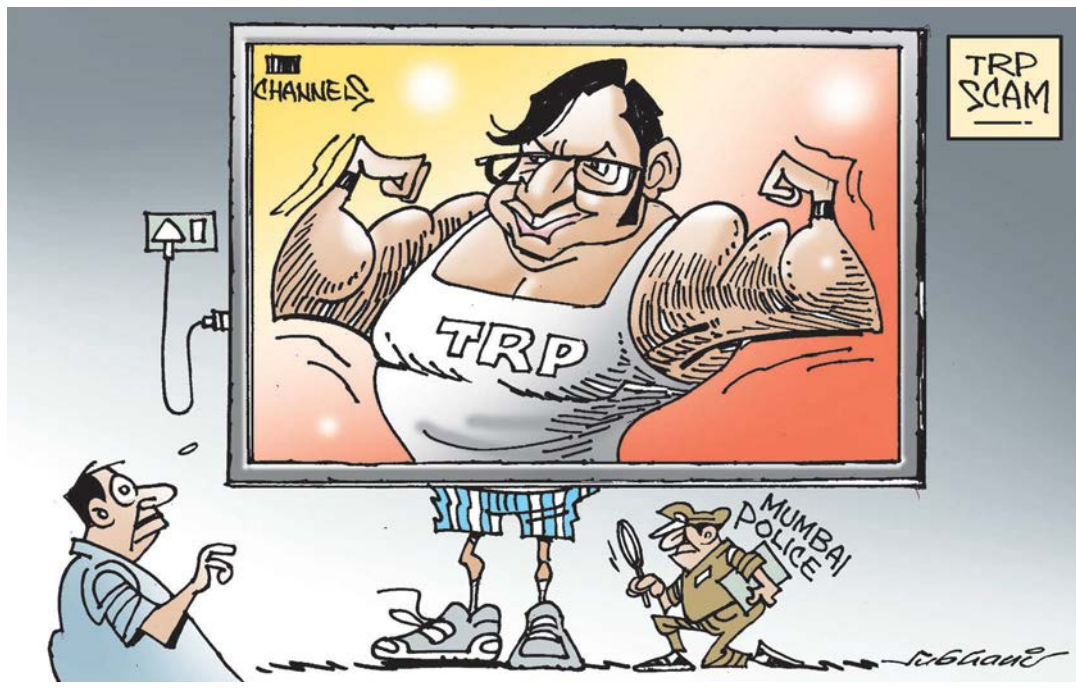
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Subhani



India's new optics for post-US Afghanistan

Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near



Using the just-ended visit of Dr Abdullah Abdullah, the senior Afghan politician who is now the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, India appears to have done its own signalling to the Afghan government, the various Afghan factions including the Taliban, and to the region at large.

Evidently, arranging the optics was deemed important since this was Dr Abdullah's first visit to New Delhi in his present capacity in which he guides Afghanistan's conversation with the Taliban (and its backer Pakistan) in all its multi-hued complexity in the Qatari capital of Doha.

As for timing, the visit took place within days of the inauguration of the negotiation process between the Afghan government and the Taliban last Saturday, 19 years after the start of the present war in Afghanistan. On this count too, the furtherance of the optics to convey intent, and long-term perspective, has been found useful since the situation and the atmospherics at the talking table, and the Afghan theatre more broadly, are likely to be fluid and carry a clear potential for regression.

The senior Afghan leader was on a briefing visit. New Delhi's well-known stance — and Kabul's just as well-known aspiration in the post-Taliban phase — were therefore reiterated for the record. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also assured the senior Afghan leader that the peace talks in Doha had India's backing. The reiteration was perhaps required in the light of certain elements in Pakistan attempting to establish the impression that India does not want the Doha talks to succeed.

India has for many years underlined the need for any reconciliation talks with the Taliban to be Afghan-owned, Afghan-led and Afghan-controlled. On the ground these conditions are not being fulfilled. It is well known that after many hiccups the talks have eventually reached the starting point, thanks to Washington's pushing, coaxing, and forcing Pakistan to let the Taliban (whom Islamabad has controlled) join meaningful negotiations, and Russia too lending its weight to the incipient process in the expectation of the possibility of peace. For the sake of the record, though, the talks are Afghan-owned in the sense that Kabul won't now disavow the present phase.

India has also sought to emphasise that any outcome acceptable to the Afghans themselves will be acceptable to it. The proviso — naturally — is that Afghanistan should remain independent, sovereign and free from foreign tutelage. Flowing from this is the sub-formulation, more recently explicated, that Afghan soil must not be permitted to be used for any anti-India terrorist activity.

Kabul accepts this readily and Dr Abdullah said so in New Delhi. To be realistic, however, the fulfilment of all, some, or none of the above objectives will depend on the shape the talks take and the texture of the final outcome whose horizon, at this stage, appears indeterminate and unattractive.

Although the grandiloquently billed peace talks have been inaugurated, the Taliban (in reality Pakistan) have not agreed to a ceasefire or cessation of violence, believing that they will lose leverage if ordinary Afghans were not pushed to the brink and to a stage of total war-exhaustion.

Since the end of February this year, when the United States and the Taliban reached an agreement which adumbrated the peace talks, around 12,000 civilians have been killed in the Afghan violence and 15,000 injured. This week alone, attacks have taken place in 20 out of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. There have been targeted assassinations and high-profile attempts, such as the one on vice-president Amrullah Saleh.

At the political level, some in the country are trying to pre-position themselves to reach a future accommodation with the Taliban (should this be necessary), while some factions are said to be keeping the powder dry for a renewed military flareup. On the broader, more popular plane, the emerging "New Afghanistan", although not armed, is eager to hold on to the gains of democracy secured in the past two decades. This includes women, large sections of the youth and the ethnic minorities. The channelisation of the political conduct of this constituency is yet to be ascertained.

It is in this background that New Delhi has done its signalling, which is of a kind it has not done before, although India and Afghanistan are "strategic" partners (to which Dr Abdullah alluded during his visit). When the senior Afghan figure sat in discussion with national security adviser Ajit Doval on Wednesday, there were also present on the Indian side the Chief of Defence Staff and the Army Chief, besides the diplomacy complement.

The new kind of well-advertised lineup at the discussion on the Indian

The new kind of well-advertised lineup at the discussion on the Indian side appears to semaphoring that India is likely to keep the military dimension of things in full view

side appears to semaphoring that India is likely to keep the military dimension of things in full view as it unrolls its diplomacy, continued development and capacity-building aid, and political goodwill, in the unfolding scenario as dictated by the state of the Doha talks. When a month ago external affairs minister S. Jaishankar virtually addressed the opening ceremony at Doha, it became clear India had gone past its earlier catechism of keeping the Taliban at arm's length and navigating a new path.

This does signify the possible start of a full-spectrum approach in light of the inability of the Taliban or the Afghan security forces to prevail, leading to the current military stalemate. However, Indian diplomacy is typically long on promise. There was no further talk of Balochistan in policy circles after Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to it in his Independence Day speech in 2016, but the Baloch factions, energised by it, found their cadres killed. In order to carry credibility with interlocutors — seen and unseen — the signalling seen this week is apt to need refurbishment.

Dr Abdullah came to New Delhi via Pakistan, where he urged reduction of violence to be taken seriously by the Taliban, and for flexibility to be shown in the Doha negotiations (the Taliban continue to harp on an Islamic "emirate" rather than a "republic").

Last Sunday, President Ashraf Ghani visited Doha, where he met his government's negotiators and the US diplomats (but not the Taliban) and underscored the need for a ceasefire as a continuing war will cost the Afghan people "trillions of dollars" in lost development.

How we approach the Doha talks will be an indicator of how we approach the post-US Afghanistan. While we are legitimate stakeholders, our enlightened self-interest is best served in standing with resolve alongside a genuinely sovereign and democracy-seeking Afghanistan.

LETTERS

HATHRAS RAPE

A woman is violated and her body burnt by those responsible to protect her. Her voice was silenced by those who didn't deserve to even hear it. How much closer home must this hit us to feel wronged and feel the pain? I doubt these demons in human form see caste, colour or age. But they do. Aren't we ashamed to say this has happened before and will repeat? How do they live with themselves knowing what they did?

Lydia Jossie Thalla
Hyderabad

IN PROTEST

The SC's observation that protests must be restricted to designated places is a welcome move (*Spare the commuter, DC, Oct. 9*). It is worth reminding protesters that protests during the colonial rule were different from the present wherein people resort to "rasta roko" even for minor incidents causing hardships to one and all.

J.S.V.S.K.N. Prasad
Patancheru

CURE AND CAUTION

The IMA objection to Union minister Harsh Vardhan's recommendation for AYUSH and Yoga treatment for Covid-19 is fully justified (*IMA slams Vardhan over AYUSH, yoga, DC, Oct. 9*). Without clinical studies, general health practices cannot be passed on to patients as treatment protocols. People holding high offices should be cautious about medical and health matters.

Arnold K.G.J.
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Cambodia becomes republic

PHNOM PEHN, Oct. 9 At 7.04 am local time, the new Khmer Republic was proclaimed in Cambodia's National Assembly. The republic, ending the rule of Kings lasting more than a thousand years was brought into being by Im Tam, President of the National Assembly. "We solemnly proclaim on October 9 that from this hour Cambodia is a republic, one and indivisible, to be known as the Khmer republic," Im Tam said. Recalling the old Cambodian saying, "Crazy like the King," he said the republic would end what was "often cruel, capricious rule by the monarchy."

Farrukh Dhondy
Cabbages & Kings



"I never believed that caterpillars Would fly on sprouted wings Or why poets hearing chirpings Could say the nightingale sings

Or that all the people born Within minutes on the same day Were destined to a certain path Along this Milky way

Or that scattered haphazard stars Make shapes in the night sky So, tell me fellow traveller, Has beauty passed me by?"

— From **The Ruins of Bachchoo** by Bachchoo

Will India too leave 'divided histories', like US & Britain?

The mass protests occasioned by the killing of black citizens by the American police gave a universal and spectacular boost to the Black Lives Matter movement founded several years ago. The current phase of support has had some expected and some unexpected corollaries.

The demonstrations in the US resulted in a battlefield of verbal swordplay — and in this world of Twitters, Instagrammatic jitters and Facebook litters, that's not surprising. Everyone in the world thinks they have some

thing to say which amounts to news or wisdom.

One predictable consequence was that the BBC and national theatrical organisations announced that they would set aside funds and make space to include people of "diverse" origins and proclivities.

An unpredictable consequence was the statement from the supermarket chain Sainsbury who announced its intolerance of racism: "We proudly represent and serve our diverse society, and anyone who does not want to shop with an inclusive retailer is welcome to shop elsewhere." Now Sainsbury is 22 per cent owned by Qatar and a recent UN report said that country practices "structural racial discrimination through a de facto caste system based on national origin". Under this system, European, North American, Australian and Arab nationals "systematically enjoy greater human rights protections than South Asian and sub-Saharan nationalities".

I am the proud holder, gentle reader, of both a British passport and enjoy the status of an Overseas Citizen of my native India. The word "nationality" then is an ambivalent one. Will I enjoy full human rights in Qatar? And would

Barack and Michelle Obama? I shall keep going to Sainsbury, but Qatar? Maybe not.

One of the consequences of the public explosion that was BLM is that people in Britain who were deemed to have had a background of political activity in the cause of justice and progress for the immigrant population are in demand to speak and comment on the media.

For most of my short and happy life, from the late 1960s, gentle reader, I have been, I hope, an energetic (if nothing else) member, first of the Indian Workers' Association of Leicester, then of the British Black Panther Movement and then of the collective Race Today.

I am aware that at the time one subscribed to the ideology and vigorous activity of these organisations, which entailed demonstrating in favour of demands, propaganda and relentless agitation, pamphleteering and making a nuisance of oneself by battling the police and taking the long march through the institutions of Britain to ensure equality and progress, one didn't think of "history". Whew! (*Kamaal hein!* Did you really do all that? — Ed. *Hanh jaar*, read my autobiographical

fiction — fd. *Bathaya na toojhey*, no advertising! — Ed.)

So, the BBC and filmmakers, documentary producers and newspapers and blogwallahs have been turning up by phone or Zoom, or physically with cameras, to ask all the colleagues from those days about the determinations, events and campaigns that we undertook. They now want to call it history, but those who were in it never think it is. Or perhaps people like the Mahatma, or Napoleon or Churchill do.

In this flurry of enquiry and interviews, apart from recounting the "history" of campaigns and exploits, I've been repeatedly asked what one should make of the Black Lives Matter movement. Despite meetings with their organisers and asking them very specific questions, I still don't know that they are an organisation with a structure, a membership, clear aims and staying power. What one can see is that the upheaval they have caused, perhaps with the resources of the social media at their disposal, brings to the fore a singular fact.

America is a nation with roughly two parallel "histories", or more accurately two distinct experiences of that single history. The Africans were brought to

America as slaves and have that cruel past, however hard they had fought against it. The white nation, consisting of the descendants of refugees from European persecution and the "wretched of the earth" in search of liberty, have the inheritance, however problematic, of the master race. If the BLM movement did a single thing, it pointed to this history and made the world see that a very substantial section of the contemporary American population, black and white, want to leave this divided history as just that. A new dawn?

So too in Britain, where the new communities carry with them the histories of colonialism. Immigrants from South Asia, the Caribbean and Africa were not brought or allowed into Britain to regale it with Carnival or to feed it tandoori chicken. They came as cheap labour for the sectors of the economy abandoned by the white working class. As such, they brought with them the history of oppression and fought in several ways over the past six decades for social and political equality. The mass support, "diverse" and white for BLM, indicates that Britain too wants to leave divided histories behind.

And India?

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,509.49	0.81
Nifty 50	11,914.20	0.67
S&P 500*	3,474.08	0.79
Dollar (₹)	73.14	0.13
Pound Sterling (₹)	94.67	0.30
Euro (₹)	86.31	0.20
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,558*236	0.00
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.82	-0.52
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.937	-0.002
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.769	0.002

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Report only FY19 transactions in GST return: MoF

Taxpayers are required to report in the annual GST return of 2018-19 only the values of transactions pertaining to that financial year. The finance ministry said it is noticed certain tables in the auto populated GSTR-9 for 2018-19 also include the data for 2017-18, which has already been filed. "It is clarified that the taxpayers are required to report only the values pertaining to the financial year 2018-19."

Bulk transfer of EPFO funds now possible



EPFO has launched a facility for bulk transfer of funds from exempted establishments through a single payment. On change of employment of a member from exempted to unexempted establishment, his past accumulations are transferred to EPFO. Till now, exempted establishments had to approve and transfer the funds one-by-one for each member. The new facility will increase the speed of funds transfer.

Firms asked to disclose forensic audit info to SEs

Sebi has asked listed companies to make disclosures about initiation of forensic audit to stock exchanges. The listed entities will make disclosures about the fact of initiation of forensic audit along with the name of the entity initiating such audit and reasons for the same, if available, to stock exchanges, Sebi said. Firms will also be required to disclose about final forensic audit report on its receipt.

Hyundai gets over 1.15 lakh Creta bookings

Hyundai Motor India said it has received over 1.15 lakh bookings for its all-new Creta. "The overwhelming response reiterates trust and love of the Indian customers in the Creta brand name," Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) director sales and marketing Tarun Garg said. The company has already sold 58,000 units of the new version while the overall sales of the model since 2015 stands at over 5.2 lakh units.



Capital cost to come down for big-ticket lenders Home loans above ₹75L to become attractive

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, OCT. 9

In a bid to boost demand for high value home purchases and the housing sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday allowed banks to consider only the loan to value (LTV) ratio while setting the risk weights—capital that banks have to set aside—for new home loans.

Till now, the risk weight of home loans was determined on the basis of loan amounts and LTV ratios. Higher loan amounts led to higher risk weights, requiring banks to set aside higher capital while sanctioning the loan.

The latest announcement regarding the home loan risk weights has done away with the requirement of factoring in loan amount while setting risk weights for fresh home loans sanctioned till March 31, 2022. The move would benefit incremental housing loans in higher ticket size of over Rs 75 lakh (below 80 per cent LTV) which currently attracts 50 per cent risk weight. Experts said that the move should reduce capital cost for banks and help in transmission and improve credit offtake.

All fresh home loans with LTV ratios of 80 per cent or less will attract risk weight of 35 per cent whereas those with LTV ratios of above 80 per cent to 90 per cent will attract risk weight of 50 per cent, the RBI said.

"Recognising the criticality of real estate sector in the economic recovery,

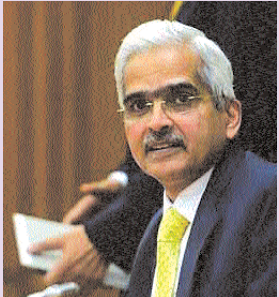
RTGS to go 24x7, PSOs to get perpetual validity

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 9

The central bank has made the real time gross settlement system (RTGS) available round-the-clock. It also has given perpetual validity for the authorisation granted to new and existing Payment System Operators.

Similar to the national electronic funds transfer (NEFT) system, large-value RTGS transactions will be made available round-the-clock on all days. Currently, it is available for customers from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm on all working days except 2nd and 4th Saturdays. This facility will be made effective from December.

This, according to the RBI, will support the ongoing efforts aimed at global integration of Indian



shaktikanta das

financial markets, facilitate India's efforts to develop international financial centres and provide wider payment flexibility to domestic corporates and institutions. With this, India will be one of the very few countries globally with a 24x7x365 large value real time payment system.

Further, the payment system operators will be

issued authorisation with a perpetual validity. Currently, the RBI issues 'on-tap' authorisation to non-banks issuing prepaid payment instruments (PPIs), operating white label ATMs (WLAs) or the trade receivables discounting systems (TReDS), or participating as Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs). Authorisation, including renewal of authorisation of such PSOs has been largely for specified periods up to five years.

According to the apex bank, such limited period licences were necessitated in the initial period of evolution of the payment system. However, it can lead to business uncertainty for the PSOs and involves avoidable use of regulatory resources in the process of renewal.

given its role in employment generation and the interlinkages with other industries, it has been decided, as a countercyclical measure, to rationalise the risk weights by linking them only with LTV ratios for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022...This measure is expected to give a fillip to bank lending to the real estate sector," said the RBI.

Raj Kiran Rai, managing director and chief executive officer of Union Bank of India, said, "From the

regulatory announcements, linking the risk weight only to Loan to Value Ratio for individual housing loans is a positive measure. Due to Covid-19 lock down, construction is a beaten down sector. Since things are getting revived, this enabling policy support will help in augmenting the credit flow to the sector.

Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director, Crisil Ratings said, "Liberalisation in risk weights for individual housing loans

by removal of ticket size criteria and linking it only to Loan to Value will provide some tailwinds to housing loan disbursals from a supply side perspective. This is because it will bring about greater capital efficiency for lenders in housing loan disbursals of more than Rs 75 lakh ticket size. At the same time, the potential for any material uptick appears subdued as that will depend upon pick up in real estate sales and demand increase for home loans from home buyers."

Exporters happy as caution-listing goes

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 9

Providing a relief to the exporter community during the pandemic, RBI has decided to discontinue the system of automatic caution-listing. Caution-listing will now be based on case-specific recommendations of banks.

Automatic caution-listing of exporters, introduced as part of Export Data Processing and Monitoring System (EDPMS) in 2016, happens if any shipping bill against them remained outstanding for more than two years in EDPMS and no extension was granted for realisation of export proceeds against the outstanding shipping bill.

Caution-listed exporters are denied packing credit and this affects their exports. It will also be difficult for them to claim incentives when they are caution-listed.

"In certain cases, some old transactions are shown as outstanding when the exporters are not able to reconcile them

and banks also are unable to help them," said K. Unnikrishnan, deputy director general, Federation of Indian Export Organisations.

Further, some of the accounts continue to remain as outstanding even after settlement. Banks, especially during times of merger, fail to update all such accounts. These also get caution-listed, he said.

In order to make the system more exporter friendly and equitable, it has been decided to discontinue the automatic caution-listing, the RBI said.

"The decision of the RBI to discontinue the 'automatic caution listing' of exporters whose shipping bills were pending for more than two years is a great relief to the exporting community, battling the pandemic-hit global meltdown, EEPIC India said. "The automatic caution-listing of exporters whose shipping bills were pending for over two years had caused an avoidable distrust in the exporting community," said EEPIC India chairman Mahesh Desai.

Bankers, experts hail RBI's discretion-based response

New Delhi, Oct. 9: Bankers and financial experts on Friday hailed the RBI policy, saying the decision to keep the key repo rate unchanged is an accommodative approach to manage inflation while keeping growth as target.

Friday's policy statement by RBI is a perfect exposition of doing 'whatever it takes' to revive growth, SBI chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara said in a statement.

Given the expectation of inflation to stay elevated and a GDP contraction of 9.5 per cent in 2020-21, RBI has done the right thing by announcing discretion-based policy responses rather than being rule based, he added.

Bank of India's chief executive A. K. Das said the retail and small business segments will also have better prospects by measures, such as, rationalisation of risk weight for housing loans, enhancement of regulatory retail cap and co-lending with NBFCs/HFCs.

Punjab National Bank's MD & CEO S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao welcomed the Rs 1 lakh crore

E-invoice begins for ₹100-cr firms from January

New Delhi, Oct. 9: The GST e-invoicing system will be extended to businesses with over Rs 100 crore turnover from January 1, 2021, for B2B business transaction, a top government official said on Friday.

Finance secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said the e-invoicing system can eventually dispense with the present system of filing GST returns for smaller businesses and micro, small & medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Under goods and services tax (GST) law, e-invoice for B2B transactions have been made mandatory for companies with a turnover of over Rs 500 crore from October 1.

Pandey, who is also the revenue secretary, said by January 1, 2021, it will be available to taxpayers having turn-over of more than Rs 100 crore a year; and for all taxpayers for B2B transactions from April 1, 2021. The e-invoicing replaces the paper invoice and will soon replace the existing e-way bill system and taxpayers won't have to generate separate e-way bills.

"The e-invoicing system can also eventually dispense with the present system of filing GST returns for smaller businesses and MSMEs because e-invoice will pre-populate their returns and they have to simply pay the taxes. The returns will be automatically generated for all supplies," he said.

—PTI

Bank, NBFC stocks join IT in bull rally

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 9

Stocks of banks and NBFCs, including housing finance companies, made big gains on RBI's dovish policy stance and measures announced to spur lending by the banks and NBFCs.

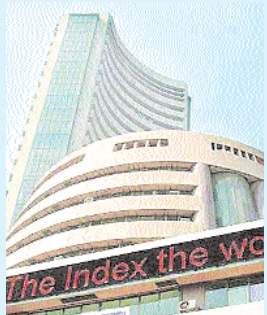
The market surged higher to a fresh seven-month high as financials joined the IT stocks in providing more strength to the bulls as the rally stretched to the seventh session.

The Sensex gained 326.82 points to close at 40,509.49 and the Nifty-50 gained 79.60 points, closing at 11,914.

The Nifty Bank Index gained 2.83 per cent, led by PSU banks, and the top gainers included State Bank of India (3.64 per cent), Punjab National Bank (4.14 per cent), Bank of Baroda (4.11 per cent), HDFC Bank (3.64 per cent), ICICI Bank (4.06 per cent) and Axis Bank (3.74 per cent).

Stocks that gained in the non-banking finance (NBFC) and housing finance (HFC) space included M&M Finance (2.73 per cent), LIC Housing Finance (7.03 per cent), HDFC (0.86 per cent), Indiabulls Housing Finance (4.43 per cent), PNB Housing Finance (5.81 per cent) and Can Fin Homes (5.81 per cent).

"RBI policy has been very dovish without any rate cut. It strengthens focus on the yield curve and provides a helping



hand to increase credit offtake. The policy stance is very accommodative and would remain as long as necessary, even going into FY22. There are other measures that will help banks and NBFCs to accelerate lending, especially in the housing finance segment and priority sector lending," said Rusmik Oza, head-fundamental research, Kotak Securities.

"Banks, HFCs and NBFCs have grossly underperformed the Nifty-50 in the last four months with valuations for most of the leading stocks going closer to the lower end of their historic valuation band. Feel the BFSI pack can play catch-up and try to cover some of the underperformance in the next few quarters," Oza said.

After Friday's friendly policy, the market would await the final Supreme Court verdict in the moratorium matter. There are enough green shoots emerging in the economy as many high frequency indicators show improvement, Oza added.

Govt lifts ban on export variety onions



SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 9

Having banned onion exports last month, the government has permitted shipping of Bangalore rose onions and Krishnapuram onions.

The export variety onions can be shipped up to 10,000 tonnes each till the end of the fiscal.

The export of both the varieties will be allowed only through the Chennai port. For Bangalore rose onions, exporters have to get a certificate from the Horticulture Commissioner of Karnataka and for Krishnapuram onions the licence has to be secured from assistant director, horticulture, Kadappa. The quantities for export have to be monitored by DGFT Bangalore and Chennai.

On September 14, the government had banned export of all onions as the retail prices moved up to Rs 40 a kg. It had suspected that increased exports would lead to further rise in prices.

Between April and July this year, the country had exported onions worth Rs 1,539 crore, registering a growth of 39 per cent in export revenue against the same period last year. In 2019-20, the country had exported around 10,11,378 mt onions, valued Rs 2,044 crore.

"At an average 60,000 tonnes of Bangalore Rose and 40,000 tonnes of Krishnapuram onions are exported per annum. The two varieties of onions are largely exported and are not consumed in the domestic market in large quantities," said the Federation of Indian Exporters Organisations.

VIEW | AND BUY

Goal is to convert videos into a catalogue of items that users can buy

YouTube to become a shopping platform

MARK BERGEN & LUCAS SHAW OCT. 9

Every toy, gadget and good you see on YouTube could soon be for sale online – not on Amazon, but right on YouTube itself.

The world's largest video site recently started asking creators to use YouTube software to tag and track products featured in their clips. The data will then be linked to analytics and shopping tools from parent Google.

The goal is to convert YouTube's bounty of videos into a vast catalogue of items that viewers can peruse, click on and buy directly, according to people familiar with

the situation. The company is also testing a new integration with Shopify Inc for selling items through YouTube.

A YouTube spokesperson confirmed the company is testing these features with a limited number of video channels. Creators will have control over the products that are displayed, the spokesperson said. The company described this as an experiment and declined to share more details.

The moves have the potential to transform YouTube from an advertising giant into a new contender for e-commerce leaders such as Amazon.com Inc. and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. "YouTube is one of the



least utilised assets," said Andy Ellwood, president of e-commerce startup Basket. "If they decided they want to invest in it, it's a huge opportunity for them."

It's unclear how YouTube will generate revenue from these sales. However, the service has begun offering subscriptions for creators and takes a cut of 30 per cent from those payments.

Alphabet Inc's Google has taken multiple stabs at online commerce, with limited success. The company has mostly preferred to sell ads that send people to other digital stores, rather than selling products itself.

However, the pandemic has hammered marketing budgets, particularly in the travel and physical retail sectors that are major Google advertisers. Meanwhile, e-commerce has boomed as people stay home. That's left Google watching from the sidelines as rivals such as Facebook Inc and its Instagram app become hotbeds of online shopping. Amazon has seen sales soar, while Google

suffered its first ever revenue decline in the second quarter.

For months now, Google executives have signalled that YouTube will be central to their e-commerce strategy. On a recent earnings call, CEO Sundar Pichai suggested YouTube's sea of popular product "unboxing" videos could be turned into a shopping opportunity. The video site is full of other popular categories, such as makeup and cooking tutorials, where creators tout commercial products.

Google has also revamped its e-commerce and payments division. In July, it announced a plan to lure merchants to Google Shopping. —Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Nadal makes 13th French Open final

Paris: Twelve-time champion Rafael Nadal reached his 13th French Open final on Friday with a 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (7/0) win over Argentina's Diego Schwartzman, setting up a potential blockbuster title clash against Novak Djokovic. For 34-year-old Nadal, it was a 99th win at Roland Garros since his 2005 debut and put him just one victory away from equalling Roger Federer's all-time record of 20 Grand Slam titles. He is also into his 28th final at the majors. Djokovic, the 2016 champion in Paris and chasing an 18th Grand Slam title, takes on Stefanos Tsitsipas in the second semi-final. The world number one has his own date with destiny should he make Sunday's final as he bids to become the first man in half a century to win all four Slams twice. — *AFP*

Russian lifters banned for doping

Geneva: Six Russian weightlifters were on Thursday handed doping bans of up to eight years, the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) announced. The group includes Dmitry Lapikov, bronze medalist at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, 2009 world silver medalist and 2011 European champion. The 38-year-old received the heaviest sanction, a competition ban until August, 2026. Maksim Sheiko, European silver medalist in 2012 and 2013, was banned for six years, with Ruslan Albegov (bronze medalist at London 2012 and a two-time world champion), Egor Klimonov, Yuliya Konovalova, and Tima Turieva all receiving four year bans. — *AFP*

Formula 1 practice session called off

Nurburg, Germany: The first practice session for the Eifel Grand Prix was cancelled Friday because of bad weather, keeping Michael Schumacher's son Mick from his first official drive as part of a Formula One race weekend. Low cloud and mist made for poor visibility around the Nrburgring track and it was declared unsafe for the medical helicopter to take off before time ran out for the 90-minute session. The helicopter is required under F1 safety rules and must be able to fly any casualties to the hospital at high speed. Lewis Hamilton is aiming to win his 91st career F1 race on Sunday. That would put him equal with Michael Schumacher's record. — *AP*

Messi leads Argies from the front

Sao Paulo: In their first matches in almost a year, Argentina and Uruguay won their South American World Cup qualifying openers without doing much to impress their fans watching from home. Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez each scored from the spot, but did little else to enliven the empty stadiums of a region still hard hit by the Covid-19. Messi netted the only goal of Argentina's victory over Ecuador at the La Bombonera stadium, while Suarez opened the scoring in Uruguay's 2-1 last-minute win over Chile in Montevideo, thanx to Gomez Gonzalez. — *Agencies*

Live on TV

CRICKET
IPL: Kings XI Punjab vs Kolkata Knight Riders from 3.30 pm; Chennai Super Kings vs Royal Challengers Bangalore from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD
FORMULA ONE
German Grand Prix: Practice 3 from 3.25 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD; Qualifying from 6.25 pm on Star Sports 3
TENNIS
French Open: Women's singles final from 6.30 pm on Star Sports Select 2
FOOTBALL
UEFA Nations League: Luxembourg vs Cyprus from 6.30 pm; Faroe Islands vs Latvia from 9.30 pm; Spain vs Switzerland from 12.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD; Ukraine vs Germany from 12.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 1
UFC FIGHT NIGHT
Marlon Moraes vs Cory Sandhagen and other bouts from 4.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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Hetmyer shimmers

Dominant Delhi extend winning streak with Royal drub

Sharjah, Oct. 9: Delhi Capitals defeated Rajasthan Royals by 46 runs in an IPL match here on Friday. Riding on Shimron Hetmyer's 45, they first made 184/8 in 20 overs and then bowled out the Royals for 138 in 19.4 overs. Yashasvi Jaiswal (34) and Rahul Tewatia (38) were the only ones who made decent scores for RR. Earlier, desperate to snap their three-match losing streak, RR opted to field and the bowling unit delivered with Jofra Archer (3/24) taking three wickets and spinner Rahul Tewatia (1/20) and Kartik Tyagi (1/35) capturing one each. The two run outs of the dangerous Shreyas Iyer (22 off 18) and Rishabh Pant (5) also proved crucial. Shimron Hetmyer smashed a 24-ball 45, studded with five sixes and a four to emerge as the top-scorer for Delhi. Marcus Stoinis (39 off 30) too chipped in. Archer was the pick of the bowlers as he dismissed opener Shikhar Dhawan (5) in the second over for his first wicket in the Powerplay this year. Skipper Iyer then smashed two fours off pacer Varun Aaron (0/25 in 2 overs) and then Prithvi Shaw (19 off 10) deposited him into the stands. — *PTI*



Shimron Hetmyer of Delhi Capitals plays a shot against Rajasthan Royals during their Indian Premier League match held at Sharjah Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates on Friday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw c and b Jofra Archer 19, Shikhar Dhawan c Jaiswal b Jofra Archer 5, Shreyas Iyer run out 22, Rishabh Pant run out 5, Marcus Stoinis c Steven Smith b Rahul Tewatia 39, Shimron Hetmyer c Rahul Tewatia b Kartik Tyagi 45, Harshal Patel c Rahul Tewatia b Jofra Archer 16, Axar Patel c Jos Buttler b Andrew Tye 17, Kagiso Rabada not out 2, Ravichandran Ashwin not out 0. **Extras:** (B-4, LB-3, W-5, NB-2) 14. **Total:** (for 8 wkts in 20 Overs) 184.

FoW: 12-1, 42-2, 50-3, 79-4, 109-5, 149-6, 181-7, 183-8. **Bowler:** V. Aaron 2-0-25-0, J. Archer 4-0-24-3, K. Tyagi 4-0-35-1, A. Tye 4-0-50-1, S. Gopal 2-0-23-0, R. Tewatia 4-0-20-1.

Rajasthan Royals: Y. Jaiswal b Stoinis 34, Jos Buttler c Dhawan b Ashwin 13, Steve Smith c Hetmyer b Nortje 24, Sanju Samson c Hetmyer b Stoinis 5, M. Lomror c A. Patel b Ashwin 1, R. Tewatia b Rabada 38, A. Tye c Rabada b A. Patel 6, J. Archer c Iyer b Rabada 2, S. Gopal c Hetmyer b H. Patel 2, K. Tyagi not out 2, V. Aaron c Pant b Rabada 1. **Extras:** (LB-2, NB-1, W-7) 10. **Total:** (all out in 20 Overs) 138. **FoW:** 1-15, 2-56, 3-72, 4-76, 5-82, 6-90, 7-100, 8-121, 9-136, 10-138.

Bowler: Kagiso Rabada 3, 4-0-35-3, Anrich Nortje 4-0-25-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-22-2, H. Patel 4-0-29-1, A. Patel 2-0-8-1, Marcus Stoinis 2-0-17-2.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	6	5	1	0	10	+1.267
Mumbai Indians	6	4	2	0	8	+1.488
Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	3	3	0	6	+0.232
Kolkata Knight Riders	5	3	2	0	6	+0.002
Royal Challengers Bangalore	5	3	2	0	6	-1.355
Chennai Super Kings	6	2	4	0	4	-0.371
Rajasthan Royals	6	2	4	0	4	-1.073
Kings XI Punjab	6	1	5	0	2	-0.431

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

Rahul rates run rate over-rated

Some CSK batsmen think it's a government job: Viru

Dubai, Oct. 9: Strike rates are over-rated, said Kings XI Punjab captain K. L. Rahul, brushing aside criticism of his bottom-placed team which lost its fourth match on the trot here, failing miserably in a chase of 202 against Sunrisers Hyderabad. KXIP lost by 69 runs and Rahul could manage only 11 off 14 balls at a strike rate of 68.75. His innings featured no boundaries despite the power-play. "I think strike rate is very, very overrated. For me, it is only about how I can win games for my team and on a certain day if 120 can win a game for my team then I will do that. This is how I bat and I like to take responsibility," Rahul replied to a question at the post-match press conference. The skipper, who has 313 runs in the six games so far including a century

and two fifties and is the leading run-scorer of the tournament, was eventually dismissed by Abhishek Sharma in the seventh over. Later, Rahul also rued the early run-out of Mayank Agarwal, saying it was a disaster for his side in its pursuit of a stiff 202-run target. "When we lose wickets in the powerplay, it's going to be tough, especially when we're playing only six batters. Getting Mayank run-out wasn't the ideal start, it was a disaster," Rahul said speaking about the match. Rahul was full of praise for his bowlers, saying: "The last five games we struggled with our death bowling, but that was a positive today. The boys showed courage and pulled things back, you expect them to score 230-plus after that start." — *PTI*

New Delhi, Oct. 9: Former India opener Virender Sehwag has taken a dig at Chennai Super Kings' faltering IPL campaign, saying that some of their batsmen think of the franchise as a "government job" in which remuneration is assured irrespective of performance. Chasing 168, veteran opener Shane Watson struck his second successive fifty to give CSK a perfect start on Wednesday, but the team choked at the back end of the innings and was restricted to 157 for 5 to suffer their fourth defeat in five matches, raising eyebrows in cricket circles. "It should have been chased down. But the dot balls played by Kedar Jadhav and Ravindra Jadeja didn't help," Sehwag told *Cricbuzz*. "And, in my view, some



It should have been chased down. But the dot balls played by Kedar Jadhav and Jadeja didn't help. In my view, some of the Chennai Super Kings batsmen think of CSK as a government job, whether you perform or not, they know they'll get their salary anyway.
— **VIRENDER SEHWAG**
former India player

of the Chennai Super Kings batsmen think of CSK as a government job, whether you perform or not, they know they'll get their salary anyway," he added. CSK added just 14 runs from 11-14 overs, a period when they lost both Watson and an in-form Ambati Rayudu. Sent ahead of West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo,

Kedar Jadhav laboured to seven off 12 balls as KKR wrapped up the game by 10 runs. This is not the first instance of batsmen letting the team down. Last week, the MS Dhoni-led side had lost a closely fought match to SRH by seven runs.se. Chennai Super Kings are placed sixth in the eight-team standings. — *PTI*

Tired CSK take on hapless RCB

Dubai, Oct. 9: Chennai Super Kings will take on Royal Challengers Bangalore in an intriguing mid-table Indian Premier League clash here on Saturday with both teams battling inconsistency. CSK all-rounder Kedar Jadhav's selection will be under the scanner after his failure in the defeat to Kolkata Knight Riders. Despite Shane Watson finding his range in a 10-wicket win over Kings XI Punjab and Faf du Plessis's consistency at the top, the middle-order continues to remain a concern for CSK with skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni himself not being at his best. While worries remain on the batting front, the CSK bowling has got better and they did well to restrict KKR in the previous game with influential all-rounder Dwayne Bravo returning to his wicket-taking ways. However, the CSK bowling will be up against a strong RCB batting line-up led by captain Virat Kohli, who returned to form with a fine knock against Rajasthan Royals. Kohli aside, young Devdutt Padikkal has looked in good touch, while

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD
OVERALL:
● Matches: 24
● Chennai: 15
● Bangalore: 8
● No Results: 1
MEETING IN 2019
● Chennai Super Kings beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 7 wickets at Chennai.
● Royal Challengers Bangalore beat Chennai Super Kings by 1 run at Bangalore.
FOR THE RECORD
● Mahendra Singh Dhoni who scored 3960 runs at an average of 44.49 in 148 innings of 166 matches, needs 40 runs to become second Chennai Super Kings batsman to score 4000 runs in IPL.
● Virat Kohli became the first Indian and seventh batsman overall to score over 9000 runs in Twenty-20 cricket during his 43-run knock in the previous match against Delhi Capitals.
— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

AB de Villiers has been a key player for RCB over the years. It is the bowling which would worry Kohli except Yuzvendra Chahal. The pacers have not lived up to their reputation, with the likes of Umesh Yadav, Mohammed Siraj and Navdeep Saini leaking runs. — *PTI*

Knights look to bruise Kings XI

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 9: Kings XI Punjab will have to play out of their skins to get their stuttering campaign back on track when they face fancied Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League here on Saturday. Smarting from a 69-run drubbing at the hands of Sunrisers Hyderabad, it will not be an easy task for a struggling KXIP side to stand up to the challenge thrown by an all-round KKR team. Shubman Gill has already created an impression as an opener and now KKR have found another option at the top in Rahul Tripathi, who will enter the game with some confidence after his swashbuckling innings of 81 against CSK two days ago. The experienced Eoin Morgan is a huge presence in the middle-order which also has Nitish Rana, always on the lookout to impress the team management with his performances with the bat. On the other hand, Kings XI Punjab will again rely on their trusted opening pair of captain K. L. Rahul

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD
OVERALL:
● Matches: 25
● Kolkata: 17
● Punjab: 8
MEETING IN 2019
● Kolkata Knight Riders defeated Kings XI Punjab by 28 runs at Kolkata.
● Kolkata Knight Riders defeated Kings XI Punjab by 7 wickets at Mohali.
FOR THE RECORD
● Mandeep Singh who scored 961 runs at an average of 22.88 in 52 innings of 56 matches, needs 39 runs to become seventh batsman to score over 1000 runs for Kings XI Punjab in IPL.
● Sunil Narine took only three wickets at an average of 50.00 off 18 overs in five innings of as many matches in this edition so far.
— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

and Mayank Agarwal, who have been in fine nick. The mis-firing Glenn Maxwell is likely to make way for Gayle. Nicholas Pooran's exploits with the bat is a positive for Kings XI Punjab and he will again look to play his shots freely. — *PTI*

Hyd girl finishes golf second best

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

Hyderabad's Shrihita Mandava emerged runner-up at the World Amateur Ranking junior golf tournament that concluded at the Classic Golf Resort in New Delhi on Friday. Shrihita managed scores of 10 over in the first round but improved to 6 over in the second for a total of 16 to finish three strokes behind Zara Anand, who carded 13, over 36 holes at the par 72 course. Rajini Navet, Palakshi Singh and Alysha Dutt were third, fourth and fifth respectively in the Girls 12 to 14 years category. Twelve-year-old Shrihita came up with a birdie on the par 5 third hole in Round One and doubled the effort in Round Two with birdies on the par 4 fourth and 16th holes. The Hyderabad girl also managed pars on 16 holes to stay in top contention. Zara pulled out her top game to card 7 over in the first round which included a birdie on the par 3 fifth hole. She then went one better with a six in the second round, courtesy a birdie on the par 4 eighth hole to maintain lead. Ragini too started well, scoring 9 in the first round with a birdie on the par 5 third hole. She again birdied the par 5 14th hole for a 7 in the second round.



Shrihita Mandava

Riders on the storm at TS regatta

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 9

The weather gods were in total confusion and after a long spell of dead calm threw in a huge storm that decimated the Telangana State Fleet and the race officer Gowtham Kankatla had to abandon the last race. The Juniors managed to sail four races in very light weather till the storm that came in from the north slammed them back to the Yacht Club Jetty but the young sailors were enjoying the fresh weather and the heavy winds back home. "We were worried since yesterday about the winds letting us down but we got a bit lucky and hope for great weather tomorrow onwards," said Suheim Sheikh The President and Coach at the Yacht Club of Hyderabad. Preethi Kongari of



The novices fleet of sailors (below 11 years) battle it out under the clouds in unpredictable weather conditions at the Telangana State Sailing Championships at Hussain Sagar in Hyderabad on Friday.

Hyderabad and Jaikiran Bolli of Wanaparthy dominated Group 'A' and Majji Lalitha and Lakshmi Chandram dominated Group 'B' almost assuring them a spot in the Gold Fleet that will be sailed once the qualifiers of two races are completed on Saturday followed by the finals. Majji Lalitha emerged

from the rear and topped the Group 'B' and she is not new to winning out of the blue after having won the Sub Junior State Championship in these very waters in 2018. The Sub Junior Novices fleet started one race but sailed right into the storm and all the little sailors, most of them below 11 years, were rescued from

the wind and waves and brought safely but drenched to shore. They will need to commence racing on Saturday. That said Bushra Minaj of Udbhav School, Rasoolpura, was well in the lead and had to sacrifice her win to the sudden storm. Earlier in the day, Rajat Kumar, IAS, carried out

an inspection of the Fleet as chief guest and met each sailor personally with words of encouragement.

THE STANDINGS

1. Preethi Kongari (3 points), 2. Majji Lalitha (4 points), 3. Lakshmi Chamdran (4 points), 4. Jaikiran Bolli (6 points), 5. Jhansi Priya (6 points).

