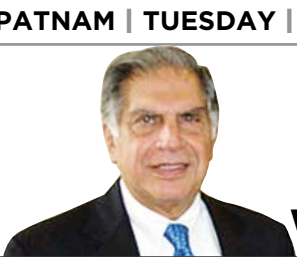


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
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WEATHER

Max: 34.8°C
Min: 24.4°C
RH: 73%
Rainfall: NIL
Forecast: Haze.
Max/Min temp.
34/24.9C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES
(+35,301)
82,62,478
covid19india.org
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS
(+922)
TS: 2,40,970
(+1,916)
AP: 8,27,882

DEATHS
(+404)
1,23,025
(+7)
1,348
(+13)
6,719

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,70,72,539
DEATHS
12,08,367
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
213
worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwauja Bahula Tadiya till 3.23 am (Wednesday)
Star: Rohini till 2.28 am
Varjyam: 5.35 pm to 7.21 pm
Durmuhurtam: 8.35 am to 9.21 am; 10.44 pm to 11.34 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HUIJI CALENDAR
Rabbi-ul Awwal 16, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5:50 am
Zohar: 1:30 pm
Asar: 4:45 pm
Maghrib: 6:15 pm
Isha: 8:15 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.24 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.56 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 7.25 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 7.59 AM

COUNTER POINT

No more slip of the tongue. They have tattooed the party's name on his hand!

SHORT TAKES

Maya's u-turn on backing BJP

Lucknow: Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asserted on Monday that her party would never enter into an alliance with the BJP in elections, highlighting that the ideology of the two parties were "opposite". Her clarification came amid speculation over her last week's statement that the BSP would vote for the BJP or any other party's candidate to ensure defeat of the Samajwadi Party contenders in future elections, including those of the Uttar Pradesh legislative council and the Rajya Sabha. She alleged that the SP and the Congress were misusing her statement so that the Muslims distance themselves from the BSP.

SC: Speed up Tablighi cases

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the trial courts to expedite hearing in the pending cases against foreign Tablighi Jamaat members for alleged visa violations. A bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna listed the pleas filed against blacklisting of foreign members of Tablighi Jamaat for attending the Nizamuddin Markaz congregation in the national capital for further hearing on November 20 and asked the lower courts to expeditiously deal with their cases.

Centre to release ₹2,300 cr for Polavaram minus riders

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

In a major and immediate relief to the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh, the Union finance ministry on Monday agreed to release ₹2,300 crore for the ongoing Polavaram multipurpose irrigation project without imposing riders. Earlier, the finance ministry insisted that the Jal Shakti ministry approve the project cost at ₹29,000 crore as estimated in the financial year 2013-2014 as against the revised estimate of ₹48,000 crore. The precondition for releasing the funds, if agreed by the Jal Shakti ministry, would have put a heavy financial burden on the state government as it

● **THE STATE** government has also got a shot-in-the-arm with the Polavaram Project Authority (PPA) observing that the project could be completed only at the revised estimate.

could have had to bear the differential amount.

"We are happy to note that the Union finance ministry has removed a conditional clause for releasing ₹2,300 crore and asked the Jal Shakti ministry to sort out the issue by the time the next instalment is due," a senior water resources official of Andhra Pradesh told *Deccan Chronicle*.

The Jagan Mohan Reddy government has also got a

shot-in-the-arm with the Polavaram Project Authority (PPA), a nodal agency, observing that the project could be completed only at the revised estimate. The PPA met here on Monday under the chairmanship of Chandrasekhar Iyer to discuss the finance ministry's proposal to the Jal Shakti ministry to approve the project cost to avail funds. Significantly, the PPA also fixed April 2022 as the deadline for completing the project.

An expert committee, which recently visited the project site, has prepared a monthly schedule of works to be completed to meet the deadline.

■ **Page 2: AP wants R&R included in project cost**

4 smugglers burnt alive

NAGESWARA RAO BALLEDA | DC KADAPA, NOV. 2

Four red sanders smugglers were burnt alive and one died in hospital after they were involved in a road accident in Kadapa district on Monday. The deceased, all from Tamil Nadu, were identified as

Rajan, Ramachandran, Mahendran and Mukthiyan, while the fifth was yet to be identified. The accident occurred on the Kadapa-Tadipatri highway around 3.30 am.

According to Eshwara Reddy, Inspector, Kadapa Rural, one tipper, one Scorpio, and another other car were hit simulta-

neously and went up in flames. Smugglers were carrying red sanders logs and passing towards Bengaluru. While they were nearing Gutur village, one tipper came on the road and the driver tried to steer the vehicle away.

■ **Page 3: Three injured shifted to Kadapa RIMS**

MFG SECTOR SEES FASTEST GROWTH IN A DECADE

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

With rising demand and output amidst Covid-19 disruptions, India's factory activity, measured by the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), expanded to 58.9 in October—nearly a 13-year high and the fastest pace in over a decade. However, on the employment front, the numbers remain a concern, as companies cut more jobs, a private survey showed on Monday.

Even though the economy shrank at a record 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, the latest PMI survey shows that Asia's third-largest economy is signalling a fast pace of recovery with several economic indicators turning positive.

"Rising from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, the headline PMI pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade, with companies raising output to the greatest extent in 13 years amid robust sales growth. The reading was the highest since May 2010 and above the 50-level separating growth from contraction for the third straight month.

■ **Full report on Page 7**

Masks get fashionable



Women wearing designer masks pose for photographs as they prepare to celebrate Karwa Chauth festival in Bhopal on Monday. — PTI

US poll campaign draws to a close

Washington, Nov. 2: The US Presidential campaign entered its final day on Monday with a last-minute scramble for votes by incumbent Donald Trump and his challenger Joe Biden, drawing to a close an extraordinary race that has put a pandemic-stricken country on edge.

While campaigning will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday,

● **WHILE CAMPAIGNING** will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday, many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and legal challenges.

many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and possible legal challenges.

Those factors, along with an unprecedented convergence of social justice protests, coronavirus precautions and Trump's fear-mongering campaign, have led to apprehension over whether unrest could erupt. Taking no chances, businesses in some cities have boarded up windows, while across the country the harsh political climate has led to fierce debate. As proof of how much

Americans have been galvanised — and perhaps frightened by the pandemic — a record of more than 93 million people have cast early ballots, according to the nonpartisan US Elections Project.

As the hours count down on Monday and with polls showing him behind, Trump and Biden continue their final rallies.

■ **Full coverage on Page 5**

EASY | RIDE APSRTC and TSRTC divide operating routes for their buses equally

Relief for Telugus as RTCs restart buses

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

There was respite for road commuters from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, who have been facing tremendous problems, with their state-run transport corporations deciding to resume inter-state bus services.

Hours after arriving at the decision on Monday, buses were pushed into service by evening. As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two,

TSRTC will operate across 1,61,258 km in AP with 826 buses and APSRTC will operate across 1,60,999 km with 638 buses in Telangana.

On the Vijayawada route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across 52,944 km with 273 buses in Andhra Pradesh and APSRTC will operate across 52,524 km with 192 buses in Telangana.

On the Kurnool route and beyond, TSRTC will cover 43,456 km with 213 buses in AP while APSRTC will do so across 43,202 km with

146 buses in Telangana. On Piduguralla/Guntur route via Wadapally, TSRTC will operate across 19,044 km with 67 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 20,238 km with 88 buses in Telangana.

On the Macherla route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across 14,158 km with 66 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 16,060 km with 61 buses in Telangana.

On the Nuzvid, Tiruvur, Bhadrachalam-Vijayawada route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across

12,453 km with 48 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 14,026 km with 65 buses in Telangana.

On the Khammam, Jeelugumilli, Jangareddy-gudem route and beyond, TSRTC will now operate across 9,140 km with 35 buses in Andhra Pradesh and APSRTC will operate across 11,541 km with 58 buses in Telangana.

On the Hyderabad-Srisaillam route, TSRTC will continue operations across 1,904 km with 62 buses in AP and APSRTC will not operate buses on

this route in Telangana.

On the remaining routes such as Sathupally - Eluru (two routes), Bhadrachalam and Kunta via Kallugudem, Sathupally-Vijayawada and others, TSRTC will operate across 8,159 km with 62 buses in Andhra Pradesh, and APSRTC will operate across 3,408 km with 28 buses in Telangana.

However, all routes would not be available as the demand is low. The routes will be increased proportionate to the demand.

57 teachers, 3 students test positive for Corona

Source of infection could not be schools, say officials

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, NOV. 2

Even as the Covid infection continues to threaten, bringing students back to the classrooms appears to be unsafe as the first day of reopening since March, saw some teachers and students testing positive for coronavirus on Monday.

As per the data, six students, including three each from Nellore and Chittoor districts, tested positive when the medical department conducted random tests. Similarly, about 57 teachers in Chittoor and a watchman and a mid-day meals helper in Nellore district also tested positive.

It may be recalled that there was strong criticism from various sections on the decision to reopen the schools while the virus rages. Monday's incidents prove them right and this has created ripples among parents and officials. The education department officials have, however, said that it is possible the children or teachers were infected elsewhere.

According to the data

Go easy on lost syllabus: Jagan

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy directed officials to ensure that students are not subject to any undue pressure on catching up with academics in a bid to cover the Covid-19 setback.

He was speaking at a review meeting on higher education with minister for education Adimulapu Suresh, chief secretary Nilam Sawhney and other senior officials at his Camp Office on Monday.

Jagan Mohan Reddy laid stress on a motivational ambience so that students

concentrate better and be on their chosen career path. He asked the officials to comply with the guidelines issued by both the Centre and the UGC in promoting higher education in the state.

The CM called for compliance with standards, especially in private universities. Pointing out that students prefer private universities in the expectation of quality teaching and good infrastructure, the state government should keep a check on such universities.

■ **Page 2: Private varsities told to maintain quality**

students across the district, saw three including two in Chandragiri and one in K.V. Palle mandal, testing positive.

■ **Page 2: Schools are sanitised, says official**

POOR TURNOUT SEEN IN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES IN STATE

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

The fear of getting infected with Covid-19 seems to have had its impact on the turnout of students from Classes IX and X and Intermediate second year in both government and private institutions.

As schools and colleges reopened on Monday after seven months closure, the turnout of students was poor on the first day.

While 43.65 per cent Class 10 students attended schools, only 39.65 per cent students from Class 9 turned out at the schools. In total, out of 10,04,989 students, the attendance registered was 42 per cent.

Among the teachers, out of a total strength of 98,723, as many as 86,656 attended schools for an 87.88 per cent of attendance.

■ **Page 2: Fewer student attend junior colleges**

Hotly-contested Dubbak bypoll has all TS focus

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

The stage is set for polling on Tuesday in the Dubbak Assembly constituency which witnessed a high-voltage campaign ever since the bypoll was notified by the Election Commission.

The polling is scheduled to take place at 315 polling stations in the constituency from 7 am to 6 pm. The Election Commission has made all arrangements for the conduct of the bypoll in compliance with Covid-19 norms, besides taking tight security measures.

The byelection was necessitated by the death of sitting TRS MLA Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy in August this year. The TRS has fielded his widow Solipeta Sujatha as its candidate. Though 23 candidates are in the fray, the main contest is among the candidates of the TRS, Congress and the BJP.

The Congress has given the ticket to TRS leader Cheruku Srinivas Reddy, who joined the party just ahead of the bypoll, while the BJP has fielded M. Raghunandan Rao who lost the previous election in Dubbak. The results of

● **AS THE TRS** goes into the Dubbaka byelection with a good track record of winning such electoral exercises, the fight between the Congress and the BJP appears to be confined for the second position.

the byelection will be out on November 10.

Political observers believe that odds are in the favour of the ruling TRS and that it would certainly retain the seat. They claim that typically a majority of voters in the bypoll opt for the ruling party for the development programmes.

As the TRS goes into the Dubbaka byelection with a good track record of winning such exercises, the fight between the Congress and the BJP appears to be confined to the second position. The Congress, though claims to defeat the ruling party, is trying hard to retain its second place in view of the ensuing elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. If the Congress loses its second position, it would have to face a difficult situation in the GHMC polls, observers noted.

SC won't extend ex-judge's security

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to extend the security of former special judge S.K. Yadav who had pronounced the verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition case and acquitted all 32 accused, including BJP veterans L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and Uma Bharti.

A bench, headed by Justice R.F. Nariman and also comprising Justices

Navin Sinha and Krishna Murari, was considering the former judge's request to continue his security in view of the sensitivity of the case decided by him on his last day in office.

"Having perused the letter, we don't consider it appropriate to provide security," the bench said.

On September 30, the special court had acquitted all 32 accused in the case. — PTI

OTHER STORIES

MALABAR NAVAL EXERCISE IN BAY FROM TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

The 24th edition of the Malabar naval exercise is scheduled in two phases beginning November 3, Tuesday. The Phase One of the exercise involving participation by Indian Navy, United States Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force and Royal Australian Navy is set to commence off Visakhapatnam in the Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6, said an official release issued by Eastern Naval Command on Monday.

The release said the Malabar series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral Indian Navy and US Navy exercise. Japan Maritime Self Defence Force joined Malabar in 2015. The 2020 edition will now witness the participation of the Royal Australian Navy in this joint maritime exercise.

The Phase Two of the Malabar 20 is scheduled to be conducted in the Arabian Sea in mid-November 2020, the release added.

US, DUTCH EXPERTS TO TRY RELOAT STRANDED SHIP

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

Experts from the United States and the Netherlands have arrived in Visakhapatnam on Monday to assist the local agencies in putting back the Bangladesh merchant vessel *Mv Maa* ran aground near Tenneti Park during the depression in Bay of Bengal last fortnight.

The management of the vessel has appointed Gill Marine to drain out the furnace oil and diesel before another agency Resolve Marine Pvt Ltd deployed to salvage the vessel.

Gill Marine, which took up the vessel cleaning completed its draining of furnace oil and diesel on Sunday evening and set to clean the ship from Monday onwards. No water ingress or oil pollution is reported so far. The draining was done in the presence of Coast Guard, Visakhapatnam Port Trust and Mercantile Marine Department. They supervised the operations to see that oil did not spill into the water or beach.

"We had a preliminary meeting today with the US and Dutch experts and more discussions would be held to explore the possibility of putting the ship back into the sea during the next three days," said managing director of Gill Marine Surender Singh Gill.

PINEPE: WILL GIVE BEST TREATMENT IN GOVT HOSPITALS

VADREUV SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, NOV. 2

The state government is rendering medical services to the people in all government hospitals in the state on par with corporate hospitals, said the social welfare minister Pinepe Viswaroop.

He, along with Amalapuram MP Chinta Anuradha, set the stone for construction of the third stair for providing 50 beds in Amalapuram Area Hospital with ₹5.75 crore Nabard funds on Monday.

Mr Viswaroop said the state government was providing all infrastructure facilities to all government and area hospitals. Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is determined to develop and upgrade all the hospitals in the state for the interests of the people.

He said the Chief Minister was making efforts to provide medical treatment to the people free of cost. He noted that institutional deliveries had been increased in Amalapuram Area Hospital and performed more than its targets.

He said that 10 ventilators had been installed in the hospital for giving treatment to Covid-19 patients.

Ms Anuradha said that the people should make use of the medical services rendered by the Area Hospital at Amalapuram.

She instructed the Medical and Health Officials to take steps to increase the institutional deliveries to all primary health centres and other health centres.

Amalapuram mandal tahsildar Mr Tagore, Hospital Incharge Superintendent Dr Supriya, Incharge Resident Medical Officer V.R.K. Murthy, Dr Koumudi, Dr M. Prasada Rao, Dr Kiranmayi, Dr Hemanth Chakradhar and others were present.

Attendance of students better in Chittoor, Nellore rural areas

Parents are concerned about the safety of their kids despite assurances

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 2

Despite worries over the safety of children and parents' reluctance to give their consent for physical classes, the attendance of the students is better in rural areas as compared to the urban areas across Chittoor and Nellore districts.

On day one of the reopening of schools on Monday, about 70-75 per cent and 43 per cent attendance was reported from schools across the Nellore and Chittoor districts respectively, in which schools in rural areas saw 60 per cent attendance.

Officials of the Education Department said some parents are concerned about the safety of their kids despite assurances by the administration regarding adherence to the Covid-19 safety guidelines and are not keen to send their wards to schools just yet.

District Educational Officers of Nellore and Chittoor districts, P. Ramesh and Narasimha Reddy said that the Covid-19 scare was still prevalent. Confirming that the attendance of the students is better in rural areas as compared to the urban areas, they reiterated that all schools had been sanitised and Covid-19 standard operating protocols (SOPs) are being followed.

In Chittoor district, of the 69,587 students enrolled in ninth standard (34,931) and tenth standard (34,656) at 673 schools across the district, about 29,559 (IX - 13,482 + X-16,077) students turned up on the day one on Monday. In all, of the 16,372 teachers working in 4,825 schools, including primary, upper primary and high schools, only 9,773 have attended the duties on day one.

Meanwhile, most parents are still having apprehensions about the safety of their wards and are not ready yet to send them to school. "We are not eager to submit consent letters immediately. Some schools are still lacking the better infrastructure to ensure a seating plan with social distancing. School managements should build confidence through preparations are being made to resume schools," said a Tirupati-based parent, who requested anonymity.



Ninth class students wear protective facemasks and attend classes while maintaining physical distance at KDPM High School near East Point Colony in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— K. MURALI KRISHNA

Parents reluctant to send children to school

VADREUV SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, NOV. 2

Many parents are not willing to send their children to the schools on the first day of reopening day on Monday in East and West Godavari districts. They were reluctant to give consent letters to send their children to the schools. They want to wait for another 10 or 15 days, and after careful observation of circumstances, they want to send their ward to the schools. Attendance was very thin on the first day of reopening the schools in East and West Godavari districts on Monday.

Most of the students have not attended the classes, in particular, the attendance in private schools was very low. It was 11.15 per cent in West Godavari with only 11,724 students attended out of 1,05,158 total students for IX and X standards and Kakinada Municipal Corporation registered 19 per cent attendance in 14 Municipal High Schools which is a strength of 1,526.

The West Godavari district Educational Officer P.V. Renuka said that the attendance of the students might increase in

coming days as it was the first day on Monday of reopening and all precautionary steps were being taken for not attracting Covid-19 virus. She said that 96.64 per cent of teachers attended the schools. She said that 11,573 teachers attended out of 1,1975 in West Godavari on the first day. She said that 4,430 students both boys and girls (8.54 per cent) out of 51,887 for IX standard and 7294 students both boys and girls (13.69 per cent) out of 53,271 to X standard attended.

East Godavari registered 69 per cent with attendance of 96,698 students out of 1,39,966 in IX and X standards. The EG District Educational Officer S. Abraham said that 49,026 students attended out of 71,861 in IX standard with 68 per cent and 47,672 students out of 68,105 attend-

ed with 70 per cent in X standard. He said that the teachers are making efforts to create awareness among the students to come to the schools.

However, the private school managements have a different view. They said that on the first day of reopening of the schools, about 1.5 per cent students attended since parents were hesitant to send their children to the schools due to Covid-19 scare.

"Parents did not give their consent letters for sending their students for the classes of IX and X standards," said the Private Schools Management Association East Godavari president Muthukumilli Sri Vijay.

He said that the parents said that they would wait for another 10 days and after observing the circumstances, they can send their children to the schools. He said that the government was campaigning on the second wave of Covid-19 and parents are afraid of sending their children to the schools. However, it is said that the students residing in slums have attended in large numbers to their respective municipal schools without expressing any Covid-19 scare.

SCHOOLS ARE SANITISED, SAYS OFFICIAL

From Page 1

Confirming the development with *Deccan Chronicle*, DM&HO, Chittoor district Dr M. Penchalaiah said the testing drive at schools across the district would continue and all Covid-19 safety precautions and sanitisation drives would be followed across the district.

"We have been conducting Covid-19 tests on students randomly and all the teachers in the district have already undergone one round of tests. We have thoroughly sanitised the premises where the positive cases emerged," he added.

Parents are also checking whether the schools are complying with Covid-19 protocol.

PRIVATE VARSITIES TOLD TO MAINTAIN QUALITY

From Page 1

He warned of stern action against private universities that do not maintain academic standards and are found guilty of having less than the required teaching staff. He urged private universities to ensure that they have the mandated accreditation from NAAC, NBA and others.

The officials spoke about a series of reforms taken up in higher education and that as part of the 'Anytime-Anywhere Learning' method adopted during Covid-19, five lakh online classes were held in the state. The Chief Minister felt the need to bring in a good number of students into the facility.

On seats allocation in educational institutions, the meeting decided to allot 50 per cent seats under convener quota while the remaining are to be filled up under the institute's quota so that poor students, who secured seats in convener quota, can be entitled for fee-reimbursement from the government.

Regarding polytechnic colleges, he underlined the importance for launching new courses and integration of existing courses dealing with engineering, veterinary and agriculture so that students can find employment. He directed the officials to come up with an action plan by incorporating new courses coming up at the global level based on local needs to help develop such colleges as centres of employment.

Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy called for development of capacity building complexes in every Parliamentary constituency so that all stakeholders like teachers, employees in village/ward secretariats and others can undergo multitasking training. He directed officials to make use of available colleges and government training centres as CBCs and also asked for roping in IITs.

Later, the officials briefed the Chief Minister about the ongoing works at prestigious institutions like IIT, Tirupati; IISER, Tirupati; IIM, Visakhapatnam and NIT, Tadepalligudem like laying roads, construction of drainages, taking up sanitation, and power supply facilities.

Include R&R in project cost: AP

From Page 1

The committee estimated that 74 per cent of the civil works are completed.

The representatives of the Central Water Commission and the Revised Cost Committee took part in the meeting through a video conference. Adityanath Das, special CS, water resources, represented the delegation of AP officials.

"The outcome of the meeting is positive. There has been a consensus among the participants that the project cannot be completed at 2013-2014 estimates and the same has to be communicated to the MoJS which in turn will take up the matter

with MoF," sources said.

The state government has also made a strong pitch for treating the Rehabilitation and Resettlement cost as an integral part of the irrigation component of the project.

The officials brought to the PPA's notice that Centre has not separated R&R in any national irrigation project currently under progress in other parts of the country and there should be no discrimination against Andhra Pradesh. The state government has agreed to the PPA's observation that revenue proceedings from the sale of water to industrial purposes should go to the authority.

Release whitepaper on Polavaram: BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, NOV. 2

The Bharatiya Janata Party demanded the state government should release a whitepaper on Polavaram project. The BJP media panel member Y. Malakondaiah told the media on Monday that the union government would release the funds for the completion of the Polavaram project if the state government acts transparently and submits details of the funds spent on the project.

He said that there was 50 per cent of corruption in taking up the Polavaram project works since the late CM Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy and the corruption went to a peak stage during the Telugu Desam regime.

The then opposition leader Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy made several allegations of corruption in the Polavaram Project. Although he assumed charge as the Chief Minister, Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy could not disclose the corruption practices during Mr Chandrababu Naidu's regime. So, now,

Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy should release a whitepaper on funds released by the Union government, taking up works, completion of works, required land for the project, acquisition of the lands and its compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement and other issues.

He said that the Union government would construct the Polavaram project compulsorily.

Mr Malakondaiah also said that the union government was releasing funds of more than ₹3,440 crore to ₹57.60 lakh farmers in the state, but the state government was not rendering support to the farmers who incurred great losses during heavy rains and floods.

He said that the government should make a probe on rice distribution under the Public Distribution Scheme as the rice was going to recycling and then it is being exported to foreign countries. He said that the state government should appoint food committees and curb the recycling of rice belonging to ration depots.

AG takes serious note of CM's letter to CJI

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

Attorney General K.K. Venugopal took a serious note of the letter written by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to Supreme Court Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and his principal advisor Ajay Kallam, releasing the same to the media.

"Prima facie the conduct of the said persons (Chief Minister and Kallam) is contemptuous," he said in his reply to Ashwin Kumar Upadhyay, a Supreme Court advocate who requested the former to initiate proceedings for

criminal contempt against the two.

Further, Venugopal said that he was of the opinion that the timing of the letter and releasing it to media "could certainly be said to be suspect, in the background of the order passed by Justice Ramana on September 16 directing pending prosecutions of elected representatives to be taken up and disposed of expeditiously."

The AG, however, declined to consent to the contempt proceedings as CJI was already seized of the matter and it would not be appropriate for him to deal with the same.

AP REVOKES GO ON 1 YR EXTENSION OF SERVICE TO AWARD-WINNING TEACHERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

The state government revoked the order dealing with enhancement of one year service beyond the age of superannuation for both national and state teacher awardees who are still in service.

The government issued GO MS No. 58 here on Monday keeping its earlier GO MS No. 101 issued on

31/12/2018 by the School Education Department, in abeyance. The GO 58 said that earlier GO 101 was issued without obtaining finance concurrence and also no mechanism was set up to determine whether a teacher was physically and mentally fit to grant extension of service. It said that to avoid unnecessary legal complications, the GO 101 was kept in abeyance.

GOVT. DECEIVED THE PENSIONERS: TULASI REDDY

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, NOV. 2

Pradesh Congress Working president Tulasi Reddy said that it is not appropriate for the government not to increase the pensions to elderly, widows, and others as assured earlier. He questioned the government that is it not deceiving the pensioners. He spoke to reporters on Monday in Vempalle. He also demanded that the old arrears be paid to them.

STATE AID

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

Minister for home and deputy Chief Minister Makethoti Sucharita on Monday called on the family members of Varalakshmi in Gajuwaka in Visakhapatnam and handed them over ₹10 lakh cheque as announced by the CM. Varalakshmi was killed by her school days friend Akhil Sai.

Gajuwaka MLA Tippala Nagi Reddy and collector V. Vinay Chand were present.

ent. Ms Sucharita told the parents of Varalakshmi Mr P. Satya Gurnath and P. Padma Priya that full protection would be given to them and the accused charge sheet under Disha Act would be filed within seven days. She said after the Disha came into being, charge sheets were filed in 390 cases and punishment given to 108 accused.

She in a case relating to rape of a minor girl in Chittoor, the court awarded death penalty to the accused within seven days

of the incident. Another person was also given death penalty for rape of a minor in Vijayawada. She said the rapes were being committed by the persons known to the victim.

Appealing the girls to download Disha App, she advised them to inform their parents immediately so that they could take precautionary measures.

Meanwhile, the accused Akhil Sai was produced in the court and the judge remanded him to judicial custody till November 12.



— DC

SHORT TAKES

RARE HONOUR
FOR WALTAIR
DIVISIONDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

The Diesel Loco Shed, Visakhapatnam achieved National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accreditation with the standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 in the field of testing.

The chemical and metallurgical laboratory of Diesel Loco Shed is the first laboratory among sheds in Indian Railway to achieve this feat. Perhaps this is also the first laboratory of Railways in India to achieve testing accreditation in the field of wear metal analysis for nine elements in used lubricating oils.

Divisional Railway Manager Chetan Kumar Shrivastava appreciated the efforts of Diesel Loco Shed in ensuring quality service to the railways and congratulated the staff for achieving the unique feat. He presented the certificate to Santosh Kumar Patra, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer.

SR ASSISTANT OF
ENDOWMENTS
WING IN ACB NETDC CORRESPONDENT
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 2

A senior assistant of endowment department was caught by ACB sleuths while accepting a bribe of ₹1.50 lakh from family members of a priest, who died of Covid-19, to process the application under compensative grounds at Nettikanti Hanuman temple in Kasapuram in the district on Monday. Shockingly, the temple executive officer, is of the cadre of deputy commissioner and office superintendent. ACB DSP Alla Baksh said Sri Kaladhar Swamy, a priest in the five centuries-old historic Nettikanti Hanuman temple in Guntakal mandal died two months ago and his son, Vinay Kumar applied for a priest post under compensative grounds. After negotiations, family members agreed to pay ₹90,000 towards posting under compensative grounds and ₹30,000 towards clearing pension papers to the endowment staff, who demanded an additional bribe. The family members of the deceased priest approached ACB sleuths. The DSP Alla Baksh caught red-handed the senior assistant Vemanna while accepting a bribe of ₹1.50 lakh. During the investigation, Vemanna revealed that ₹1 lakh was a bribe towards temple executive officer Vijaysagar Babu, ₹20,000 to office superintendent Venkatesh, ₹10,000 to computer operator Ranga Reddy and ₹20,000 towards himself. Similarly, endowments commissionerate proposed action against the executive officer and other staff involved in the case.

CRIME AGAINST WOMEN TO BE REDUCED TO
ZERO PER CENT, SAYS KADAPA COLLECTORDC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, NOV. 2

District Collector Chevuri Harikiran said that the concerned authorities should work in coordination to bring the registration percentage of cases of sexual assault, crime, and aggression against women and children to zero. They want to expand services at Disha, Sakhi Kendras and Mahila police stations for the

protection of the rights of women, girls, and children.

He directed the authorities to raise awareness among the people on the Disha law to curb crimes against women. He held a meeting in his chamber at the Collectorate on Monday with the staff of the District Women and Child Welfare Department, Police Department, Medical Health Department, One-Stop Center (Sakshi).

State records 1,916 Covid
cases, 13 deaths; toll 6,719

AP conducted Covid-19 tests on 1,53,226 samples per one million

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN |
DC
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

AP registered 1,916 new Covid-19 cases scaling up the tally to 8,27,882 and 13 deaths taking the toll to 6,719 in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities released Covid-19 bulletin on Monday reporting that out of 64,581 samples tested, 1,916 persons were found infected with Covid-19. Out of a total number of 81,82,266 samples tested so far in the state, 7,98,625 patients were discharged after recovery while 22,538 patients are still active with the virus and are undergoing treatment at various hospitals in the state.

Among the daily Covid-19 cases, West Godavari topped the state with 426 followed, 354 in East Godavari, 179 in Guntur, 178 in Prakasam, 141 in Kadapa, 121 in Chittoor,

Vizag, Vizianagaram report
zero Covid deaths in a weekK.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts reported no deaths due to Covid-19 while Srikakulam recorded only two deaths during the last one week ending on Monday.

Visakhapatnam recorded 55,036 positive cases with only 1,894 active cases. The total number of deaths so far was put at 479. Srikakulam registered 44,390 positive cases so far and 85 cases on Monday.

The total number of deaths was 336. Vizianagaram district, which remained a green district for the first two months after the outbreak, registered around 36,000 positive cases with 199 deaths.

Health officials appealed to the people to continue Covid-19 protocols by wearing masks and maintaining social

distance. "The ensuing festivals including month-long Kartika Masam beginning with Diwali, Christmas, New Year and three-day Sankranti is testing time for the people of Andhra Pradesh," said a senior health official from Visakhapatnam. He also feared that the opening of schools and cinema theatres could be focal points of contracting the virus.

Guntur, 64,835 in Anantapur, 59,834 in Prakasam, 59,665 in Nellore, 59,530 in Kurnool, 56,003 in Visakhapatnam, 52,346 in Kadapa, 44,095 in

used to be the worst hit with the cumulative positive Covid-19 cases with the highest number of 1,16,389 followed by 86,449 in West Godavari, 78,886 in Chittoor, 67,786 in

Red cross Nellore chief accused
of selling plasma to hospitalsAVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 2

The Red Cross Parirakshana Samithi on Monday staged a protest in front of the Red Cross committee unit office in Nellore, accusing the unit chairman K. Chandrasekhar Reddy for allegedly diverting and selling plasma, donated by recovered Covid-19 patients, to private hospitals for cash instead of sending them to the government institutions.

The Samithi leader Kaku Murali, who led

the protest, alleged that the Red Cross unit chairman has been swindling money by selling plasma, which was donated by many Covid-19 recovered patients from across the district.

He alleged that the members of the Red Cross committee, Nellore have been illegally supplying plasma to private hospitals in Chennai in the name of dead patients and swindling money. He demanded the district collector to order for a probe on the issue and reveal facts to the public. Meanwhile, the Red

Cross committee chairman Mr K. Chandrasekhar Reddy interacted with the media and said that they had maintained every record transparently and adequately. He claimed that the Red Cross committee, Nellore unit, has been involved in many service activities during the lockdown period.

"We have supplied food to the homeless and roadside dwellers in Nellore city limits during the lockdown. We also motivated people on blood donation," he maintained.

YOUNGSTER
BOOKED UNDER
POCSO FOR ASSAULTDC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 2

A six-year-old girl was sexually assaulted by her neighbour when the victim's mother went out to buy vegetables at Rayalpet in Peddapanjani mandal of Chittoor district. Though the incident happened late on Sunday night, it came to light on Monday when the parents lodged a complaint at the police station.

According to Palamaner DSP Arifulla, 26-year-old Mohan, who found the six-year-old girl alone at home, sneaked inside and sexually assaulted her at around 8 pm on Sunday night. The accused absconded after the incident. The victim's mother, who returned home after an hour, was shocked to see her daughter bleeding and crying in pain. The girl was rushed to the government hospital, the doctors confirmed that she was sexually assaulted.

Srikakulam, 39,720 in Krishna, 39,429 in Vizianagaram, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery among the Covid-19 infected patients has been good in East Godavari with 1,11,569 followed by 82,891 in West Godavari, 75,970 in Chittoor, 63,812 in Guntur, 63,122 in Anantapur, 59,084 in Nellore, 58,739 in Kurnool, 57,816 in Prakasam, 53,699 in Visakhapatnam, 50,710 in Kadapa, 43,099 in Srikakulam, 38,926 in Vizianagaram, 36,293 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

Among daily death cases of Covid-19 infected patients, Anantapur and Krishna registered three each followed by one each in East Godavari, Guntur, Kadapa, Prakasam, Srikakulam and West Godavari.

3 INJURED
SHIFTED TO
KADAPA RIMS

FROM PAGE 1

The Scorpio with red sanders logs and passengers hit the tipper's diesel tanker. Meanwhile, the smugglers' escort pilot vehicle being driven at a high speed rammed into both vehicles. All three vehicles were burnt and four persons were burnt alive and three were seriously injured.

On coming to know of the incident, Valluru police sub-inspector Rajagopal Reddy and Kadapa, Kamalapuram fire department personnel and Kadapa fire officer Palagiri Basivi Reddy rushed to the spot and tried to douse the flames.

The three injured were shifted to RIMS Hospital in Kadapa. One of them, Mukthiyani succumbed while taking treatment. Police filed a case and are investigating.

FOLLOW COVID
NORMS: MUNICIPAL
COMMISSIONERDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

Municipal commissioner V. Prasanna Venkatesh called upon the people to strictly follow all safety norms to avoid getting infected with Covid-19.

The commissioner held a review meeting with the heads of various departments here on Monday. He laid stress to follow Covid-19 norms in the wake of expected outbreak of the second wave of Covid-19 as is evident in some European countries.

The commissioner called for maintenance of six feet physical distance, usage of hand sanitiser and wearing face mask.



Asha workers protest against the government demanding job security and to implement government welfare schemes for them, outside the District Collectorate in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— K. MURALIKRISHNA

ASHA workers
held for protestDC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 2

Thousands of ASHA workers on Monday staged a protest at Gandhi statue near RTC complex against their transfer to village secretariats. They later took out a rally to Collectorate where the police, present in large numbers, bundled several of them into vans and taken to the Two Town police station and were later released on self bail.

Honorary president of AP ASHA Workers Union P. Mani said the workers were attached to the district medical and health department under the National Health Mission.

By transferring them to secretariats, the jurisdiction

of each worker has been enhanced from 2,500 population to 8,000. She said the workers were being asked to sign the register at the secretariat every evening after daylong fieldwork and the superiors are harassing them for no reason.

Mani said they were being paid ₹10,000 per month and no social benefits like ESI and PF were given to them. They were also denied the superannuation benefits like other employees.

"Hundreds of workers are on the rolls since the last 14 years, but the government is not showing any interest in regularising their services despite their immense contribution to the health sector," Mani said.

AP POLICE RESCUE 12,621 CHILDREN
UNDER OPERATION MUSKANDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

The state police rescued 12,621 children under Operation Muskan Covid-19 in three days covering October 28, 29 and November 2.

Given the huge response for the programme taken up based on the initiative of Director General of Police Goutam Sawang, the police rescued 3,339 children on Monday alone up to 7.30 pm and out of them, 2,691 were

boys and 648 were girls. Out of the total number of 12,621 children rescued in three days, 10,492 were boys and 2,129 were girls.

The police will continue the operation on Tuesday.

All the rescued children were being subjected to Covid-19 tests and also being provided with medical treatment to the infected children besides providing them rehabilitation to the homeless and orphan children.

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SHORT TAKES

MAYA: BSP-BJP ALLIANCE NOT POSSIBLE

Lucknow, Nov. 2: Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asserted on Monday that her party would never enter into an alliance with the BJP in the assembly or the Lok Sabha elections, highlighting that the ideology of the two parties were “opposite”.

Her clarification came amid speculation over her last week’s statement that the BSP would vote for the BJP or any other party’s candidate to ensure defeat of the Samajwadi Party contenders in future elections, including those of the Uttar Pradesh legislative council and the Rajya Sabha.

Mayawati alleged that the SP and the Congress were misusing her recent statement so that the Muslim community distances itself from the BSP.

“The alliance of the BJP with the BSP is not possible in any polls in the future. The BSP cannot contest with the communal party,” she said in a media briefing.

“Our ideology is of *sarvajana sarva dharma hitay* (benefit of everyone and all religions) and is opposite to the BJP’s ideology,” she said. “The BSP cannot enter into an alliance with those having communal, casteist and capitalist ideology.”

Mayawati said she would rather take *sanyas* (retirement) from politics than ally with such parties.

MODI LIKELY TO WIND UP BIHAR CAMPAIGN TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

As the battle for Bihar enters its final phase, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi are all set to address rallies in the Seemanchal area of the state.

While the Prime Minister will be winding up his election tour of Bihar on Tuesday, Mr. Gandhi will carry on with his campaign and address another couple of rallies the next day as well.

A senior leader of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee said that in all likelihood Mr. Gandhi might conclude his election engagements by holding a joint press conference with RJD leader and Grand Alliance’s CM face, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, on Wednesday.

The Congress leader will address two rallies at Bihariganj in Madhepura and Araria on November 4.

Daughter of Sharad Yadav, Subhashini Rao, and sitting MLA Abidur Rahman are set to take on JD(U)’s Niranjan Kumar Mehta in Bihariganj and Sagufta Ajim in Araria seats respectively.

Bihar Congress leaders are also mobilising their resources to ensure that the rallies of the former Congress president at Korha in Katihar and Kisaniganj on Tuesday are a grand success and work in favour of sitting MLA Poonam Paswan and Izharul Hussain, who are pitted against the BJP’s Kavita Singh and Sweetey Singh respectively.

CRUCIAL CONTEST IN MP AS VOTING TO BE HELD TODAY

Bhopal/Lucknow/Ahmedabad, Nov. 2: Voting will be held on Tuesday for by-elections to 54 assembly constituencies in 10 states including 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh where the BJP is locked in a keenly-fought contest with the Congress to save its government.

All eyes are riveted on Madhya Pradesh where the BJP which has 107 MLAs in the assembly, with an effective strength of 229, needs at least eight more MLAs for a simple majority.

The stakes are high for the Congress too as it had sitting MLAs in 27 seats out of 28 in the state.

The saffron party is fielding 31 candidates in MP, Gujarat and Karnataka who had won from the Congress ticket but switched sides and resigned, necessitating the byelections in those states.

In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP, which has a comfortable majority in the Assembly, is locked in a battle of prestige on the seven seats six of which it had won in the last election while one was with the Samajwadi Party.

In Gujarat, the bypolls are being held in eight seats after the Congress MLAs resigned ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls in June this year. Five of them later joined the ruling BJP and are contesting again.



Security personal carrying VVPATs and EVMs leave for polling booths from a distribution centre ahead of the second phase of Bihar assembly elections, in Patna on Monday. — PTI

SC ‘relief’ for Kamal Nath on star campaigner issue

SC issues notice to EC, CJI focuses on issue of the powers of poll panel

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Election Commission’s order taking away the start campaigner status of the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath for the Congress in the ongoing bypolls to the state assembly for which campaigning ended on Sunday.

The court issued notice to the Election Commission.

Putting on hold the poll panel’s decision denuding Kamal Nath of his status as star campaigner for the Congress in Madhya Pradesh bypolls, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde heading a bench also comprising Justice A. S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramasubramanian sought reply from the poll

panel while questioning its powers to decide as to who will be the leader of a party during electioneering. Referring to Section 77 of the Representation Act that deals with the expenditure of a candidate or by the leader of a political party campaigning during election, the Chief Justice of India expressed his misgiving whether the poll panel had any such powers which it had exercised in the case of Kamal Nath.

At the outset of the hearing, senior counsel Rakesh Dwivedi told the court that the petition by the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister has become infructuous as campaigning has already ended and polling is on Tuesday (November 3).

However, the CJI focused on the larger issue of the powers of the poll panel to

take decision ousting a star campaigner from electioneering.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Kamal Nath, asserted that “no notice was issued to us” and the decision was arbitrary.

Kamal Nath has moved the top court challenging the EC’s decision to revoke his status as a star campaigner.

The BJP on Tuesday said the stay on election commission’s order revoking former chief minister Kamal Nath’s star campaigner status by supreme court, cannot be construed as relief to the Congress leader.

BJP spokesman Rajneesh Agrawal said the stay order was merely a judicial process and it did not give a clean chit to Mr Nath for his violation of model code of conduct

by terming state women and child development minister Imarti Devi as an ‘item’.

Besides, the stay order is meaningless now considering that the campaigning for the assembly by-elections in the state already came to close on Monday evening.

Shivraj, Nath hit out at each other

Meanwhile, with barely 24 hours left for the crucial assembly by-elections in Madhya Pradesh, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Congress veteran Kamal Nath on Monday indulged in name-calling to show each other in poor light in public.

While Mr Chouhan has refused to withdraw the *papi* (sinner) tag given by him to Mr Nath, the latter literally called him a liar.

“Mr Chouhan calls me a *papi*. Let him explain what sin I have committed? All his (Mr Chouhan’s) assertions that I have not implemented farm loan waiver promises and also held back students’ scholarships when I was chief minister are utter lies. Mr Chouhan is shamelessly dishing out lies”, Mr Nath told reporters here.

He said crop loans of around 27 lakh farmers were written off when he was chief minister. His government was planning to waive farm loans of the rest of the beneficiaries in 2 phases, but it was pulled down. Mr Chouhan, however, stood by his remarks saying that Mr Nath has committed fraud on farmers by going back on his promise to waive their crop loans within ten days of coming to power in the state.

Tejashwi, 4 ministers of Nitish govt in fray as Bihar votes in 2nd phase today

Patna, Nov. 2: The stage is set for the second and, arguably, the most crucial of the three phases of Bihar assembly elections in which over 2.85 crore voters are eligible to decide the fate of nearly 1,500 candidates on Tuesday.

Voting will take place on November 3 in 94 assembly segments, more than a third of the 243-strong assembly spread across 17 districts, all of which but three — Patna, Bhagalpur and Nalanda — are situated north of the Ganges.

Notable among the candidates is the RJD’s Tejashwi Yadav, the opposition Grand Alliance’s Chief Ministerial candidate, who has been aggressively trying to cash in on the anti-incumbency factor against the Nitish Kumar government.

The 31-year-old is seeking re-election from Raghupur in Vaishali district which he had wrested back for his party from the BJP’s Satish Kumar in 2015. The BJP leader had defeated Yadav’s mother Rabri Devi, a former chief minister, in 2010.

The BJP has retained its trust in Satish Kumar, hoping that the giant killer will be able to do a repeat of 2010 when, like this time, JD(U) president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was with the NDA.

Tejashwi’s elder brother Tej Pratap Yadav is trying his luck from Hasanpur in Samastipur district, shifting his base from Mahua

in Vaishali. There were said to be fears in the RJD camp that Tej Pratap’s bid to retain Mahua could be challenged by the NDA through his estranged wife Aishwarya as its trump card. She is already taking an active part in the campaign for her father Chandrika Roy in Parsa, which he has represented a number of times and is seeking to retain on a JD(U) ticket this time.

All the four assembly segments in the capital city Patna Sahib, Kumhrar, Bankipur and Digha are also going to polls in the second phase. All these are held by the BJP.

State minister Nand Kishore Yadav is in the fray trying to retain Patna Sahib for a seventh consecutive term.

Multiple-term MLA Nitin Nabin faces a challenge in Bankipur from Congress candidate Luv Sinha, who is the son of actor-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha, a two-time local MP who lost the seat when he entered the fray after quitting the BJP.

The BJP has retained as its candidates Arun Sinha and Sanjiv Chaurasia for Kumhrar and Digha respectively. Seven constituencies of Nalanda district, to which Chief Minister Nitish Kumar belongs, also go to polls in the second phase. Barring Hilsa, represented by the RJD’s Shakti Singh Yadav, and Bihar Sharif, which two-term

MLA Sunil Kumar retained on a BJP ticket in 2015, all the remaining five were won by the JD(U). The assembly segment named after the district is represented by state minister Shrawan Kumar who is seeking re-election from the seat.

The JD(U) has suffered a setback in the reserved Rajgir seat where its sitting MLA Ravi Jyoti, a former police inspector, is now the fray on a Congress ticket.

Two other ministers Ram Sevak Singh (JDU) and Rana Randhir Singh (BJP) are trying their luck from Hathua and Madhubani in Gopalganj and East Champaran districts respectively. The ministers are sitting MLAs from the respective seats.

Many bahubalis or their wives, sons, brothers or other close relatives are also contesting a number of seats.

Of the 1,463 candidates in the fray on the 94 seats, nearly 10 per cent (146) are women. Among the 2.85 crore voters, females account for 1.35 crore.

Maharajganj has the maximum number of 27 candidates for any constituency while Darauli (04) has the lowest.

The RJD is contesting 56 of the 94 seats while its ally Congress is contesting 24. The CPI and CPI(M), which joined the Grand Alliance recently, are fighting four seats each. — PTI

HAM seeks probe into Paswan’s death

Patna, Nov. 2: NDA ally HAM created a flutter on Monday with its leader Jitan Ram Manjhi demanding a judicial inquiry into the death of union minister Ram Vilas Paswan while pointing an accusing finger at Chirag Paswan, prompting the LJP chief to claim it was a “plot” by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to discredit him when election was under way.

Chirag Paswan, in an angry retort to Manjhi, said the former chief minister should ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the issue.

Paswan jr. said Modi used to call him up every day to inquire after his late father when he was sick and hospitalised, sometimes to even inform him about the LJP founder’s condition after talking to doctors attending to him.

“I request the prime minister to order a judicial probe into the death of Ram Vilas Paswan to unravel the dubious role of Chirag Paswan in the matter,” Manjhi said.

HAM spokesman Danish Rizwan also wrote a letter to Modi backing the demand while citing a video of Chirag rehearsing before issuing a video message a day after the death of his father where he was purportedly seen joking with the people present and even talking about the texture of his hair.

Chirag Paswan accused Nitish Kumar of “scripting a plot to settle political scores with him” and instigating the HAM to rake up an emotional issue to blunt the LJP’s campaign to prevent him from becoming the chief minister once again.

Manjhi wanted to know who ordered the hospital to not issue regular health bulletins of Paswan, who was “such a big leader”.

Manjhi also claimed people were prevented from meeting the Dalit leader when he was hospitalised. Chirag had informed people about the death of his father through a tweet on October 8. Manjhi claimed it was being speculated that the LJP leader had died 2-3 days ago.

“When he had telephoned me when my father was in hospital, I told him everything. He

● **CHIRAG PASWAN**, in an angry retort to Manjhi, said the former chief minister should ask Prime Minister about the issue.

● **BOTH THE HAM** and the LJP draw strength from Dalit voters, and Manjhi was not on good terms with Ram Vilas Paswan when the two were partners in the NDA in the 2015 election.

neither called me again nor visited Papa in the hospital,” Chirag Paswan told a press conference.

Ever since his return to the NDA, facilitated by Kumar, Manjhi and his party have been routinely targeting the LJP, which has walked out of the ruling alliance in Bihar and is going solo at the hustings. Chirag has also frequently launched vicious attacks on the chief minister.

Both the HAM and the LJP draw strength from Dalit voters, and Manjhi was not on good terms with Ram Vilas Paswan when the two were partners in the NDA in the 2015 assembly election.

“Kumar, who is now showing concern about my father’s death, never telephoned me to know about his health leave alone visiting him in the hospital,” the LJP president said.

“On the other hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was kind enough and used to telephone me almost twice a day to inquire about Papa’s health and sometimes even tell me what the doctors are saying about his medical condition.”

He recalled Modi had told his first rally of the election in Sasaram that Paswan stood with him till his last breath.

“Indeed he (Modi) was the only person who was sincerely bothered about him till he breathed his last,” the 38-year-old LJP chief, who recently declared himself Modi’s Hanuman, said.

Flanked by BJP and JD(U) rebels like Rajendra Singh and Bhagwan Singh Kushwaha, he claimed while there were smiles on the faces of LJP candidates after the first phase of polls, Kumar was glum. “Nitish will be sent packing after November 10,” he asserted. — PTI



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar addresses a gathering during an election rally, at Alamnagar in Madhepura district on Monday. — PTI

NITISH: WILL RJD DELAY SALARIES TO FULFILL 10-LAKH JOBS PROMISE?

Patna, Nov. 2: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday said providing 10 lakh jobs, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav’s main poll promise, would cost the exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually, and wondered if his rival would shelve other development works or delay salaries to implement his pledge.

Addressing constituents in five assembly segments through a virtual rally called “Nishchay Samwad”, Kumar also said his government has changed the state’s industrial policy and that “we will be able to invite several industries”.

Tejashwi has promised he would sanction 10 lakh government jobs in his

very first cabinet meeting if the ‘Mahagathbandhan’ is voted to power.

“That is impossible, they won’t get the chance to govern,” Kumar said.

“But for what he (Tejashwi) has said, it will cost the state exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually... Should they shelve all other development work?”

He said earlier nobody used to get salaries in time and recalled that several teachers and university professors had told the CM during his Vikas Yatra in 2005 that they did not get salaries in time.

“We fixed that. Now what do they want to do? Again not paying salaries? Will there be no other (development) work?” Kumar said. — PTI



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US on edge as 77% fear violence

Last-minute scramble for votes by Trump and Biden; no clarity on timing of the result

POLL LINGO: NAKED BALLOTS TO A RED MIRAGE

WILMINGTON, Del. (Reuters) - Every U.S. presidential election has its own lingo, like the "hanging chads" on voting cards in Florida that led to a landmark court battle in 2000. Below is some of the jargon used in the days leading up to the Nov. 3 election pitting President Donald Trump against his Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

NAKED BALLOTS

Sixteen states require voters to return mail ballots in a special "secrecy" envelope. Ballots that don't arrive in the envelope will be considered "naked" and might be disqualified. Celebrities including Naomi Campbell, Chris Rock and Sarah Silverman disrobed in a video to promote proper voting procedures, "the least sexy thing a completely naked person can say," according to actor Josh Gad, who also stripped for the video by activist group Represent.Us, which has promoted anti-graft resolutions, says it does not endorse either candidate.

RED MIRAGE/BLUE SHIFT

Fearing crowded polling places amid the Coronavirus pandemic, a record number of Americans, particularly Democrats, cast mail-in ballots this year, and counting them could take days. As a result, initial results on Election Day may show Republicans, indicated by red on election maps, holding large leads in battleground states, which counts mail-in ballots received three days after Nov. 3. As ballots are tallied in the ensuing days, that "red mirage" could fade, giving way to a "blue shift." Experts see a possible "blue mirage" and "red shift" in Florida and North Carolina.

SPOILED BALLOTS

Ballots that are improperly marked can be rejected as spoiled. Trump said in a tweet the phrase "can I change my vote" was trending on Google and urged Americans to submit a new ballot for him. Some states allow voters to request a new absentee ballot but first they have to request their original ballot be marked as spoiled.

DUELLING ELECTORS

The Electoral College allots electors to states based on population, and the candidate who wins the popular vote gets its electors. But legal experts say Trump could try to convince Republican lawmakers in closely contested states to approve the Republican slate of electors based on early vote tallies. As more ballots are counted, Biden might be certified as the winner. The result: Dueling electors and an outcome that could be determined by Congress.

COURT PACKING

Republicans confirmed Amy Coney Barrett as a Supreme Court justice on Oct. 26 to replace the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a hero to many for her advocacy for women's issues. Democrats had argued Ginsburg's seat should be filled after poll. Some have suggested that a Biden Administration could expand the court beyond its traditional nine justices. Biden has said he will establish a bipartisan commission to consider changes to the court system, which he said is "getting out of whack."

POLL WATCHERS

The Republican National Committee is mobilizing thousands of supporters to monitor early voting sites and ballot drop boxes, looking for irregularities such as people dropping off multiple ballots in states where that generally is not allowed. This marks the first presidential election in nearly four decades in which the Republicans can engage in "ballot security" activities without prior review and approval from the Department of Justice.

Washington, Nov. 2: The US presidential campaign enters its final day Monday with a last-minute scramble for votes by Donald Trump and Joe Biden, drawing to a close an extraordinary race that has put a pandemic-stricken country on edge.

But while campaigning will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday, many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and possible legal challenges.

About three-quarters of Americans are concerned about riots and violence after election day, according to a new poll by J.L. Partners-Independent.

Almost three out of four voters (72%) describe themselves as "very or very concerned about post-election violence", according to the survey. Concerns are greater among President Trump's supporters - 77% said they fear violence and unrest. Among former Vice President Biden's supporters, 73% described these concerns.

Those factors, along with an unprecedented convergence of social justice protests, Coronavirus precautions and President Trump's fear-mongering campaign, have led to apprehension over whether unrest could erupt.

Taking no chances, businesses in some cities have boarded up windows, while across the country the harsh political climate has led to fierce debate, in some cases even dividing families.

As proof of how much Americans have been galvanized - and perhaps frightened by the pandemic - a record of more than 93 million people have cast early ballots, including in-person and mailed votes, according to the nonpartisan US Elections Project.

— Agencies

Will host meet of democracies: Joe

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has said that if elected, he will convene a global summit of democracies in the first year of his presidency to counter the "rising authoritarianism" in the world and address issues of election security and human rights.

Biden accused President Donald Trump of "embracing" every autocrat in the world which he said has undermined America's credibility. "One of the things that have hurt us so badly, is that this president has embraced every thug and every

autocrat in the world, in ways that have undermined our credibility," he said during a conference call.

"I'll energise the community of democracies to counter the rising authoritarianism we see in the world. In my first year, we're going to host a summit of the democracies to address election security, human rights, etc." Biden said.

Responding to questions on China, he said trade, human rights and security are the three main issues. Criticising President Trump's policies toward China, he said, "Trump caved to Chinese leaders every time. He let them off the hook, started a trade war, etc."

"Trump gave them the green light to put millions of Chinese Uighurs in concentration camps," he said. His campaign has termed the alleged HR violations of Uyghur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region as "genocide" and called for a global effort to make a united stand against the "oppression". — PTI



US President Donald Trump arrives for a Make America Great Again rally at Fayetteville Regional Airport in Fayetteville, North Carolina on Monday. — AFP

Biden names 800 major fundraisers

Washington, Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has released the names of major fundraisers, including Indian-Americans, who helped him raise at least \$100,000 for his election campaign this year.

The list, released on Sunday, contains the names of 800 major donors, including a few dozen Indian-Americans.

Topping the list of Indian-Americans are well known community leaders Swadesh Chatterjee, Rameshk Kapoor, Shekar N. Narasimhan, R. Rangaswami, Ajay Jain Bhutoria and Frank Islam.

Among other prominent Indian-American bundlers are Neil Makhija, Rahu, Prakash, Deepak Raj, Raj Shah, Rajan Shah, Radhika Shah, Jill and Raj Singh, Nidhi Thakar, Kiran Jain, Sony Kalsi and Bela Bajaria. Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has also been listed as a bundler.

Given that the list of bundlers includes all those

who have raised more than \$100,000, the number of Indian-Americans in far less than those of former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton campaigns. Some of the traditional Indian-American Democratic donors like hotelier Sant Chatwal are missing from the list. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the list of "bundlers" includes the who's who of Democratic

politics, including former and current governors, senators, Cabinet secretaries and big names from Hollywood. Film producer Jeffrey Katzenberg, writer and director Lee Daniels, LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman; media mogul Haim Saban and former US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker are on the list, the daily said.

— PTI

FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



93 million Americans have already cast ballots

11 precincts in New Orleans could still be without power on Tuesday

1,100 prominent members of the Asian-American community endorse Joe Biden, Kamala Harris

300 lawsuits already have been filed over the election in dozens of states across the country



127,000

127,000 ballots cast at drive-thru voting places in the Houston area not to be tossed out after the Texas Supreme Court on Sunday denied a Republican-led petition

Idli and any kind of 'Tikka' fav Indian dishes: Kamala

New York, Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has listed Idli with a "really good Sambar" and "any kind of Tikka" as her favourite Indian dishes. Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, Harris, is the first Indian-origin and first Black woman to be picked by a major American political party for the top post. Harris, responding to a question on what her favourite Indian dishes are, said: "So South Indian, it would be Idli with... a really good Sambar, and then North Indian — probably

any kind of Tikka".

The 56-year-old California senator, after being chosen by Democratic Party's presidential candidate Joe Biden as his running mate in August, reflected on her proud Indian heritage during her maiden address to the Indian-American community and recalled how her mother Shyamala Gopalan always wanted to instill in her a "love for good Idli".

She had taken a trip down the memory lane, mentioning her "long walks" in Madras (now Chennai) with her grandfather who would tell her about the

"heroes" responsible for the birth of the world's largest democracy. In a video posted on Twitter on Sunday, Harris answered some questions asked by Instagram users. On what she is doing to take care of her mental health on the campaign trail, she said that she works out every morning, speaks with her kids and loves to cook. Asked what her plan is to ensure a sustainable and eco-friendly future for the coming generations, Harris said Biden and she are prepared to make commitments with timelines to achieve zero emissions by 2050. — PTI

PROLONGED VOTE COUNT: DON READY FOR LEGAL BATTLE

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: US President Donald Trump has denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday and hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle against a vote count that stretched past Election Day. "No, no that was a false report," Trump told reporters on Sunday at the Charlotte airport in North Carolina amidst a news report that he is planning to prematurely declare victory on the election night.

Americans have rushed to vote early, already casting nearly 92 million mail-in ballots that could take days or weeks to be counted in some states — meaning a winner might not be declared in the hours after polls close on Tuesday. Trump indicated that his team was gearing up for a legal battle.

Trump lamented Supreme Court's rulings that allowed for Pennsylvania and North Carolina to count absentee ballots that are postmarked before Election Day but arrive shortly after Tuesday. "I think it is a terrible thing when ballots can be collected after an election. I think it is a terrible thing when people or states are allowed to tabulate ballots for a long period of time after the election is over because it can only lead to one thing," Trump said.

"We are going in the night of — as soon as the election is over — we are going in with our lawyers," he said as he criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states. — PTI

HARRIS SEEKS DECISIVE MANDATE FROM AMERICANS

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has sought a decisive mandate from Americans so that no amount of legal battle can overturn the poll results.

US President Donald Trump on Sunday denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday, but hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle in the counting of mail and absentee votes post the election.

He criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states.

"Well, first of all, we plan to decisively win this election so I don't, I don't think we're going to need to get to that point," 56-year-old Harris told reporters during a day of hectic campaigning with stops in this North Carolinian city and in Georgia.

Over the past few days, polls indicate that the November 3 presidential election is getting tighter, even though Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden continues to maintain substantial lead over Republican incumbent President Donald Trump.

— PTI

ELECTION | EVENT

Drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature

Honking gets new meaning

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Honking has got a new meaning in the US politics with the annoying sound replacing clapping, cheers and even boos in election campaigns, in particularly the drive-in car rallies of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris. Drive-in car rallies have become a signature election event of the Democratic Party which has taken the innovative path

wherein a select group of supporters gather in a parking lot to be addressed by the party's top leadership as part of its efforts to maintain social distancing due to the Coronavirus.

Both Biden, 77, and Harris, 56, ask their supporters sitting in their cars to honk to express their sentiments. In fact, honking in the election rallies of the Democratic Party has replaced all kinds of emotion in election rallies. In the election rallies of Republican incumbent President Donald Trump, thousands of his supporters cheer, clap and

chant slogans like "We Love You" and "Four More years." Most of these drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature and they are not publicised. In their rallies, it's all honking.

The level of honking reflects the sentiments, happiness and anger of their supporters. On Sunday at a drive-in rally attended by less than 100 cars, invited by the local campaign officials, every time Harris supporters got excited with her remarks, they honked. Every time she spoke about

"Black Lives Matter", they honked. It was once in a while that some of the supporters peeked out of their car windows. Those who were standing outside their cars ensured that they were maintaining social distancing as they clapped.

There were no cheers at all. Same was the case with shouting slogans. Unlike the Trump rallies, which are publicised locally much in advance and people are encouraged to participate, the car drive-in rallies of Biden and Harris are by invitation only.

— PTI



Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden hugs his granddaughter Finnegan Biden during a canvassing kick-off event in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Sunday. — AFP

The writer is a former secretary in the external affairs ministry. He tweets at @ambkcsingh.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,757.58	0.36
Nifty 50	11,669.15	0.23
S&P 500*	3,309.28	1.20
Dollar (₹)	74.42	-0.42
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.79	-0.004
Euro (₹)	86.57	0.42
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,286.103	0.20
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	37.95	0.01
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.890	0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.838	-0.021

Singh to continue as NTPC chief till July 2025

The NTPC board approved the extension of tenure of chairman and MD Gurdeep Singh till July 31, 2025. Singh's extended term will start from February 4, 2021. Singh had taken over as the CMD of NTPC on February 4, 2016.

Aditya Puri to join Carlyle as senior advisor

Aditya Puri, who retired as HDFC Bank CEO and MD last week, will be guiding global private equity major Carlyle on investment opportunities across Asia as a senior advisor. Puri will advise the Carlyle team and provide guidance on the evolving market landscape and new investment opportunities, Carlyle said. He will also be advising Carlyle's investment professionals and portfolio management teams.

Tax payers generate 4.95 cr e-invoices: Govt

Tax payers generated 4.95 crore e-invoices in the first month of the launch of the service, the ministry of electronics and IT said. Besides e-invoices, 6.41 crore e-way bills were generated in October, which was highest in any month since the launch of the service. "According to NIC, within the first month of introduction itself, more than 495 lakh e-invoices were generated on the NIC portal by 27,400 taxpayers," the ministry said.

Coromandel Intl posts 17% rise in Q2 profit

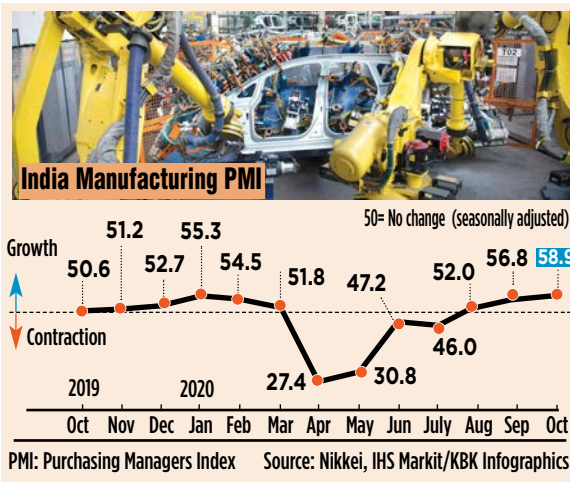
Coromandel International reported a 17 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit after tax at Rs 589 crore for the September 2020 quarter. Total income was lower at Rs 4,620 crore against Rs 4,867 crore in the year-ago quarter. Standalone net profit after tax for the quarter rose to Rs 582 crore versus Rs 503 crore. Total income stood at Rs 4,605 crore against Rs 4,865 crore.



PMI at a 13-year high of 58.9 in Oct. Mfg sees fastest pick-up in decade

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

With rising demand and output amidst Covid-19 disruptions, India's factory activity, measured by the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), expanded to 58.9 in October—nearly a 13-year high and the fastest pace in over a decade. However, on the employment front, the numbers remain a concern, as companies cut more jobs, a private survey showed on Monday. Even though the economy shrank at a record 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, the latest PMI survey shows that Asia's third-largest economy is signalling a fast pace of recovery with several economic indicators turning positive. "Rising from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, the headline PMI pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade, with companies raising output to the greatest extent in 13 years amid robust sales growth. The reading was the highest since May 2010 and above the 50-level separating growth from contraction for the third straight month. While firms purchased additional inputs for use in the production process, payroll numbers were lowered due to government guidelines related to the Covid-19," said the IHS Markit survey. Commenting, Pollyanna



De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit, said, "Levels of new orders and output at Indian manufacturers continued to recover from the Covid-19 induced contractions seen earlier in the year, with the PMI results for October highlighting historically sharp monthly rates of expansion. Companies were convinced that the resurgence in sales will be sustained in coming months, as indicated by a strong upturn in input buying amid restocking efforts." "Also, confidence towards the year-ahead outlook for production improved as firms hoped that fewer Covid-19 cases and the reopening of other businesses could boost output growth. There was disappointing news on the employment front though, with October seeing another reduction in pay-

PNB profit rises 22% to ₹621 cr

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Monday reported a 22 per cent jump in net profit to Rs 620.81 crore for the second quarter. The lender had posted a net profit of Rs 507.05 crore during the corresponding quarter a year ago. The bank's total income during July-September rose to Rs 23,438.56 crore as against Rs 15,556.61 crore in the year-ago period, PNB said in a regulatory filing. Gross non-performing assets accounted for 13.43 per cent of the gross advances at the end of September, lower than 16.76 per cent a year ago. Net non-performing assets (NPAs) declined to 4.75 per cent, compared with 7.65 per cent a year ago. However, provisions for bad loans rose to Rs 3,811.17 crore in the quarter, against Rs 3,253.32 crore in July-September 2019. Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India merged with PNB, effective April 1, 2020. —PTI

TRADING HOURS FOR RUPEE, BOND MARKETS EXTENDED

FC BANKING BUREAU MUMBAI, NOV. 2

In view of the graded roll-back of lockdown restrictions, the Reserve Bank of India on Monday decided to restore trading hours for the bond and currency market in a phased manner with effect from November 9. The trading hours for foreign currency and rupee market—including forex derivatives, government securities, commercial paper and certificate of deposit, which had been amended to 10 am to 2 pm—can be conducted between 10 am to 3:30 pm from November 9, the Reserve Bank said. The trading hours for various markets were amended from April 7.

Reliance Cap in bid to sell stake in arms to cut debt

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL), part of debt-ridden Anil Ambani-promoted Reliance Group, has invited bids for sale of its subsidiaries, including Reliance General Insurance and Reliance Nippon Life Insurance, to repay loans of about Rs 20,000 crore. According to sources, the process for inviting expression of interest (EOI) for its key assets was launched on October 31, with a view to unlock value of its underlying businesses and targets to make RCL debt free. EOIs invited for all or part of RCL's stake of subsidiaries Reliance General Insurance, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company, Reliance Securities, Reliance Financial Limited and Reliance Asset Reconstruction Limited. The monetisation process is run under the aegis of Committee of Debenture Holders and the Debenture Trustee Vistra ITCL India Ltd, which represents 93 per cent of outstanding debt of RCL, sources said. The company proposes to exit from its wholly owned Reliance General Insurance Company Limited with paid up capital of Rs 252 crore as of September 30, sources said, adding that 51 per cent stake in Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company is also for sale. —PTI

Manipal to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India for ₹2,100 cr

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Leading multi-specialty healthcare provider Manipal Hospitals on Monday said it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India. According to sources, the acquisition will be for Rs 2,100 crore. The company intends to acquire 100 per cent stake in Columbia Asia Hospitals Pvt Ltd (Columbia Asia). The transfer of ownership to Manipal Hospitals is expected to be completed post regulatory approvals, the healthcare providers said in a statement. "We are very pleased to welcome Columbia Asia Hospitals to the Manipal family and proudly acknowledge their outstanding track record of healthcare delivery of a very high standard over the years," Manipal Education and Medical



Group (MEMG) chairman Ranjan Pai said. "This is the start of an exceptional journey for us and together with Columbia Asia, we are now bigger, stronger and uniquely positioned to meet the growing expectations of the communities we serve across the country," he added. Together, the combined entity will have a presence of 27 hospitals across 15 cities with over 7,300 beds and a pool of more than 4,000 doctors and over 10,000 employees, the statement said.

Columbia Asia Hospitals commenced operations in India in 2005 in Hebbal, Bengaluru and currently operates 11 hospitals across the country, it added. "This combination of Columbia Asia and Manipal Hospitals is very exciting because of the strong cultural alignment between the two companies and the opportunity it provides for continued growth," Columbia Pacific Management chairman Dan Baty said. The acquisition of Columbia Asia offers a geographical and cultural fit, and provides Manipal Hospitals a larger national footprint, the statement said. The advisor for Manipal Health Enterprise was Allegro Capital and Columbia Pacific was advised by Morgan Stanley, it added. —PTI

Centre transfers ₹6,000 cr to 16 states, 3 UTs

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

In an effort to meet the goods and services tax (GST) revenue shortfall, the Centre on Monday transferred loans worth Rs 6,000 crore as the second tranche to 16 states and three Union territories (UTs) under a special borrowing window. With this amount, the government has already facilitated total loans of Rs 12,000 crore till date under the special window to states and UTs to meet the shortfall in GST compensation cess collections. "The finance ministry said the "amount was raised at a weighted average yield of 4.42 per cent. This amount will be passed on to the states/UTs at the same interest rate, which is lower than the cost of borrowings for the states and UTs, thus benefitting them." The 16 states and three UTs that received funds include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa,

Gujarat, Haryana, HP, Karnataka, MP, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand and the UTs of Delhi, J&K and Puducherry. Twenty-one states and three UTs have opted so far for the special window under Option 1 presented by the Union government. "The loans raised by government are released on a back-to-back basis to states/UTs, in lieu of GST Compensation Cess releases," the ministry said.

Essel sells Devanahalli, Dichpally tollways

Mumbai, Nov. 2: The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) on Monday said it has acquired two assets—Dichpally and Devanahalli tollways—from Essel Group, marking its entry into the roads and highways sector. The deal size was not disclosed by the fund. The acquisition is done through the NIIF Master Fund, and the projects will be managed by Athaang Infrastructure, NIIF's proprietary roads platform backed by a team of professionals. Subhash Chandra's debt-laden Essel Group has



been in talks with NIIF to sell these assets since last year for an estimated Rs 1,500-1,800 crore. Essel Dichpally Tollway is a 60-km four-lane toll road in Telangana and has been in operation for over seven years, connecting Hyderabad and Nagpur. Essel Devanahalli

Tollway is a strategic arterial 22-km six-lane toll road in Karnataka, connecting Bengaluru city and the airport and is a part of NH44 (erstwhile NH7). It has been in operation for over six years. Vinod Giri, managing partner at NIIF said this is the first investment that the fund has made in the roads sector. NIIF is a collaborative investment platform for international and domestic investors, anchored by the Centre and manages over \$4.3 billion of equity capital commitments across its three funds. —PTI

BMW LAUNCHES X3 M IN INDIA, PRICES START AT ₹99.9 L

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, NOV. 2

BMW, India's second biggest luxury carmaker, on Monday introduced the first-ever X3 M in India for Rs 99.90 lakh to cash in on the festive season. The X3 M is the first mid-size SUV with German BMW's M package in India which would be imported into the country. The X3 M has no direct rivals in India as there is no mid-size SUV available in India at this price point



with such performance in tow. The BMW X3 M is powered by a new 3.0-litre, 6-cylinder M TwinPower turbo engine, which is the

HDFC profit more than halves in Q2

Mumbai, Nov. 2: Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd's profit after tax declined by more than half to Rs 4,600 crore on a consolidated basis in the September quarter. It had reported a profit after tax of Rs 10,389 crore in the year-ago quarter. It said during the quarter ended September 30, 2019, Rs 8,000 crore pertained to profit on loss of control of a subsidiary, Gruh Finance. The stake sale of Gruh Finance by the housing finance player was to facilitate the merger of Gruh with Bandhan Bank. On a standalone basis, its net profit dropped 27.56 per cent to Rs 2,870 crore in the September quarter as against Rs 3,962 crore in the previous year. It provided Rs 662 crore for tax in the reporting quarter. "In reality, profit (in Q2 FY21) is higher by as much as 27 per cent compared to last year after you remove dividend income, profit on sale of investments and expected credit loss (ECL) provisions," HDFC VC and CEO Keki Mistry said. Its dividend income and profit on sale of investments during the quarter stood at Rs 323 crore as against Rs 2,701 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal. "In accordance with the directions by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, the Corporation has not received any dividend from its investments in banks and insurance companies during the current financial year so far, it said. Provisioning, including provisioning for the impact of Covid-19, was Rs 436 crore compared to Rs 754 crore in the year-ago quarter. The net interest income (NII) for the quarter grew 21 per cent to Rs 3,647 crore compared to Rs 3,021 crore in the previous year. Net interest margin for the quarter stood at 3.3 per cent versus 3.2 per cent. HDFC shares ended at Rs 2,042.65 apiece, up 6.24 per cent on BSE. —PTI

AGILE MODEL Company moves to trust and outcome-based working culture

Work from anywhere, Tata Steel tells staff

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Domestic steel maker Tata Steel on Monday announced a new work model for its employees which allows them to work from home for up to 365 days a year. The new 'Agile Working Models' policy is effective from Sunday, Tata Steel said in a statement. Tata Steel said that it is moving towards a "trust and outcome-based working culture" and to give more flexibility to its employees. Under the new models, effective November 1, even officers who are required to be based out of a particular location can now work from home for unlimited days in a year, it said. Once the pandemic situation normalises, the policy will enable company's officers to move to a location of choice, giving the employee the flexibility



to operate out of any location in the country, the company said adding the policy will be piloted for a year and based on adaptability and feedback, the policy will be reviewed after one year. Suresh Dutt Tripathi, vice-president, human resource management, Tata Steel, said that flexible working not only por-

trays an organisation's intent to create a workplace for the upcoming generations but also solidifies its intent to cater to the needs of its diversified workforce across geographies. The pandemic has helped move away from the traditional thinking of productivity being contingent upon fixed hours of work within an office environment and bust many of the myths around remote working, he said. The policy will ensure better work-life balance, will give more flexibility to choose where one lives as the daily work commute shifts out of consideration, provides working opportunities to new parents at their convenience, and ensures continuity of work for persons with disabilities in their respective work enabled environment. "Flexible working provides greater freedom to choose locations and make essential life decisions such as supporting families, be it ageing parents or spouses with non-transferrable jobs. This will help in retaining and enriching our key talent from across the country and attract workforce for location agnostic roles," Tripathi added. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Watson set to retire from cricket

Dubai: Top Australian all-rounder Shane Watson has decided to call time on his competitive cricket career after Chennai Super Kings' exit from the Indian Premier League. While Watson has not made any official announcement, it has been learnt that after CSK ended their IPL campaign on Sunday with a win over Kings XI Punjab, the senior player told his teammates about the decision to retire from all forms of cricket. This season, he has scored 299 runs in 11 games. He was a star for Rajasthan Royals during the inaugural edition (472 runs and 17 wickets) and in 2018, his century in the final post his international retirement won it for CSK, who had just come back from a two-year ban. — *PTI*

Gagan's shooting range in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: India's emerging sporting hub, Odisha, on Monday made its foray into shooting as the state government joined hands with Olympic medallist Gagan Narang to set up a 10m and 50m range at the Kalinga Stadium here. Also associated with the project is the Aditya Birla Group. The facility is called the Odisha Aditya Birla-Gagan Narang Shooting High Performance Centre, adding to the much acclaimed hockey and athletics infrastructure of the state. Further cementing Odisha's reputation as the sports capital of India and providing major boost to infrastructure in the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated three state-of-the-art sports facilities in Hinjilicut, Chatrapur and Bhubaneswar. — *PTI*

Shooter tests +ve but camp to go on

New Delhi: An athlete training in the national capital's Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range has tested positive for Covid-19, the Sports Authority of India said on Sunday but maintained that it will not hamper the ongoing national camp. Last month, SAI had approved a two-month long coaching camp for the Olympic core group shooters from October 15 to December 14. "An NCOE (National Centre of Excellence) athlete training at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in the 10 metre range has tested positive for the coronavirus. The athlete who last visited the range on October 28th in the second half of the day, intimated to his coach that his test result had come positive," SAI said in a statement. — *PTI*

Legend Charlton has dementia

London: Manchester United and England great Bobby Charlton has been diagnosed with dementia. "Everyone at Manchester United is saddened that this terrible disease has afflicted Sir Bobby Charlton and we continue to offer our love and support to Sir Bobby and his family," United said in a statement on Sunday. The announcement came two days after Nobby Stiles, who won the 1966 World Cup and 1968 European Cup as Charlton's teammate, died after his own battle with the illness. In July, Bobby's brother and fellow England World Cup winner Jack also died after being diagnosed with dementia. The 83-year-old Charlton held England's goalscoring record of 49 until it was broken by Wayne Rooney. The striker also took his United record by eclipsing the 249 goals Charlton scored for the club. — *AP*

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

Women's Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Melbourne Renegades from 9 am on Sony Six

TENNIS

ATP Paris Masters: Day 2 action from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Lokomotiv Moscow vs Atletico Madrid from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; RB Salzburg vs Bayern Munich from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Real Madrid vs Inter Milan from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Manchester City vs Olympique from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Atalanta vs Liverpool from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1

WIN-WIN GAME

Delhi beat Bangalore but both teams make play-offs

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Delhi Capitals qualified for the Indian Premier League play-offs at number two position with a six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Monday.

RCB also entered the play-offs after DC took more than 17.3 overs to complete their chase.

Invited to bat, Royal Challengers Bangalore scored 152 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs. Young Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with a 41-ball 50.

In reply, DC chased down the target with six balls to spare, courtesy calculative knocks from Shikhar Dhawan (54) and Ajinkya Rahane (60).

Earlier, Padikkal, who looked in good nick during his stay in the middle, smashed five fours and shared a 57-run stand with skipper Virat Kohli (29 off 24) for the third wicket.

The Capital pulled things back brilliantly in the middle overs.

Pacer Anrich Nortje (3/33) was the pick of the bowlers for Delhi Capitals, while Kagiso Rabada (2/30) picked up two wickets and Ravichandran Ashwin (1/18) took the important wicket of Kohli.

Padikkal and Josh Philippe (12) were circumspect in the powerplay overs. Rabada provided the Capitals with the early breakthrough off his very first ball, claiming the wicket of the Australian in the fifth over. — *PTI*



Ajinkya Rahane of Delhi Capitals plays a shot against Royal Challengers Bangalore in an Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Monday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: J. Philippe c Shaw b Rabada 12, D Padikkal b Nortje 50, V. Kohli c Stoinis b Ashwin 29, AB de Villiers run out 35, C Morris c Pant b Nortje 0, S Dube c Rahane b Rabada 17, W Sundar not out 0, I Udana c Iyer b Nortje 4, S Ahmed not out 1. Extras (B-1, W-3) 4. **Total (for 7 wkts in 20 overs) 152.**

FOW: 1-25, 2-82, 3-112, 4-112, 5-145, 6-146, 7-150.

Bowling: Daniel Sams 4-0-40-0, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-18-1, Anrich Nortje 4-0-33-3, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-30-2, Axar Patel 4-0-30-0.

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw b Mohammed Siraj 9, S. Dhawan c S. Dube b Shahbaz Ahmed 54, Ajinkya Rahane c S. Dube b Washington Sundar 60, Shreyas Iyer c Siraj b Shahbaz Ahmed, R. Pant not out 8, M. Stoinis not out 10. **Extras:** (LB-3, W-3) 6. **Total (for 4 wkts in 19 overs) 154.**

FOW: 1-19, 2-107, 3-130, 4-136.

Bowling: Chris Morris 2-0-19-0, Mohammed Siraj 3-0-29-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-24-1, Isuru Udana 2-0-24-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-29-0, Shahbaz Ahmed 4-0-26-2.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	13	9	4	0	18	+1.296
Delhi Capitals	14	8	6	0	16	-0.109
Royal Challengers Bangalore	14	7	7	0	14	-0.172
Kolkata Knight Riders	14	7	7	0	14	-0.214
Sunrisers Hyderabad	13	6	7	0	12	+0.555
Kings XI Punjab	14	6	8	0	12	-0.162
Chennai Super Kings	14	6	8	0	12	-0.455
Rajasthan Royals	14	6	8	0	12	-0.569

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

'SHORT RUN' CAME BACK TO BITE US, SAYS RAHUL

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Kings XI Punjab skipper K L Rahul believes that the "short run" that played a part in their opening IPL loss to Delhi Capitals massively affected their play-off chances despite a remarkable comeback in the second leg of the tournament.

KXIP finished on 12 points after losing their last game against Chennai Super Kings after winning five games on trot to raise visions of a play-off chance.

"It is disappointing. We had a lot of games in our pockets and we couldn't get over the line and we only have ourselves to blame. That short run game too (against Delhi Capitals on September 20), looks like it has come back to bite us,"

Rahul said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Before that particular match went into Super Over, the TV footage showed that square leg umpire Menon had erred in calling Chris Jordan for a "short run" in the third ball of the 19th over, bowled by Kagiso Rabada.

The TV replays showed that Jordan's bat was inside the crease when he completed the first run, starting from the non-striker's end.

However to KXIP's horror, Menon gestured that Jordan has not completed the run and only one run was added to Mayank Agarwal and the Punjab team's total.

On their loss against CSK, Rahul said that it was all about not batting too well. — *PTI*

Mumbai stand in between Sunrisers and play-off spot

Sharjah, Nov. 2: Riding high on momentum, resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will back themselves to topple the mighty Mumbai Indians and qualify for the IPL play-offs here on Tuesday.

Thanks to their healthy run-rate, a win against Mumbai Indians should be enough to send Sunrisers into the final-four.

After taking a tough call to leave out the dangerous Jonny Bairstow from the playing eleven, Sunrisers have managed to find out the "right" balance.

Wriddhiman Saha has made an instant impact as David Warner's opening partner and the inclusion of Jason Holder has given them an all-round option.

Pacers Holder and Sandeep Sharma were extremely impressive, both upfront and at the death, in the last game against RCB.

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL: ● Matches: 15 ● Hyderabad: 7 ● Mumbai: 7 ● Tied: 1 (Mumbai Indians beat Sunrisers Hyderabad in Super Over after match ended in a tie)

MEETING IN 2019

● MI beat SRH by 40 runs in Hyderabad.

● MI beat SRH via Super Over in Mumbai.

MEETING IN 2020

● Mumbai beat Hyderabad by 34 runs in Sharjah.

FOR THE RECORD

● David Warner with 444 runs at an average of 37.00 in 13 innings of as many matches is the fourth highest run-getter in this IPL.

● Krunal Pandya, who has scored 986 runs at an average of 25.94 in 57 innings of 68 matches, needs 14 runs to become eighth batsman to complete 1,000 runs for MI in IPL.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

Add left-arm pacer T. Natarajan and trump card Rashid Khan to their bowling attack, it makes up for a well rounded attack.

Already assured of the top spot in the points table, Mumbai will be expected to put up another ruthless show against Sunrisers.

The nature of surface in Sharjah has changed drastically with low-scores replacing 200-plus totals, which was the norm at the start of the season. — *PTI*

MPL to sponsor Team India kit

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Fantasy gaming platform Mobile Premier League's subsidiary arm 'MPL Sports Apparel and Accessories' is the new kit sponsor of the Indian cricket team for a period of three years.

A member of the Apex Council confirmed the development on Monday that BCCI has inked the apparel and merchandise deal with MPL, replacing Nike.

"Yes, Apex Council has passed the sponsorship deal for apparel of Indian team (men, women, A and U19).

"However the rate per match will be ₹65 lakh per game instead of ₹88 lakh that Nike was giving," the senior official said on conditions of anonymity.

It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

"MPL has formed an apparel manufacturing company. They will also pay an amount for merchandise contract. The deal will end in November, 2023," the source added.

● It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

While Puma and Adidas had earlier picked up the bid papers for apparel sponsorship, they didn't fill the bid as they felt that the deal needed to be reduced to one third from the original bid.

Nike had a five year deal during which they paid ₹370 crore from 2016 to 2020 with a ₹30 crore royalty.

"No sporting apparel major was ready to pay that kind of money that Nike paid in current economic climate (due to Covid-19).

"One of the major reasons being merchandise items being very costly for common public," the source said.

MPL is currently associated with two IPL franchises (Kolkata Knight Riders and RCB), one CPL franchise (TKR) and the cricket boards of Ireland and the UAE. — *PTI*

New Beginning



Telangana Minister for Information Technology, Industries and Municipal Administration K. T. Rama Rao and former shuttler Jwala Gutta (right) take a tour of The Jwala Gutta Academy of Excellence at Sujatha School in Nagireddydyguda in Moinabad Mandal near Hyderabad after its inauguration on Monday. Sports Minister V. Srinivas Goud can be partially seen on the right.

Ronaldo returns with double in Juve's win

Milan, Nov. 2: Cristiano Ronaldo came off the bench to score a brace on his return from coronavirus as Juventus got back to winning ways in Serie A with a 4-1 victory against promoted Spezia on Sunday.

The champions ended a run of three consecutive draws to move third in Serie A, four points behind leaders AC Milan, who beat Udinese 2-1 earlier in the day thanks to a spectacular late winner from Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Sassuolo overtook Juventus to reclaim second spot, two points behind Milan, after a 2-0 win over Napoli, their first ever success at the Stadio San Paolo. Ronaldo replaced Paulo Dybala in the 56th minute in Cesena with the match level after Tommaso Pobega had cancelled out Alvaro Morata's opener for Juventus.

But the Portuguese striker put Juve in front just three minutes later.

Adrien Rabiot grabbed a third on 68 minutes, with Ronaldo scoring a second from the penalty spot with 15 minutes to go for his fifth goal in three league games this season.

"Cristiano is back. This is the important thing," said Ronaldo, who had been furious at missing Juventus' Champions League 2-0 defeat in mid-week by Lionel Messi's Barcelona.

IBRAHIMOVIC STUNNER

AC Milan extended their unbeaten streak as Ibrahimovic scored an acrobatic late winner to seal a win over lowly Udinese. The 39-year-old has scored seven goals in four league games having missed the other two after contracting Covid-19. — *AFP*

BALE IS TOTTENHAM'S MATCH WINNER AGAIN

London, Nov. 2: Gareth Bale soared into the air, connected with the ball and powered it into the net.

It's taken more than seven years but Bale was Tottenham's match-winner again. And they have only required three minutes on the field for the substitute to clinch a 2-1 victory over Brighton on Sunday.

A bit of relief and a lot of happiness, Bale said after being set up by Sergio Reguilon, who also switched from Real Madrid in September.

"It's an incredible feeling, personally. Obviously you wish the fans were here to be able to celebrate," he said after the match. — *AP*

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