

THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2020



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Tanushree Dutta, who made #MeToo headlines, all set to make her comeback



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WINDOWS



Magician Murray Sawchuk performs during the "Fantasy" show at Luxor Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Monday.

— AFP

BSE Sensex surges 680 points, closes above 43,000 mark

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks rallied to fresh lifetime highs on Tuesday, propelled by banking and finance stocks, after positive results from Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine trials turbocharged global market sentiment. Climbing for the seventh session on the trot, the BSE Sensex soared 680.22 points or 1.60 per cent to close above the 43,000-mark for the first time at 43,277.65. Intra-day, the 30-share benchmark touched its lifetime peak of 43,316.44.

Full report on Page 7

Hear plea on Covid ICU beds: SC to HC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to grant any interim relief against the Delhi high court order staying the AAP government's decision to reserve 80 per cent ICU beds in 33 private hospitals for Covid-19 patients and ordered urgent hearing on the plea on November 12.

Full report on Page 4

Delhi-NCR air hits 'emergency' level

New Delhi: A grey apocalyptic smog enveloped Delhi on Tuesday, blotting out the sun from the sky and smudging landmarks from view as the city's air quality hit "emergency" levels. Delhi recorded a 24-hour AQI of 476, which falls in the "severe" category.

Full report on Page 4

COUNTERPOINT



The vaccine is more effective in polls than in clinical trials!

WEATHER

Max: 28°C
Min: 13°C
RH: 55%
Rain: Nil

Forecast: Sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Bahula Ekadasi till 12:37 am
Star: Purvaphalguni till 6:27 am
Variyam: 1.02 pm to 2.29 pm
Durmuhurtam: 11:37 am to 12:22 pm
Rahukalam: Noon to 1.30 pm
SUNSET TODAY 7.17 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.37 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 8.04 AM
MOONSET TODAY 9.33 PM

NDA wins, but Tejashwi leads

■ BJP calls win before final count; Chirag Paswan makes a dent in JD-U votes

■ Tejashwi Yadav says we won 119 seats, alleges pressure, asks EC for recount

■ Left parties see resurgence, Congress' dismal show drags down Mahagathbandhan

SREEPARNA CHAKRABARTY
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

The BJP-JD(U)'s National Democratic Alliance inched towards hitting the majority mark in the Bihar Assembly and forming the government though 31-year-old Tejashwi Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) emerged as the single-largest party on Tuesday. The day saw many seesaws with trends flipping several times as the Election Commission began the counting of votes at 8 am and went on past midnight because of a staggering increase in the number of EVMs on account of the coronavirus pandemic. At the time of going to press, the final results were not out but the trends foretold the fate of most.

The NDA was leading in 124 seats, one more than the magic mark in the 243-member Assembly. The BJP seemed to be the gainer in the alliance with a lead in 73 seats, while the JD(U), which was leading in just 43 seats, was down from its 71-seat position in the 2015 state elections.

The Mahagathbandhan was leading in 111 seats, of which the RJD had the king's share of 76. The Congress was leading in just 19 seats, but the Left parties looked set for a resurgence with a lead in 16 seats.

The RJD contested 144 seats, the Congress 70, and Left parties 29. In the NDA, the JD(U) contested 115 seats and the BJP 110.

Late in the evening, the RJD shared a purported list of its candidates who had won from as many as 119 seats, claiming the returning officers had already congratulated their candidates on their win, but the Election Commission was now

refusing to issue certificates claiming they've lost. A delegation including RJD and Congress leaders visited the Election Commission office in Patna and demanded a recount in many constituencies.

The CPI(M-L) too sought a recount in three seats. The Left parties, which were leading in 19 seats for most part of the day, were down to 12 in the evening.

In a letter to the Election Commission, the CPI(M-L) demanded a recount of votes in Bhorey, Arrah and Daraundha Assembly constituencies citing "dubious counting practices".

The letter said that the CPI(M-L) candidates "have been shown to be defeated in very narrow margins, following some worrying violations of counting norms".

The letter alleged that in Bhorey, JD(U) candidate Sunil Kumar, a former additional director general of police, "commands a lot of clout in the administration" and that a local JD(U) leader "was seen entering the counting hall — which is illegal and prohibited".

Election Commission, which held three press briefings on Tuesday and was likely to hold another one late at night to declare the final results, responded to the RJD's allegations saying that according to an order dated May 2019, "in places where the margin of victory is less than the total number of postal ballots rejected as invalid, it is mandatory to reverify rejected ballots. The reverification should be mandatorily videographed."


A majority of the exit polls had on Saturday projected that the Tejashwi Yadav-led Mahagathbandhan will

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BIHAR RESULT			243 TOTAL SEATS	122 MAGIC MARK	
	2020	2015		2020	2015
NDA	124	123	MGB	111	110
BJP	73 ↑	53	RJD	76 ↓	80
JD(U)	43 ↓	71	CONG	19 ↓	27
VIP	4 ↑	0	LEFT	16 ↑	3
HAM	4 ↑	1	AIMIM	5 ↑	0
LJP	1 ↓	2	* The 2020 figures include party wins & trends as per EC * In 2015, JD-U was part of Mahagathbandhan		

WHICH WAY WILL OWAISI GO?


► AIMIM, which appeared set to win 5 Muslim-dominated seats, will take a call on extending support to the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan once the final results are declared, party chief Asaduddin Owaisi said




Nitish Kumar




Chirag Paswan



Dipanker, CPI(ML)



Tejasvi Yadav



Rahul Gandhi

BJP relied on Modi's charisma to defuse anger against Nitish, and it worked

YOJNA GUSAI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

Plagued by the "anti-incumbency" against incumbent chief minister and NDA "face" Nitish Kumar, the BJP strategised its election campaign heavily around the popularity and charisma of its key star campaigner, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and on the "Modi votebank". This, the BJP felt, helped it to tide over the "anti-incumbency"

against the Bihar government and also overshadow "big brother" JD(U) by bagging more Assembly seats.

Mr Modi, according to BJP poll strategists, helped change the narrative of the Bihar polls in the NDA's favour. BJP poll strategists relied heavily on the "Modi votebank", which includes beneficiaries of the Narendra Modi government's flagship schemes — cash transfers in the Jan Dhan

accounts, the "garib kalyan" scheme, free LPG under Ujjwala, DBT schemes, and most important, free rations in the Covid-19 lockdown. Women and youth constitute a sizeable chunk of this votebank, which is credited by BJP poll managers for the party's stunning performance in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

The Prime Minister himself addressed a dozen rallies, including those Mr Nitish

Kumar shared the dais with him, and also wrote an open letter to the people of Bihar seeking votes for the incumbent CM.

The initial feedback reaching the BJP indicates there was simmering anger against the "Sushashan Babu" over various issues, including the Covid-19 lockdown and the recent floods, prompting the BJP to focus its campaign around the PM and the Central

■ Turn to Page 4

BJP sweeps bypolls, wins 40 out of 56

Bags 19 out of 28 seats in MP, 6 of 7 in UP, stuns TRS in Dubbak

AGE CORRESPONDENTS
NEW DELHI/BHOPAL, NOV. 10

The BJP on Tuesday won byelections in 11 states, heading for victory in 40 of the 56 Assembly seats that went to the polls, with new BJP entrant Jyotiraditya Scindia ensuring the party remains in power in Madhya Pradesh, where it won 19 of 28 seats. These seats had fallen vacant after Mr Scindia quit the Congress and joined the BJP with his followers, that led to the fall of the Kamal Nath government in the state.

Mr Scindia tweeted his congratulations to his party's "winners", with the contest in MP turning into a prestige fight between Kamal Nath and himself. The Congress had to win 27 of the 28 seats if it had to displace the BJP and return to power in the state, which it could not.

Of the seven Uttar Pradesh Assembly seats for which counting continued Tuesday, the BJP managed to retain six while one went to the Samajwadi Party. UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath said: "This shows that the BJP will do well in the upcoming elections too."

and

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA SCORES, CONGRESS SUFFERS SETBACK



► CM Shivraj not only contained the rebellion in the party but also by successfully countered the Cong 'gaddars' narrative

► New BJP entrant Jyotiraditya Scindia ensured the party remains in power in MP, where it won 19 of 28 seats

► We were visible on social media, but not on the ground. That has caused the party's debacle in the bypoll.

Chhattisgarh brought some cheer to the Congress and its allies. The two seats in Jharkhand were won by the Congress and its ally JMM, while the lone Chhattisgarh seat went to the Congress. In Haryana's Baroda seat, the Congress' Indu Raj Narwal defeated the BJP's Yogeshwar Dutt by 12,300 votes. This was a prestige battle for former chief minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda.

In Telangana's Dubbak constituency, the BJP stunned the state's ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi by narrowly defeating it by over 1,000 votes. This is expected to rejuvenate the BJP in the state, which till now had only one MLA in the Assembly.

In Karnataka too, both Bengaluru's Rajarajeshwari Nagar and Sirsi in Tumakuru district were won by the BJP, with the party winning in Sirsi for the first time. In Gujarat, the BJP made a clean sweep in the bypolls, necessitated after many Congress MLAs resigned during the Rajya Sabha polls earlier. The BJP won all eight seats.

The Biju Janata Dal won both seats in Odisha. In Manipur, the BJP won four out of five seats. In most of the byelections, the BJP consolidated its position while the Congress and other Opposition parties were limited to their areas of influence.

In Madhya Pradesh, two of 12 ministers in the Shivraj

Singh Chouhan government who fought the bypolls lost, while another minister was trailing. The two ministers who lost are Giriraj Dandotia and Anand Singh Kansana. State minister Imarti Devi, whom former CM Kamal Nath referred to as an "item", inviting criticism from all quarters, was trailing by a thin margin of 500 votes behind her Congress rival.

In Gwalior-Chambal, Mr Scindia's stronghold, the BJP won 10 seats but lost in five, while trailing in another constituency. With these, the ruling BJP's strength in the 230-member MP Assembly will go up from 107 to 126, while the Congress' strength will go up from 87 to 96.

Resurgence of Left in Bihar, lead in 16 of 29 seats fought

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

If any single block has gained phenomenally in the battle for Bihar it is undoubtedly the three Left parties — the CPI(Marxist), CPI and CPI-ML (Liberation).

The three parties fought as part of the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan, but their strike-rate was far better than the other alliance partner, Congress, which fought 70 and is on its way to winning only 20. According to the EC, the Left parties were leading in 16 of the 29 seats they contested.

Out of this, the major gainer was the CPI-ML (Liberation) which was leading in or had won 13 seats out of the 19 it fought. The CPI(M) was ahead in two out of the four it contested and the CPI in three out of six.

The RJD had stuck its neck out and gave the Left 29 seats despite objections from other alliance partners.

■ More on Page 3

Tejashwi, the new formidable player in Bihar

NAYEAR AZAD
PATNA, NOV. 10

The NDA on Tuesday emerged as a likely winner after the closely contested Bihar Assembly elections — the first amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Political analysts said that it was Tejashwi Yadav's "ten lakh job promise" and aggressive campaign against the NDA which made the contest for Bihar Assembly tough.

While talking about the Assembly election results, an RJD leader in Patna said,

"It was Tejashwi Yadav's leadership and his effort that made the contest tough for the NDA. A leader like Nitish Kumar, who has been ruling in Bihar for 15 years, has slipped to the third position only due to him and despite grand

alliance losing the polls, we are sure that Tejashwi Yadav will prove his worth in the state Assembly as well."

This was also the first time in four decades when RJD chief Lalu Yadav did not campaign for Bihar elections. Experts assessing the political scenario after the results on Tuesday were of the opinion that Tejashwi Yadav has come out of the shadow of his father, a formidable mass leader, and has proven that he is ready to lead the party in his absence.

Lalu Yadav is currently serving a jail term in fodder scam cases and his

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SHORT TAKES

MODI HAILS BJP BYPOLL VICTORIES ACROSS STATES

New Delhi: Hailing the BJP's strong performance in assembly bypolls in various states, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday praised the party's leadership there and expressed his thanks to people.

Powered by the "progressive agenda" of the government under Chief Minister Shivraj Chouhan and the hardwork of its workers, the BJP has emerged as the "unparalleled choice" of people in Madhya Pradesh, Modi said, adding that the people's affection for the party is "invaluable".

The BJP has won 16 seats and was leading in three others in the bypolls to 28 seats in the state. In a tweet about the party's win in two bypolls in Karnataka, Modi said, "The @BJP4Karnataka's victories in Rajarajeshwarinagar and Sira are extremely special. It reaffirms the people's unwavering faith in the reform agenda of the Centre and State Government under @BSYBJP Ji. I thank the people for their support and laud the efforts of our Karyakartas."

Lauding the party's win in all eight assembly seat bypolls in Gujarat, he said the bond between the people of state and the BJP is "unbreakable". This affection is again seen in the eight by-polls where the BJP made a clean sweep, he said, appreciating voters for support and the work of CM Vijay Rupani-led government. —PTI

JOLT FOR TRS AS BJP WINS DUBBAK BYPOLL IN T'GANA

Hyderabad: In a boost to the BJP in Telangana, the party on Tuesday won the bypoll held to the Dubbak Assembly constituency, a stronghold of the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi, defeating the TRS candidate by a margin of 1,079 votes.

"BJP candidate won by 1,079 votes," Siddipet district Collector Bharati Hollikeri told PTI over phone.

In a close contest, BJP's M Raghunandan Rao got 63,352 votes, while the TRS nominee secured 62,273 votes.

Cheruku Srinivas Reddy of the Congress finished third with 22,196 votes.

The counting of votes reminded one of a T-20 cricket match as the lead position kept changing between the BJP and TRS, but the saffron party candidate had the last laugh.

The bypoll, held on November 3, was necessitated due to the death of sitting TRS MLA Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy in August due to health issues and the TRS has fielded his widow Sujatha as its candidate.

Mr Reddy had won the bypoll by a margin of over 62,000 votes.

Buoyed by the victory, state BJP president and MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who thanked the electorate in Dubbak for the win, said the TRS leaders should remember that BJP's series of victories would continue till the saffron flag reached the top of Golconda fort (coming to power in the state).

He claimed that the Dubbak verdict is against chief minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his "arrogant, corrupt and dictatorial" rule.

—PTI

BARODA BYPOLL: CONG RETAINS SEAT, DUTT LOSES

Chandigarh: The opposition Congress on Tuesday retained the Baroda assembly seat after its candidate Indu Raj Narwal defeated BJP nominee and Olympian wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt by a margin of 10,566 votes. This is the second time that Dutt has lost from the constituency.

In the 2019 assembly poll, he had lost by about 4,800 votes to Congress candidate Krishan Hooda. The Baroda bypoll was necessitated following the death of Hooda in April. He had won the constituency thrice in 2009, 2014 and 2019.

According to officials, Narwal polled 60,636 votes while Dutt got 50,070 votes.

Indian National Lok Dal nominee Joginder Singh Malik polled 5,003 votes while Loktantra Suarkasha Party candidate Raj Kumar Saini got 5,601 votes.

As many as 468 voters opted for NOTA (none of the above) option in the bypoll, according to the Election Commission data.

The Congress secured a vote share of 49.28 per cent in the bypoll held on November 3 followed by the ruling BJP at 40.70 per cent and INLD at 4.07 per cent, the data showed. —PTI

Shivraj's charisma saves the day for BJP

MP CM successfully crushed rebellion in the party and led from the front in Assembly bypolls

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, NOV. 10

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has led ruling BJP to landslide victory in the Assembly by-elections in Madhya Pradesh which was turned into a battle of charismas between him and Congress veteran Kamal Nath.

Chouhan led his party from the front in the Assembly by-elections by not only containing the rebellion in the party triggered by nomination of 25 former Congress MLAs as BJP candidates from their respective Assembly constituencies but also by successfully countering the narrative by Congress describing its former legislators as 'Gaddars' (betrayers) during its electioneering.

"The by-elections turned out to be the most challenging elections faced by us in Madhya Pradesh so far since the core BJP cadres and local leaders were up in arms against the 25 BJP candidates who have joined our party from Congress barely 8 months ago. It was an emotional, social and political issue with the core cadre and leaders of the party who were apprehensive of being politically eclipsed due to the party's decision to give ticket to the newly inducted party men in the by-elections", BJP spokesman Rajneesh Agrawal told this newspaper.

"We won half the battle when the party leadership nipped in bud a brewing rebellion in the party by pacifying the aggrieved party cadres and synchronising them with the new entrants in the party at the booth level", he added.

Chouhan took charge of the affairs when the 'Gaddar' narrative by Congress to put BJP in 25 Assembly constituencies on defensive had appeared to be catching imagination of the people by aggressively projecting failure by the former chief minister Kamal

● **SHIVRAJ SINGH** Chouhan had also succeeded in generating sympathy for him among the electorates by playing victim when Congress leaders including Nath launched personal attack on him by calling him names such as 'nayaalaya' (good for nothing), 'kameena' (mean) and 'bhookha-nanga' (extremely poor), thus helping the party in the polls.

Nath to fulfill promises given by him to the farmers to waive their crop loans.

Chouhan had also succeeded in generating sympathy for him among the electorates by playing victim when Congress leaders including Nath launched personal attack on him by calling him names such as 'nayaalaya' (good for nothing), 'kameena' (mean) and 'bhookha-nanga' (means extremely poor), thus helping the party in the polls.

Even Rajya Sabha MP Jyotiraditya Scindia who has joined the BJP from Congress in March this year had chosen to play second fiddle to Chouhan in the by-elections.

"BJP is fighting by-elections under Mr Chouhan's leadership", was his constant refrain during campaigning.

Nath too chose to fight the by-elections on his charisma by making a narrative on his vision for MP the focus of the Congress campaign. He had also tried to evoke sympathy among the voters by narrating how his democratically elected government was pulled down by the former rebel Congress leaders.

"However, the 74-year-old Nath had failed to take the senior leaders of his party along with him in the by-elections", a senior Congress leader said unwilling to be quoted.

"We were visible on social media, but not on the ground. That has caused the party's debacle in the by-polls", the Congress leader said.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and BJP State President V.D. Sharma greet each other as they celebrate their party's lead in Madhya Pradesh bypolls in Bhopal on Tuesday.

—PTI



BJP supporters react during counting day of Madhya Pradesh Assembly bypolls, at party headquarters in Bhopal on Tuesday.



JMM candidate Basant Soren celebrates his victory in the Dumka Assembly by-election on Tuesday.

—PTI

Two ministers in Shivraj Cabinet lose; Congress wins C'garh bypoll

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, NOV. 10

The BJP has registered a landslide victory in the assembly by-elections in Madhya Pradesh results of which were declared on Tuesday by winning 19 out of 28 seats that went to bypolls on November 3.

Congress won 7 seats and is ahead of its nearest BJP rivals in 2 other assembly constituencies, reports reaching last said.

Two out of 12 ministers in the Shivraj government lost the polls, while another minister was trailing, reports reaching last here said.

The two ministers who lost the elections are Giriraj Dandotia and Anand Singh Kansana.

State minister Imarti Devi whom former chief minister Kamal Nath referred to as 'item' inviting criticism from all

quarters was trailing by a thin margin of 14,000 votes behind her nearest Congress rival, reports reaching last said.

The state ministers who won the polls are Bisahul Singh, Prabhuram Choudhury, Pradyumna Singh Tomar, Govind Singh Rajput, Tulsi Silawat, Mahendra Singh Sisodia, Rajvardhan Singh, Suresh Dhakad, and O.P.S Bhadouria.

Interestingly, 7 out of 25 former Congress MLAs who were given tickets by BJP in the by-elections lost the polls.

In Gwalior-Chambal region, said to be the stronghold of senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, BJP won 10 seats and lost in 5 seats. The party was trailing in another constituency, reports reaching last said.

Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan hailed the

massive win by his party in the by-elections saying "People have given us the opportunity to work for the development of the state".

Congress veteran and former chief minister Kamal Nath said he respected the people's mandate asking Congress to sit in Opposition.

He congratulated the chief minister for BJP's handsome win by the elections and hoped that the Shivraj government would work for development of women, farmers and other sections of people in the state.

The strength of ruling BJP in 230-member MP assembly is poised to go up from 107 to 126 following the outcome of the assembly by-elections, while the strength of Congress is set to increase from 87 to 96.

The by-elections necessitated the resignation of 25

Congress MLAs and demise of 3 sitting legislators.

Meanwhile, Congress won the by-elections in the Marwahi (ST) assembly constituency in Chhattisgarh. Congress candidate K.K. Dhruv defeated his nearest BJP rival Gambhir Singh by a margin of 38,197 votes. The seat was a pocket borough of the Jogi family.

Former chief minister late Ajit Jogi had won the seat 4 times and his son Amit represented the constituency in 2013-18.

The by-elections to the constituency necessitated following demise of Ajit Jogi. Earlier, nominations of Jogi junior and his wife Richa for the constituency were rejected following controversy over their tribal status. Both of them had filed nomination for the seat as candidates of Janata Congress Chhattisgarh.

Naveen proves to be invincible

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 10

Odisha's ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Tuesday proved that it was invincible in bypolls as it won the two Assembly seats that went to elections following the death of two incumbent lawmakers in July.

The regional party headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wrested the Balasore Sadar seat which was represented by the Madan Mohan Dutta of the BJP and retained the Tirtol seat.

Though the official figures with the regard to the votes polled by the candidates were not announced till this report was filed, reports from counting centres said the BJD nominee Swarup Das, a fresh face, defeated Manas Kumar Dutta, son of Madan Mohan Dutta

by a huge margin of around 13,000 votes.

In Tirtol, the regional party's candidate Bijaya Shankar Das crushed his BJP rival by around 40,916 votes.

The ECI reports said the BJD bagged 52.39 per cent votes while the BJP got 35.56 per cent. The Congress finished third with just 10.31 per cent votes.

By-elections in the two constituencies were held on November 3, following the demise of BJP MLA Madan Mohan Dutta in Balasore and BJD legislator Bishnu Charan Das in Tirtol.

The ruling BJD has not lost any Assembly bypolls in the last 14 years. For the first time in his 22 years of political career, the party president and CM Naveen Patnaik did not campaign for the party in the constituencies. He rather focussed on virtual campaigns.

WELCOME BOOST

The outcome has given a boost to BSY amid talks about his replacement

BJP sweeps bypolls to 2 Assembly seats in K'taka

Bengaluru, Nov. 10: The ruling BJP on Tuesday swept the bypolls to two Assembly seats in Karnataka by wresting them from opposition Congress and JD(S).

The outcome has given a boost to Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's stock amid talks about his replacement in some quarters.

It is seen as a setback for opposition leaders, especially Karnataka Congress chief D.K. Shivakumar as it was the first election in the state under his stewardship.

With this victories, the strength of BJP will rise to 118 in the 225-member Assembly that would still

have two vacancies caused by including by a recent death of a member.

Congress has 67 members, JDS 33, BSP one, nominated one and two independents besides the Speaker.

In Rajarajeshwari Nagar Assembly segment, N. Munirathna scored a hat-trick, winning by an impressive margin of more than 58,000 votes.

In Sira, it was history of sorts for the BJP as it recorded its first ever victory there with its candidate Dr C.M. Rajesh Gowda securing the seat by a margin of over 13,400 votes.

The bypoll has been necessitated in Sira in

Tumakuru district following the death of JD(S) MLA B. Sathyanarayana in August, while the RR Nagar seat fell vacant due to disqualification of Munirathna as the then Congress MLA last year under anti-defection law.

Though it was known that the results of the polls will have no bearing on the stability of the BJP government, the outcome was perceived in many quarters as a reflection on the performance of the B.S. Yediyurappa government, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"This is the victory of the people and by ensuring BJP's victory they have exuded confidence and

support towards the state government and its handling of flood situation and Coronavirus pandemic," Yediyurappa said, thanking voters for the party's success in both the constituencies.

He also vowed to fulfill the promises made to the people during the campaign, and said that with the blessings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi he will work towards completion of all the developmental works, in the remaining two-and-half years tenure.

Yediyurappa also said he will contact the Prime Minister, Union home minister Amit Shah, and BJP national president J.P.

Nadda over phone soon, also try to meet them regarding the much-awaited cabinet expansion or reshuffle, and wants to complete the process in the next couple of days.

In Sira BJP's Rajesh Gowda secured 76,564 votes, while his opponent Congress leader T.B. Jayachandra (71), a six time MLA and former Minister, got 63,150 votes.

JD(S) that had won the seat in the 2018 Assembly polls has been relegated to the third place with the party candidate Ammajamma B. (wife of late party MLA Sathyanarayana) securing 36,783 votes.

In RR Nagar segment,

part of Bengaluru Urban district, BJP's Munirathna won by securing 1,25,990 votes, followed by Congress' Kusuma H. with 67,877 votes.

JD(S) ended up distant third with party candidate V. Krishnamurthy securing just 10,269 votes.

This is the third victory in a row for Munirathna, and his first as the BJP candidate.

He had won the seat in 2013 and 2018 assembly polls on the Congress' ticket by a margin of over 18,800 votes and 5,400 votes respectively. Munirathna, after his disqualification last year, had joined the BJP. —PTI

IN BRIEF

THOSE CALLING US
VOTE-CUTTER HAVE
GOT REPLY: AIMIM

Patna/New Delhi, Nov. 10: Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen, which was given tags like 'vote cutter' and spoiler in the Bihar assembly polls, won five Muslim-dominated seats on Tuesday and said its critics have got a befitting reply from the people.

With the election results on a knife's edge earlier in the day, many thought AIMIM could play a key role in the formation of the next government in case there was a hung assembly, having captured a sizeable number of seats in the state's Seemanchal region, which was being seen as a stronghold of the grand opposition alliance.

The results, however, appeared giving a simple majority to the NDA, according to the latest Election Commission figures till midnight.

AIMIM national spokesperson Asim Waqar had earlier told PTI that a final decision on who AIMIM could back in case of a hung assembly will be taken by Owaisi, but ruled out supporting the BJP, asserting that his party's fight has always been against the saffron party.

Ahead of the polling in the third phase of the polls, the Congress had dubbed the AIMIM as the BJP's "B-team" and had accused the party of colluding with the BJP. Congress' Bihar unit chief Madan Mohan Jha had said AIMIM will not have any significant impact on the assembly polls as people will not "waste" their votes.

Asked about the assertion of the Congress and the Mahagathbandhan calling it a "vote cutter", Waqar said, "Those calling us that have got a befitting reply and their mouths will now be shut in the future as well."

On whether his party was likely to go with Mahagathbandhan or the NDA, he said, "The decision will be taken by Asad (Owaisi) sahab, but the reality is that our fight is against the BJP and for the country. So the BJP and its alliance do not appear anywhere in our list."

Expressing happiness over the AIMIM's performance, he said the party workers were expecting such a result as they had toiled hard on the ground for the last five years. As per the latest results, the AIMIM won from Amour, Kochadhaman, Jokihat, Bahadurganj and Baisi.

Owaisi-led AIMIM seems to have cut big time into the Mahagathbandhan vote in the Seemanchal region in the third phase of the polls.

The AIMIM was in the fray for 20 seats in Bihar polls, a majority of which went to polls in the third phase on November 7, as part of the Grand Democratic Secular Front that has four other parties, including Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Samta Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party. — PTI

■ Chirag Paswan's negative campaign against Nitish Kumar reduced the NDA's tally in Bihar elections

Nitish, NDA apple cart upset by Chirag

NAYEAR AZAD
PATNA, NOV. 10

LJP Chief Chirag Paswan's aggressive campaign against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar affected the JD(U)'s tally during the assembly elections. The results show that the JD(U) has slipped to number three position in the state after BJP and RJD. The situation also raises questions about Nitish Kumar's role in the NDA after the results.

The BJP, however, met Nitish Kumar in the evening to discuss future strategies. When asked whether the BJP was comfortable in accepting Nitish Kumar as its Chief Ministerial face despite its falling tally MoS Home Nityanand Rai said, "the party extends its thanks to the people who voted for the NDA during the assembly elections. NDA is intact and there is no problem with our leadership issue in Bihar".

The BJP emerged as a single largest party in the state with 74 seats while its partner JD(U) managed to win 43 seats. Two NDA partners Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) and Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) also managed to win 4 seats each during the polls. Jitan Ram Manjhi's HAM had fielded candidates on 7 seats and Mukesh Sahani's VIP was given 11 seats from the BJP quota.

However, Chirag Paswan who campaigned aggressively against Nitish Kumar's party JD(U) failed to open an account in the state. "In the current scenario, the BJP would be needing JD(U)'s support to form a government in the state comfortably. It is also clear now that the NDA's tally would have been better if Chirag Paswan had not fielded candidates against the JD(U)", political observers said.

Reports suggest that the JD(U) has urged the BJP central leadership to act against the LJP "for creating confusion by launching a negative campaign against Nitish Kumar and his party".

A day after quitting the NDA citing ideological differences with Nitish Kumar, Chirag Paswan had written an open letter urging people "not to waste a single vote" for the JD(U) nominee. Ahead of the polls, Chirag had also distributed symbols and tickets to sitting BJP MLAs who seats had gone to the JD(U). The BJP in face-saving tactics had later issued a letter condemning the act and expelled its leaders for abandoning the party for joining hands with LJP ahead of polls.



RJD chief Lalu Yadav, who is serving a jail term in a fodder scam case and undergoing treatment at RIMS, speaks on the phone during counting day of Bihar Assembly polls in Ranchi on Tuesday. — PTI

With 25% strike-rate, Cong's relevance for allies dwindles

'Cong had more Central observers than the number of seats it has won'

ASHHAR KHAN
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

There were leaders from outside the state running the show who had no idea about Bihar. Several candidates were dropped from the top who had little resonance on the ground.

— Congress leader

Samajwadi Party. It contested 105 seats and won only seven, thus ensuring that the alliance lost miserably.

Now questions are being raised about the Congress being a burden on its alliance partners in states. Many feel that after the Bihar result it will be difficult for the Congress to get a good deal from the DMK in the upcoming Assembly elections of Tamil Nadu where the two parties are slated to contest in alliance. Even in West Bengal, where the Congress is looking at Left parties for potential alliance, the Congress will be on the back-foot in seat-sharing negotiations.

The dismal performance of the party in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat by-polls also sug-

gests that the leadership was not geared up to take the challenge to the BJP. Though there is no dearth of issues, including farm laws, rising prices, unemployment, the party is unable to connect with the people.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress could just manage to win eight seats out of the 28 it fought, while in Gujarat it lost all the eight seats. In Uttar Pradesh, where the Congress staged two massive protests over migrant labourer crisis and the Hathras rape incident, the party lost all seven seats.

Just two months back, 23 leaders of the Congress — young and old included — had written to the Congress president, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, demanding several changes, including elections to the working committee and the post of Congress president. Many saw this as a challenge to Mr Gandhi who is in line to take over from his mother in due course. With the disastrous results in Bihar and bypolls, the chasm within the party is only going to grow and create more troubles for Mr Gandhi. Insiders feel that many more leaders may speak up in the coming days about the functioning of the party. — PTI

Left resurgence in Bihar, leading in 16 of 29 seats

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

If any single block has gained phenomenally in the battle for Bihar it is undoubtedly the three Left parties — the CPI(Marxist), CPI and CPI-ML (Liberation).

The three parties fought as part of the R J D - l e d Mahagathbandhan, but their strike-rate was far better than the other alliance partner, Congress, which fought 70 and is on its way to winning only 20.

According to the Election Commission, the Left parties were leading in 16 of the 29 seats they contested in the Bihar Assembly election.

Out of this, the major gainer was the CPI-ML (Liberation) which was leading in or had won 13 seats out of the 19 it fought. The CPI(M) was ahead in two out of the four it contested and the CPI in three out of six.

The RJD had stuck its neck out and gave the Left 29 seats despite objections from other alliance partners. Some of the seats contested by the Left had been won by the RJD in the last Assembly polls. In 2015, the CPI-ML (Liberation) had grabbed three seats while the other two Left parties drew a blank. Only the CPI-ML (Liberation) had an understanding with the RJD in 2015, and not the other two Left parties.

According to Dipankar Bhattacharya, general-secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation: "The leads so far are on expected lines and we hope to catch up in three more seats. This was a different kind of election."

This was more a people's movement. We

● IF ANY SINGLE block has gained phenomenally in the battle for Bihar it is undoubtedly the three Left parties — the CPI(Marxist), CPI and CPI-ML (Liberation).

● THE THREE parties fought as part of the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan, but their strike-rate was far better than the other alliance partner, Congress, which fought 70 and is on its way to winning only 20.

banked on young candidates, student leaders, candidates who were part of farmer struggles, working class people. That seems to have worked".

The Left parties fielded candidates from Agiaon, Arrah, Arwal, Balrampur, Bibhutipur, Darauli, Daraundha, Dumraon, Ghosi, Karakat, Manjhi, Matihani, Paliganj, Tarari, Ziradei, Bachhwara, Bakhri, among other places.

According to CPI, general-secretary D. Raja, while the alliance with the two parties has helped in vote conversion, what has also led to the good performance is the cadre base of the three parties that helped spread the reach of the Mahagathbandhan.

"We were clear from the beginning that we have to defeat the BJP. Our strike rate in Bihar is 80 per cent and if we had been given more seats, we would have contributed more to the Gathbandhan tally. Our alliance with the RJD and Congress combined issues of social justice with that of economic justice. One cannot be achieved without the other," CPI general secretary Sitaram Yechury told said.

He said that the Left parties "provided legitimacy" to the grand alliance to fight the BJP.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE	
The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS, Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites e-tender for the following work:-	
Name of the work with its location	Allotment of 13 Catering Stalls (Special Minor Units) at various A & B category of Railway Stations over Delhi Division for a period of five (5) years, (Ctg. SMU 04 to 16-2020)
Name of tender on IREPS	23AC/Ctg./Blue Print/A/18
Approximate cost of work	As per NIT on ireps.gov.in
Date of opening of Tender	04.12.2020 at 15:00 hrs.
Cost of Tender document & 18% GST	As per NIT on ireps.gov.in
Earnest Money Deposit	As per NIT on ireps.gov.in
Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	https://www.ireps.gov.in
No.: 23AC/Ctg./Blue Print/A/18 Dated : 09.11.2020 2489/20	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

Bihar win likely to help BJP in Bengal elections

SANJAY BASAK
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

The outcome of the Bihar elections sounds an alarming bell for the Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee. The Bihar results will be a tailwind for the BJP which has already moved into a campaign mode in West Bengal.

"Bihar victory again proves Modi magic still works and will also work in Bengal. Bihar victory will influence the Bengal voters and will certainly have a major impact on Hindi speaking community in the state," said the vice president of Bengal BJP's minority morcha, Mr Charles Nandi.

Moreover, similar to Bihar, anti-incumbency is riding high in Bengal. The BJP leaders are working overtime to talk about distributions of ration and relief material post-cyclone Amphan and the home ministry, Amit Shah who recently promised a "Sonar Bangla" also targeted the TMC regime for "shoddy handling of the Covid crisis and distribution of relief materials."

Polarizing the vote bank will remain BJP's main

weapon against the TMC ruled Bengal. To counter Mamata Banerjee's hold over the minority community, the strategists intends to divide the Muslim vote bank.

In 2016 of the 294 assembly seats, TMC had won 211. According to statistics in nearly 100 of these Muslim votes played the decisive factor.

The BJP is already working to select candidates, who could make a dent in the TMC's armour in these seats.

Speculations are rife that Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMM along with an influential Muslim cleric could field candidates in Muslim dominated constituencies and this could divide the Muslim votes and benefit the BJP. And the BJP is waiting for such an alliance to happen. Party's vice president, Jay Prakash Majumder had gone on record saying that "the trouble for Mamata Banerjee will start when a influential Muslim group in alliance with Owaisi will contest Muslim dominated seats...Mamata's Muslim vote share will be under serious stress."

In 2019, BJP managed to bag nearly 30 percent of vote share in north Bengal.



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IN BRIEF

Subhendu Adhikari denounces Mamata

Kolkata: With the slogan of “Bharat Mata Zindabad” on his lips, West Bengal transport minister Subhendu Adhikari for the first time gave a prelude of his next political move on Monday after denouncing chief minister Mamata Banerjee over her absence at Nandigram in East Midnapore on the 13th anniversary of the brutal massacre of 14 farmers in police firing there during a land movement which once helped her come to power in the state. The TMC heavyweight also reminded the party supremo to visit an electorate after winning its “votes.” In the morning, Ms Banerjee tweeted, “Today is Nandigram Dibas—the 13th anniversary of the barbaric massacre in the name of ‘new dawn.’ My homage to all those who have lost their lives due to political violence across the world. Peace must always win.” Countering Mr Adhikari, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Dola Sen explained at another rally in Nandigram, “Every year Ms Banerjee is included in a rally of Bhumi Uchchedh Protirodh Committee. But this year, we had to come on our party’s behalf to the BUPC meeting because Ms Banerjee has been excluded.”

Firoz Nadiadwala’s wife granted bail

Mumbai: A local court, on Tuesday, granted bail to Bollywood producer Firoz Nadiadwala’s wife, arrested by the NCB, in a drug-related case. The NCB had arrested Shabana Saeed on Sunday after ganja (marijuana) was allegedly found at their residence in Juhu. Advocate Ayaz Khan, on behalf of Ms Saeed, had argued before additional chief judicial magistrate A.H. Kashiskar that the recovered contraband was of small quantity. According to Mr Khan, Ms Saeed is not a peddler, but a consumer. The maximum punishment, which she could get, is one year. He also argued that her custody is not required for further investigation.

UK: Lot of potential to collaborate with India

New Delhi: British acting high commissioner Ms Jan Thompson on Tuesday said there was a lot of potential for collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region between her country and India, adding that there has been an increased focus by her country on the crucial region. She was speaking at a Virtual press interaction, and her statement comes even as the “Quad” countries, USA, India, Japan and Australia, have stepped up cooperation in the maritime region in the face of aggressive Chinese military behaviour in the region. Britain has been a long-time ally of the United States. British Foreign Secretary

TIHAR AUTHORITIES RELEASE WRONG INMATE ON BAIL

New Delhi: The Tihar jail authorities released a wrong inmate on interim bail, confusing him with a namesake who was lodged there in the same robbery case, officials said on Tuesday. According to jail officials, as per a court order dated November 4, an inmate lodged in Central Jail No. 1 of Tihar had to be released on interim bail. But instead of releasing him, the jail authorities mistakenly released another inmate with the same name who was lodged in Central Jail No. 8 of Tihar. They said the two inmates were arrested in connection with a case of robbery. Both of them were named in the same First Information Report and the officials claimed that this led to the release of the wrong inmate. The matter came to light the next day when the lawyer approached the court stating that despite being granted interim bail, the inmate was not released.

Following this the jail authorities found out that they had released the wrong inmate, a senior jail official said. Instead of releasing the inmate of Central Jail no 1, they released the inmate serving jail term in Central Jail no 8. Efforts were then made and the inmate, who was wrongly released, was brought back to jail, the official said. Director general (Delhi Prisons) Sandeep Goel said that they are conducting an enquiry into the matter.” — PTI

■ Top court asks HC to hear the matter pending before it on Nov. 12**SC refuses to lift stay on 80% ICU beds for corona patients**

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

The Supreme Court, on Tuesday, declined to lift Delhi high court’s stay on Kejriwal government’s decision asking 33 private hospitals to reserve 80 per cent ICU beds for Covid patients as the top court asked the high court to hear the matter pending before it on November 12.

The court noted that the adjournment of the hearing by the division bench was on the request by the Delhi government.

Noting the statement by senior counsel Maninder Singh, appearing for respondent Association of Health Care Providers (India), that they have no objection to any date that the top court may decide for hearing by the high court, Justice Bhushan in the order said, “In view of the above, we are of the view that looking to the facts of the case and the request made by learned counsel for the parties, we request the concerned

24,000 calls for ambulance since fresh surge in Delhi Covid cases

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

With Delhi witnessing a fresh surge in cases of Covid, nearly 24,000 calls have been made by people to access Delhi government-run ambulance services during emergency situations in the last two weeks in the city, according to official data.

Besides, the centralised Control Room set up by bench for taking up the LPA on 12.11.2020.”

The court insisted on the Delhi government approaching the HC, even as additional solicitor general Sanjay Jain, appearing for the government, told the court that the matter before the single judge is listed for hearing on November 18 and urged the court to lift for one week the high court’s stay on

the Delhi government has received over 5,000 calls to seek coronavirus-related information.

On October 26, the city recorded 54 deaths pushing the toll to 6,312. The next day, 4,853 fresh cases and 44 fatalities were reported. From October 28 onwards, the surge has been huge and over 5,000 daily cases were recorded per day from October 28-November 1.

Delhi government’s decision to reserve 80 per cent ICU beds for Covid patients. Mr Jain told the court that the number of cases were rising by the day and had crossed the 7,000 mark two days ago and people belonging to the middle class prefer private hospitals. Mr Jain said that they were facing difficulty as a number of people from the adjoining states too land up

in Delhi for treatment.

He said that under the prevailing circumstances, Delhi needs 6,000 ICU beds against 3,500 beds currently available and if the decision to reserve 80 per cent ICU beds in 33 hospitals is implemented, another 400 to 500 additional beds would be available.

The government, in its plea, had said the contention by the private hospitals—that in admitting Covid patients in ICU in such a large number would adversely impact the non-Covid patients—was simply to camouflage their commercial interest as they can’t charge more money from the Covid patients than that is fixed by the government.

The Delhi government had further stated that the high court failed to consider that it had only directed 33 private nursing homes and hospitals to reserve 80 per cent beds in ICU for Covid patients whereas there are around 1,170 private nursing homes and hospitals across the city.

City records 7,830 cases; 83 fatalities take toll to 7,143

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

Delhi recorded 7,830 fresh Covid cases on Tuesday, the highest single-day spike here till date, taking the infection tally in the national capital to over 4.5 lakh even as 83 new fatalities pushed the toll to 7,143, authorities said.

These fresh cases came out of the 59,035 tests conducted the previous day.

The positivity rate stood at 13.26 per cent amid festive season and rising pollution in the city, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi health department.

The previous highest single-day spike till date here, 7,745 cases, was recorded on Sunday.

Eighty-three new fatalities were recorded, pushing the death toll in the

national capital to 7,143. Delhi had recorded 71 fatalities from Covid on Monday and 5,023 fresh cases.

On Saturday and Sunday, 79 and 77 deaths were recorded respectively. The active cases tally on Tuesday rose to 41,385 from 39,795 the previous day.

The bulletin said that the total number of cases has climbed to 4,51,382.

PM’s stern message for China, Pak in SCO meet

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

In a veiled message directed at China and Pakistan which was delivered in the virtual presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State meeting in Virtual format on Tuesday, PM Modi in his address on Tuesday told the eight-nation grouping that connectivity can be strengthened only if nations respect each other’s sovereignty and territorial

integrity.

In another oblique message aimed at Pakistan, PM Modi said it was unfortunate that attempts are being made to unnecessarily drag bilateral issues into the SCO agenda, which violated the SCO charter and was contrary to the grouping’s spirit of consensus and cooperation. PM Modi shared screen space with the Chinese President and Pakistani Prime Minister during the Summit that was chaired by Russia. It was the first time he came face to face with President Xi, albeit in virtual mode, since Sino-Indian military tensions.

Maha: Dawood & Mirchi’s properties auctioned

SAURABH JOSHI
MUMBAI, NOV. 10

In yet another auction of immovable assets belonging to fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar, the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Authority (SAFEEMA) conducted a sale of six of his properties on Tuesday. The list of properties included his family home in Ratnagiri’s Mumbake village and two flats of his close aide Iqbal Mirchi, located in Mumbai.

The virtual auction took place in Mumbai and the organizers stated that four of the properties were successfully bid by Delhi based lawyer Bhupendra



Dawood Ibrahim



Iqbal Mirchi

Bhardwaj whereas the other two bids were won by advocate Ajay Srivastava.

“The auction went well with six properties at Ratnagiri and Goregaon having been sold. While several enquiries were received for the Mylton apartment, owned by Mirchi, no bids were received for the same,” said SAFEEMA officials.

They further revealed

that the highest bid for two of the properties went from the reserve price of ₹1.89 lakh and ₹5.35 lakh to ₹4.3 lakh and ₹11.2 lakh respectively. The other properties went for their base prices set for them.

The SAFEEMA officials also had to withdraw one of the properties belonging to the fugitive gangster over technical reasons. The auction was conducted in a

public auction, e-auction and silk tender. However, citing the pandemic situation, they converted the public auction into a virtual public auction.

Those who won the bids will now have to deposit 25 per cent of the bid amount within seven days (if the total amount is below ₹50 lakh). However, if it above ₹50 lakh, then the 25 per cent of the bid will have to be deposited within a month. In 2019, another auction of his properties had taken place. The auctioned property was an apartment where his deceased sister Haseena Parkar used to stay. The reserve price of the flat was ₹1.69 crore and it was auctioned for ₹1.80 crore.

NDA wins but Tejashwi leads

■ Continued from Page 1

have an edge over the National Democratic Alliance. It seemed that the pollsters got the Bihar results wrong once again. The results threw up many interesting possibilities and alliances in Bihar with a weakened Nitish Kumar and a strengthened Baratiya Janata Party. It remains to be seen whether Mr Kumar, who is seeking a fourth term as chief minister, heads the next government in Bihar.

The massive drop in the JD(U)’s seats and vote-share could largely be attributed to the Chirag Paswan-led LJP which was, late in the evening, leading in one seat. The party, which had walked out of the NDA in Bihar just ahead of the polls, has dented the JD(U)’s

chances by putting up candidates against it and not the BJP. Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi’s AIMIM was leading in five seats.

If the NDA manages to maintain its majority, then there is no question of any post-poll formation. However, in case it fails to reach the magic mark, then the field is open and the Mahagathbandhan is likely to approach Mr Owaisi’s AIMIM for support.

In such a scenario, it would be difficult for AIMIM as it cannot be openly seen to be aligning with the National Democratic Alliance and would have to either support the Grand Alliance or abstain in case of a show of strength on the floor of the Assembly.

Nitish main loser: BJP uses Chirag to cut him to size

■ Continued from Page 1

attacks from the LJP and the Mahagathbandhan.” Battling 15 years’ anti-incumbency, he was already on weaker ground.

As the JD(U) kept hurtling down the electoral tally, senior leader K.C. Tyagi made the party’s feelings against Chirag Paswan amply clear: “We are hurt.”

During the campaign, Mr Kumar’s so-called socialist politics had been “hurt” time and again. As Mr Kumar tried to woo his minority votebank by openly opposing the CAA and NRC, BJP Hindutva face and UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath carried on with a tirade against the minorities, saying the “infiltrators will be thrown out”. Mr

Kumar’s humiliation continued as the Prime Minister joined in: “These people don’t like to hear Jai Shri Ram. The opponents of Bharat Mata have got united and are seeking votes”.

Also, during the entire campaign, Mr Modi remained outside the prism of any attack. The Opposition focused its attack on Mr Kumar alone

Tejashwi emerges as a formidable player

■ Continued from Page 1
ball petition is to be heard on November 27.

“Despite the National Democratic Alliance’s ‘15 years of good governance of Nitish Kumar versus 15 years of jungle raj’ narrative against the Rashtriya Janata Dal, Tejashwi managed to turn the tally in his party’s favour.

However, our assessment is that few political parties like Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP) and All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) cut his party’s votes during



Tejashwi Yadav

the third phase of polls which led to the loss of the grand alliance,” political analysts said.

During the polls, Tejashwi Yadav managed to mobilise youth and did not pull back while being attacked by the National Democratic

▶ DURING THE elections, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav managed to mobilise youth and did not pull back while being attacked by the National Democratic Alliance during campaigns of the elections

Alliance during polls campaigns.

Analysts said that “when he was called the ‘yuvraj of jungle raj’ he handled the situation well and urged the NDA to talk about employment, industrialization and special status for the state”.

BJP relied on Modi’s charisma to defuse anger

■ Continued from Page 1
government’s schemes, which the party poll managers claim had a major impact in rural constituencies and on the “pachpaniya votebank”, which constitutes around 27 per cent of the state’s total population.

“In caste-riddled Bihar, PM Narendra Modi created another caste of the poor and marginalised, which transcended the limits of caste and community. It is the silent votebank but the most vocal supporter of Mr Modi. Also, the BJP’s campaign under party president J.P. Nadda energised and encouraged the grassroots worker,” said Rajya Sabha MP Rakesh Sinha.

In the state where the JD(U) is considered the “big brother” in the NDA alliance, the BJP outperformed it, keeping both the strike rate and number of seats way ahead of the JD(U). While the JD(U) contested 115 seats, the BJP contested 110 seats.

According to BJP poll strategists, in some seats, mainly in rural areas, the “Modi votebank” voted for the JD(U) because of

▶ IN THE state where the JD(U) is considered the “big brother” in the NDA alliance, the BJP outperformed it, keeping both the strike rate and number of seats way ahead of the JD(U)

his appeal for the “double engine government” despite the “anti-incumbency” against the Nitish Kumar government.

“This is the first Assembly polls during the Covid-19 pandemic and Bihar was one of the states that suffered badly as lakhs and lakhs of people had returned home, had no jobs and then the floods battered the state. However, the Modi government’s decision to give free rations, the DBT schemes, mainly Jan Dhan, in women’s bank accounts, strengthened Mr Modi’s appeal and connect with the poor and the marginalised. On an average, a household of a poor family received 20 kg of rations through the lockdown and even after the lockdown, which perhaps no promises in any manifesto can match with,” said a key BJP election strategist.



Low visibility due to smog in New Delhi on Tuesday. This is the sixth ‘severe’ air-day on the trot with air quality inching closer to ‘emergency’ levels. — PTI

Delhi-NCR’s air quality hits ‘emergency’ levels

AGE CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, NOV. 10

A grey apocalyptic smog enveloped Delhi on Tuesday, blotting out the sun from the sky and smudging landmarks from view as air quality hit “emergency” levels.

Delhi recorded a 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) of 476, which falls in the “severe” category. The neighbouring cities of Faridabad (448), Ghaziabad (444), Noida (455), Greater Noida (436), and Gurgaon (427), which fall in the National Capital Region (NCR), also recorded “severe” air quality.

This is the sixth “severe” air day on the trot in Delhi. The city witnessed seven “severe” air days in November last year.

The levels of PM2.5 — which is about three per cent the diameter of a human hair and can lead

▶ DELHI RECORDED a 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) of 476, which falls in the “severe” category. This is the sixth “severe” air day on the trot in Delhi. The city witnessed seven “severe” air days in November last year

to premature deaths from heart and lung diseases — were 494 µg/m3 at 5 pm, more than eight times the safe limit of 60 µg/m3.

PM10 levels stood at 600 microgram per cubic meter (µg/m3) at 5 pm, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data. PM10 levels below 100 µg/m3 are considered safe in India.

According to the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), the air quality is considered in the “severe plus” or “emergency” category if PM2.5 and PM10 levels persist above 300 µg/m3 and 500 µg/m3 for more than 48 hours.

GRAP recommends measures such as ban on construction activities, entry of trucks and car rationing scheme in such a scenario.

Earlier in the morning, air quality monitoring stations at Mandir Marg, Punjabi Bagh, Pusa, Rohini, Patparganj, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Najafgarh, Sri Aurobindo Marg and Okhla Phase 2 maxed out as their readings hit the 500-mark, according to CPCB data.

Smog reduced visibility to merely 300 meters in the morning, affecting traffic, an official of the India meteorological department (IMD) said.

The city recorded calm winds and a minimum temperature of 10.7 degrees Celsius on Tuesday morning. Calm winds and low temperatures trap pollutants close to the ground, while favourable wind speed helps in their dispersion.

THE ASIAN AGE

11 NOVEMBER 2020

Act responsibly, heed NGT ban on crackers

The decision of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to impose a total ban on all kinds of firecrackers in the National Capital Region from November 9 to 30, and extend it to all cities and towns where the average of ambient air quality is “poor” is welcome. The NGT has mandated that only green crackers that pollute less will be allowed in cities and towns where air quality is “moderate” or below. In other towns and cities, the state governments are given the freedom to impose more stringent restrictions. The duration for bursting of crackers has been limited to two hours during festivals.

The NGT decision comes in the wake of the extreme poor air quality reported in the national capital and elsewhere in the country in the winter season and the renewed threat the coronavirus has been posing of late to the lives of people. With fog and crackers, the air quality is sure to go down further, inconveniencing even healthy citizens. That apart, the ban on crackers will have a salutary effect on the fight against Covid-19 as the pandemic is resurfacing as a wave in Delhi and some other states. Cracker bursting is a community activity in most places and can turn into a super-spreader event. It can be fatal for some people who are suffering from the disease, which impairs, among others, the lungs most. The ban would, thus, help the nation save precious lives.

But the purpose will be served fully only if the state governments and more importantly, the people, took it seriously and implemented it wholeheartedly. It is natural for governments to be hesitant in pouring cold water on the festive spirit and invite the wrath of the people, though some states such as Rajasthan and Odisha have already banned crackers. The procrastinators have a ruse now in the form of the order of the NGT, and can go all out and ensure that the order is implemented in its spirit.

But there is only so much the governments can do on public health; it should primarily be the concern of the public. They must come forward and understand why the tribunal and governments have been forced to come out with such restrictive orders. Reports from the ground suggest that there is little progress in the way Indians grasp the enormity of the threat the pandemic is, and that they go ahead with their lives and manners throwing caution to the wind. They swarm markets, shops, malls, public places and places of worship as if the virus either did not exist or has vanished. Since neither is true, it is incumbent upon them to restrict themselves and keep the virus at bay. The Union government should intensify the Jan Andolan awareness campaign but is for the people to pick the right lessons from the nation's experiences and protect themselves. Celebrations and festivals are a yearly phenomenon; life is but a once-in-a-lifetime offer. It's important that we live on to celebrate them.

Hope across sectors

Valuations on the Indian equity markets soared on Tuesday after a report jointly issued by drug makers — Pfizer from the United States and BioNTech from Germany — announced a significant success in the development of a vaccine for the most infectious Covid-19 disease. While the broader Indian markets were mirroring euphoria witnessed around the world, India's benchmark index BSE Sensex hit an all-time high on Tuesday.

The vaccine may not be available immediately. However, it gives hope to businesses across sectors like aviation, travel and hospitality, tourism, movies among others that were shut because of the highly human contact nature of their operations. It will reopen a significant part of the economy which is either shut or severely underperforming. The rise in the Sensex and the Nifty was primarily driven by bank stocks, which indicate an optimistic assessment of the economy by investors.

This assessment goes against claims made by several analysts that the Indian economy would take a year or two to crawl back to its size in March 2020. However, the bullishness of investors, who look at future earnings before taking investment decisions, should keep us optimistic about the return of normalcy in the economy.

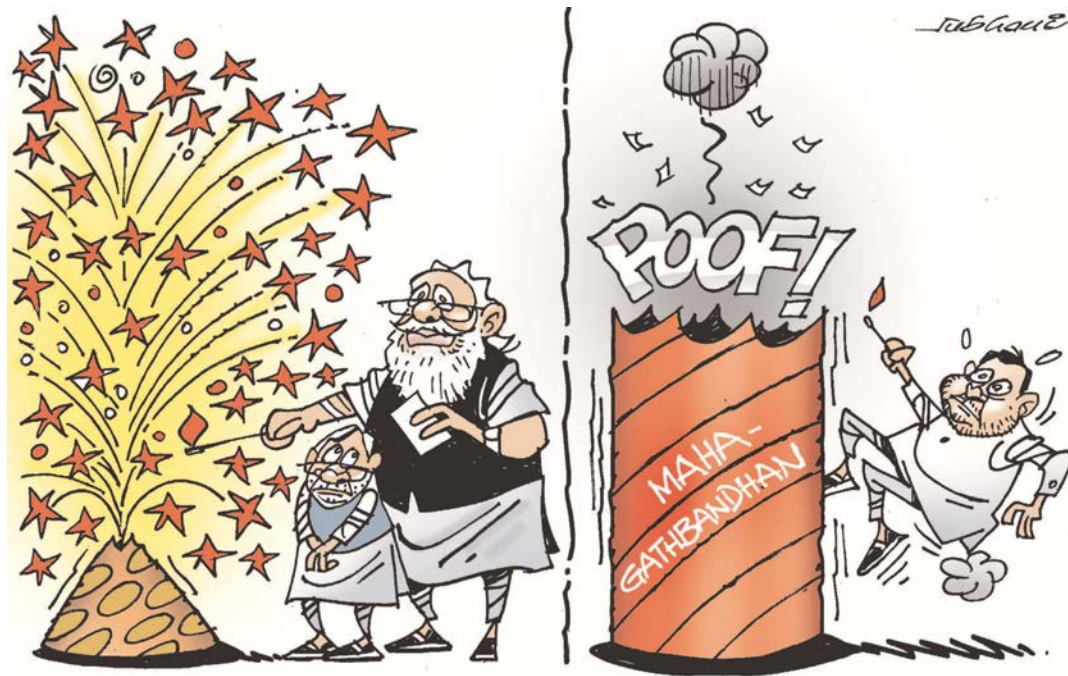
Another factor that has been driving the growth in equity markets across the world, including India, is the victory of Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the US Presidential elections. Investors were happy about the election result because they expected global trade would return to normalcy under the Biden administration. However, with incumbent US President Donald Trump preparing for protracted legal challenges to invalidate mail-in votes that predominantly favoured Mr Biden and several grey areas existing in the US electoral system, the field is still open in Washington. It would be ideal for Indian investors to be cautious and watchful about the unfolding events in US politics.

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Subhani



India-US ties might be stronger under Biden



Vishnu Prakash

It was difficult to believe one's eyes when the so-called leader of the free world stood before the cameras to announce that his opponent was trying to “steal” the just-concluded American presidential elections, which he claimed he had already won, with barely half the votes tabulated. In the supercharged atmosphere, such an incendiary assertion was bound to spark protests and violence across the nation. Unfortunately, it did.

India may not be a perfect democracy, but it has a fairly enviable record of peaceful transition of power, notwithstanding the heated rhetoric. Even Mrs Indira Gandhi, having imposed an ill-advised Emergency in 1975, bowed out of office gracefully upon losing at the hustings in 1977. Every credit goes to India's Election Commission for meticulously organising the gigantic parliamentary elections last year, involving a 850-million strong electorate.

Curiously, the United States doesn't have a Federal Electoral Commission. Each of the 50 states and Washington D.C. is responsible for holding the elections and framing procedural/policy guidelines, even without judicial oversight. As such, there is a wide variation in practices. Some states allow early voting by all, some don't. Some use EVMs, while others have only paper ballots. Some undertake simultaneous or early ballot counting, while the others do so only after the polls have closed.

Even more unique is the institution of an “Electoral College” which actually elects the President and vice-president. An eligible voter votes for the President and the Veep, but also for the elector. Both the popular and the Electoral

College votes are tallied, but the latter takes precedence. At least five times in US history has a candidate won the popular vote while his rival has taken office by virtue of garnering a majority in the Electoral College.

The Electoral College is a historical legacy. America's 1787 constitutional convention was not ready to bestow universal franchise and was bitterly divided over allowing semi-literate or underprivileged individuals to choose the President.

That is when a compromise was struck. Political parties could nominate their representatives to contest for the Electoral College. Towards the end of the 18th century only property-owning white American men were enfranchised, who comprised just six per cent of the population. Women got the right to vote only in 1920. Surprisingly, the system has worked extremely well till now.

However, not even America's founding fathers could have foreseen and insulated the electoral architecture against an iconoclast and narcissist like Donald Trump, for whom the ends justify the means. As of November 9, he continues to claim victory and vows to wage a futile legal battle to get the results annulled or the ballots recounted, essentially on frivolous grounds.

All the same, much to the relief of the world and a majority of the American people, former vice-president Joe Biden is all but certain to be the next occupant of the White House. His running mate, Kamala Devi Harris, half black and half Indian, will become the first woman and the first non-white person to become the vice-president of the United States.

The question that is uppermost in the minds of most Indians is about Mr Biden's disposition

towards India and China. Some analysts contend that he would be soft towards China and Pakistan. It would be recalled that in October 2008, Islamabad had conferred the “Hilal-i-Pakistan” (Crescent of Pakistan), its highest civilian honour, on him “in recognition of... consistent support for Pakistan”. That said, the geostrategic scenario has undergone a sea change in the past five years, and Pakistan has been totally exposed. Its utility for the US has diminished, and it is now firmly in the Chinese camp, which makes it a bigger suspect.

At the same time, China has grievously erred by overtly stepping up its efforts to displace America as regional hegemon. It challenged the might of the US by flexing its military muscle with most maritime neighbours, some of whom, like Japan and Philippines, are under the US security umbrella. It also aims to wrest the crown as world leader in innovation, infotech and biotech. Through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China is expanding its economic and strategic footprint across the globe. As these directly threaten America's primacy, no US President, not even an internationalist like Joe Biden, can afford to turn a Nelson's eye.

On the other hand, Mr Biden has stayed invested in India-US relations for decades. He has visited India several times and officially once while he was vice-president in 2013. He has been an admirer of India's democratic moorings and pluralism. As a senator, he voted in favour of India-specific motions at least six times. He backed the civil nuclear agreement with India as well as India's permanent membership of the UN

There is a growing convergence in our regional and global outlook. We particularly view Chinese aggression, ambition and threats from a similar prism.

Security Council.

Earlier this year he assured the Indian American community: “I'll continue to believe and continue... standing with India and confronting the threats it faces in its own region along its borders.”

In any event, leaders are guided by national interests in cultivating ties with other countries. India and the US have over 60 dialogue mechanisms in addition to the “2+2” ministerial consultations encompassing a wide range of subjects, including the economy, trade, education, energy, science and technology, security and defence, outer space, counterterrorism and cyber security, in addition to regional and international issues. It is natural for the world's largest and (soon to be) third largest economies to enhance their synergies.

There is a growing convergence in our regional and global outlook. We particularly view Chinese aggression, ambition and threats from a similar prism. It is said that “where you stand in the world has a good deal to do with where you sit”. And there are a handful of matters where our interests do diverge, such as India's ties with Iran and Russia. This is primarily due to our geographical and security imperatives.

It is reasonable to expect, therefore, a continued emphasis and attention on infusing greater momentum in bilateral ties. America's interest in the “Indo-Pacific concept” or the “Quad” should remain undiminished. Given the trajectory that China is following, it is not inconceivable for India to opt for an enhanced partnership with the US. “If the US and India become closer friends and partners, then the world will be a safer place”, Mr Biden had observed 15 years ago. It's time to make that happen together!

The writer is a foreign affairs analyst and a former Indian high commissioner to Canada and ambassador to South Korea

LETTERS

A GOOD FIGHT

Once again, astute voters kept their cards close to their chests and their voting choice deep in their hearts and fooled the pollsters. All exit polls in Bihar Assembly election predicted a rout for the ruling JD(U)-BJP combine and a resounding victory for the Mahagatth-bandhan led by RJD's Tejashwi Yadav. However, on the counting day, the ruling NDA secured the majority. Great disappointment for the anchors but also for Tejashwi fans. At a time of crisis, he did not hesitate to lead from the front. Well fought, Tejashwi.

M.C. Joshi
Lucknow

CURIOUS SUGGESTION

MEHBOOBA MUFTI has reportedly called on the Union government to hold talks with Pakistan, too; as is being done with China. Can the lady and her Gupkar alliance partners tell the country as to why they have soft corner for the theocratic bigot whose only aim is to spread religious fanaticism across the sub-continent? It is nothing but their religious affiliation which is the driving force behind this suggestion. Also, why does she want to have a separate flag for Jammu and Kashmir? Is the Union Territory not an integral part of India, so as to warrant an identity of its own?

Arun Malankar
Mumbai

CONGRESS DID POORLY

DID THE CONGRESS let the Mahagatthbandhan down? It was allotted 70 seats in Bihar but had won or was leading in only 18 of them when reports last came in. It cost RJD a hard-won election. The Left had held its end of the bargain up by hugely improving its tally. The Congress needs to introspect. Merely criticising its opponents will not endear it to voters. But a sincere and thorough programme to mete out economic and social justice to all, including the needy, will definitely bear dividends.

D.B. Madan
New Delhi

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: asianage.letters@gmail.com.

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Gehlot denied his choice of chief secretary

N.K. Arya, the new chief secretary of Rajasthan, is not the first choice of state chief minister Ashok Gehlot for the position. Until the last moment, the last working day of outgoing chief secretary Rajeev Swarup, the Gehlot government hoped to push for a tenure extension for Mr Swarup. But the Centre denied its consent and Mr Arya was drafted in, superseding eight IAS officers in the process. He was additional chief secretary for finance. Besides appointing Mr Arya, the government also effected a major reshuffle involving 21 senior IAS officers.

The drama was building for some time. Sources say that Mr Gehlot had worked hard to ensure Mr Swarup was appointed chief secretary in early July this year and then pushed for his extension. It is said that to appoint Mr Swarup to the state's top post, the chief minister reportedly “struck a deal”

with the previous chief secretary D.B. Gupta who was slated to retire in September. Under this supposed deal, Mr Gupta resigned in July and was immediately appointed advisor to the CM for a year and Mr Swarup stepped in as his successor.

The babu grapevine has it that Mr Swarup endeared himself to the chief minister during the Gehlot-Sachin Pilot standoff, which may not have gone down well with the Centre.

HAVE ‘COOLING-OFF’ PERIOD FOR BABUS, SAYS EC

The Election Commission (EC) is now likely to recommend to the Centre a “cooling off” period for IAS, IPS and other officers who join politics soon after retirement or after resigning the service. Sources say that the poll panel was jolted into this line of thinking after former Bihar DGP Guptaeshwar Pandey resigned

from the IPS in September and promptly joined a political party barely weeks before the Bihar Assembly elections. His resignation was accepted immediately, even though government regulations stipulate that an officer who wishes to join private employment after service needs to wait a year after retirement or resigning from service.

Though the demand for a cooling-off period is not a new one and is usually raised around election time when babus who have political ambitions often quit to join a political party. The government has so far rejected it, arguing that barring former babus from joining politics immediately after leaving service can be interpreted as an infringement of their right to equality.

But the poll panel is now keen to ensure that the government insists on a cooling-off period for AIS officers seeking to join poli-

tics, just as it does for those seeking corporate jobs. The commission is yet to work out the modalities of how long this cooling-off period should be, but sources say it could be at least two years.

FOREST TRANSFERS IN UTTARAKHAND: A U-TURN

The forest department of Uttarakhand and the state government seem to be at odds with each other. The government recently cancelled all the transfers of forest department officials done between September and October for violating an order that prohibited transfer of any official during 2020-21. Apparently, the department has done around a dozen such transfers without first seeking clearance from the state government.

Earlier, in July, sources say, the government had revoked the transfer order of 11 deputy conservator of forests (DCFs) within 48

hours of the issuing of the orders. At the time, Anand Bardhan, principal secretary, forest department, had issued a terse statement saying that it was a government order “and we are simply following it”.

However, according to sources, several Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers say that the order was revoked since the transfer list contained several names that were not presented before the civil service board for transfers. Further, some officers on deputation were given additional charge, which is apparently against the rules. According to a Supreme Court ruling, no transfer can be done without the approval of the civil services board. So why was this being done? That's a mystery.

Share a babu experience! Follow [@dilipthecherian](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian) on Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

IN BRIEF PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN EREKAT DEAD

Jerusalem, Nov. 10: Saeb Erekat, a veteran peace negotiator and prominent international spokesman for the Palestinians for more than three decades, died Tuesday, weeks after being infected by the Coronavirus. He was 65.

The American-educated Erekat was involved in nearly every round of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians going back to the landmark Madrid conference in 1991, when he famously showed up draped in a black-and-white checkered keffiyeh, a symbol of Palestinian nationalism. Over the next few decades Erekat was a constant presence in Western media, where he tirelessly advocated for a negotiated two-state solution to the decades-old conflict, defended the Palestinian leadership and blamed Israel for the failure to reach an agreement. His Fatah party announced his death in a statement.

A relative and a Palestinian official confirmed he passed away.

Erekat is survived by his wife, two sons, twin daughters and eight grandchildren.

ANTI-GOVT PROTESTS: IRAN PARDONS 157

Tehran, Nov. 10: Iran pardoned 157 people held on charges stemming from their alleged participation in antigovernment protests, the country's judiciary announced on Tuesday, the biggest such release of those swept up in the harsh crackdowns.

Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili told reporters that the people freed had been imprisoned for "spreading propaganda against the system" and taking part in several waves of protests that challenged the government over the last three years. The amnesty was part of a customary clemency order by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to mark the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Khamenei, who has the final say on all state matters, issued a decree pardoning 3,780 prisoners last week.

As the Coronavirus pandemic ravaged Iran, propelling its death toll to highest in the Middle East, the government released over 100,000 prisoners to keep the virus from spreading behind bars. Economic grievances in Iran have repeatedly triggered nationwide political unrest in recent years. In November 2019, security forces smothered protests that were prompted by a sharp increase in gasoline prices, arresting over 1,000 and killing hundreds, according to rights watchdog Amnesty International. The cases of those caught in crackdowns have drawn international outrage.

In September, Iran executed a 27-year-old wrestler accused of stabbing a water supply company employee.

CHASTISED CARDINAL HOSPITALISED

Warsaw (Poland), Nov. 10: A prominent Polish cardinal who was recently sanctioned by the Vatican over sex scandal cases has been hospitalised since last week and remains unconscious, Polish media said Tuesday.

Retired Archbishop Henryk Gulbinowicz was sanctioned by the Vatican last week after the 97-year-old was accused of sexually abusing a seminarian and of covering up abuse in another case.

The Vatican's embassy in Poland said Friday that Gulbinowicz, the former archbishop of Wrocław, has been forbidden from using his bishop's insignia and participating in any religious celebrations or public events.

The once well-respected cardinal, who supported Poland's pro-democracy Solidarity movement in the 1980s, has also been denied the right to have a cathedral burial service or to be buried in a cathedral. Professor Wojciech Witkiewicz, head of the hospital in Wrocław, told Radio Wrocław Tuesday that Gulbinowicz is in a very serious condition and unconscious.

Local daily Gazeta Wroclawska said Gulbinowicz was hospitalized Wednesday. A few days earlier, Vatican envoys had informed him about the sanctions. Recently, allegations were also made that Gulbinowicz was an informer for the communist-era secret security.

Gulbinowicz is the latest Polish prelate to be sanctioned after a Vatican-mandated investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct.

Ready to write next chapter: Harris

Will build an economy that works for working families, the V-P elect says in a tweet

SC weighs future of Obamacare

Washington, Nov. 10: When the Supreme Court weighs the fate of "Obamacare," arguments will revolve around arcane points of law like severability — whether the justices can surgically snip out part of the law and leave the rest.

But what's at stake has real-world consequences for just about every American, as well as the health care industry, a

major source of jobs and tax revenues. Whether the Affordable Care Act stays, goes, or is significantly changed, will affect the way life is lived in the US.

The argument against the law from the Trump administration and conservative states is that the 10-year-old statute was rendered unconstitutional in its entirety when Congress dialled down to zero a penalty on those

remaining uninsured.

The court has shifted solidly to the political right under President Donald Trump. Here's a look at some of what's at stake if the opponents of the law prevail: COVID-19 A NEW PRE-EXISTING CONDITION Before the ACA, insurers could turn a person down for an individual policy, or charge them more, based on their medical history. — AP



Harsh Vardhan Shringla

FS DISCUSSES WAYS TO BOOST TIES WITH MALE

Male, Nov. 10: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla on Tuesday held a series of meetings with the Maldivian leadership and the Opposition and discussed ways to further strengthen India's relations with the island nation, and reviewed the progress of key infrastructure projects under the \$1.3 billion bilateral package. Shringla, who was on a two-day visit to the Maldives, held a joint meeting with Minister for National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Mohamed Aslam, Minister of Economic Development Fayyaz Ismail and Minister of Finance Ibrahim Ameer.

On Monday, Shringla also called on President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and Speaker of the People's Majlis Mohamed Nasheed.

"FS@harshvshringla held a joint-meeting with Minister for National Planning, Housing & Infra Dvpt @AslamAslamtey Minister of Economic Dvpt@faya.i& Minister of Finance @iameru; they assessed progress in 8 infrastructure projects part of the \$1.3 billion bilateral package," the High Commission of India in the Maldives tweeted.

India is carrying out a wide-range of infrastructure projects in the Maldives, including Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) and other projects such as port, roads and reclamation, expansion of airports, building of a new Cricket Stadium and cancer hospital and development of fisheries. Shringla also met Maldivian Home Minister and leader of the Adaalah Party Imran Abdulla and sought the party's cooperation in further strengthening the bilateral relations.

The religious conservative Adaalah party is part of the Maldivian Democratic Party-led ruling coalition. "Foreign Secretary @harshvshringla @HarshShringla met Home Minister & leader of the Adaalah Party @ShimranAb; FS sought continuing cooperation of the Adaalah Party in ensuring the success of #IndiaMaldives relations," it said. — PTI



People wave the national flag and hold portraits of Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev as they celebrate in the streets of the capital Baku on Tuesday, after Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed a ceasefire. — AFP

Russian peacekeepers head for Nagorno-Karabakh as war ends

Moscow, Nov. 10: A dozen planes filed with Russian peacekeepers headed for Nagorno-Karabakh on Tuesday, hours after Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to halt fighting over the separatist region and amid signs this ceasefire would hold where others hadn't.

The truce came after significant advances by Azerbaijani forces that the Nagorno-Karabakh leader said made it impossible for their side to carry on — but angered many Armenians, who stormed government buildings overnight, demanding the Parliament invalidate the agreement. Dozens of protesters gathered again Tuesday morning in front of the parliament building in the Armenian capital of Yerevan. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked in a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh for decades. The region lies within Azerbaijan but has been under control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

Heavy fighting erupted in late September — the biggest escalation of the conflict in a quarter-century — and has left hundreds, possibly thousands, dead. Several cease-fires announced over the past six weeks crumbled almost immediately, but the

current agreement appeared to be holding, with neither side reporting any more fighting since it came into force. It came days after Azerbaijan pressed its offensive deeper into the region and took control of the city of Shushi, which is strategically positioned on heights overlooking the regional capital of Stepanakert. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian said on Facebook that calling an end to the fight was "extremely painful for me personally and for our people." But on Tuesday he explained that he was left with no choice, saying the army had told him it was necessary. "We found ourselves in a situation when there was no alternative to signing the agreement," Pashinian was quoted by Russia's Interfax news agency as saying.

Nagorno-Karabakh's separatist leader Arayik Harutyunyan echoed Pashinian's sentiment. He said: "Had the hostilities continued at the same pace, we would have lost all of Artsakh (an Armenian name for Nagorno-Karabakh) within days." Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev referred to the agreement as a "glorious victory" on Twitter, and Azerbaijanians flooded their capital city to celebrate. Russia's Defence Ministry said that 12

● **THE TRUCE** came after significant advances by Azerbaijani forces that the Nagorno-Karabakh leader said made it impossible for their side to carry on — but angered many Armenians, who stormed government buildings overnight, demanding the Parliament invalidate the agreement.

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planes carrying peacekeepers and military equipment departed for the region Tuesday. A total of 1,960 Russian peacekeepers are to be deployed in Nagorno-Karabakh under a five-year mandate. The pact calls for Armenian forces to turn over control of some areas it held outside the borders of Nagorno-Karabakh, including the Lachin region, where the main

road leading from Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia passes through. The agreement calls for the road, the so-called Lachin Corridor, to remain open and be protected by Russian peacekeepers. The agreement also calls for transport links to be established through Armenia linking Azerbaijan and its western exclave of Nakhchivan, which is surrounded by Armenia, Iran and Turkey.

Nagorno-Karabakh military have reported over 1,200 troops killed in the six weeks of fighting. Azerbaijan hasn't disclosed its military losses. Scores of civilians have also been killed and wounded on both sides.

Nagorno-Karabakh has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a 1994 truce ended a separatist war in which an estimated 30,000 people died. Sporadic clashes occurred since then, and full-scale fighting began on Sept. 27. Several cease-fires had been called but were almost immediately violated. However, the agreement announced early Tuesday appeared more likely to take hold because Azerbaijan has made significant advances, including taking control of the strategically key city of Shushi on Sunday. — AP

Boris cautiously welcomes bugle of virus vaccine

London, Nov. 10: UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has cautiously welcomed the promising results from the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and warned people not to rely on this news as a solution as it is still "very, very early days".

Addressing a briefing from 10 Downing Street here on Monday, Johnson urged the British public not to "slacken" their resolve as it is still "very, very early days", even as he confirmed that the UK had pre-ordered 40 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine — enough for about a third of the UK population, taking into account that two doses each are required.

"The Pfizer/BioNTech Vaccine has been tested on over 40,000 volunteers and interim results suggest it is proving 90 per cent effective at protecting people against the virus. But we haven't yet seen the full safety data, and these findings also need to be peer-reviewed," said Johnson.

"We have talked for a long time, or I have, about the distant bugle of the scientific cavalry coming over the brow of the hill, and tonight that toot of the bugle is louder. But it is still some way off. And we absolutely cannot rely on this as a solution," he said. He reiterated that it is "crucial" not to overdo things and follow the lockdown rules strictly until December 2, after which England is set to revert to a tiered lockdown system.

"We cannot let our enthusiasm (about a vaccine) run away with us. It is more vital now than ever that we follow the basics," said the prime

REGULATOR HALTS BRAZIL VACCINE TRIALS

Sao Paulo, Nov. 10: Brazil's health regulator has halted clinical trials of the potential Coronavirus vaccine CoronaVac, citing an "adverse, serious event." The decision posted on Anvisa's website Monday night elicited immediate surprise from parties involved in producing the vaccine.

The potential vaccine is being developed by Chinese biopharmaceutical firm Sinovac and in Brazil would be mostly produced by Sao Paulo's state-run Butantan Institute. Sao Paulo state's government said in a statement it "regrets being informed by the press and not directly by Anvisa, as normally occurs in clinical trials of this nature." Butantan said in a statement that it was surprised by Anvisa's decision and that it would hold a news conference Tuesday. The CoronaVac shot has already stirred controversy in Brazil. — AP

minister. England's deputy chief medical officer Prof Jonathan Van-Tam, who joined Johnson at the briefing, said he was "hopeful" that the first vaccine could be seen by Christmas after Pfizer's announcement earlier on Monday that its vaccine candidate has proven 90 per cent effective in a large trial. "This is a very important scientific breakthrough," said Prof Van-Tam. — PTI

Covid triggers OCD in kids

London, Nov. 10: Children and young people with obsessive thoughts and compulsions may experience their OCD, anxiety, and depressive symptoms worsen during a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a new study.

While previous research had shown that trauma and stress can trigger or worsen obsessive-compulsive disorder, or OCD, the current study, published

in the journal BMC Psychiatry, assessed how children and young people with the condition experience the ongoing pandemic. In the study, scientists, including those from Aarhus University in Denmark, sent a questionnaire to two groups of children and young people between the ages of seven and 21.

They said one group had been diagnosed with OCD in a specialised section at

the Centre for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry — and all had been in contact with a therapist at the hospital.

The other group consisted mostly of children and young people who had been diagnosed years ago, identified through the Danish OCD Association. According to the study, a total of 102 children responded to the questionnaire. — PTI

SPIRITUAL | OASIS

Master plan in the video shows a massive amphitheatre overlooking the shrine

Images of Abu Dhabi's 1st Hindu temple released

Dubai, Nov. 10: The majestic stone façade of the first Hindu temple coming up in Abu Dhabi will be adorned with scenes from Hindu epics, scriptures and ancient stories from India, as well as motifs popular in the Gulf countries, according to a media report on Tuesday.

The temple management of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi has released the first images of the final design of the traditional stone temple and the hand-carved stone pillars that have been taking shape in India, the *Gulf News* reported. The visuals of the final design of the temple have been released through a video that chronicles the progress of the temple right from the inception of

its concept till the pouring of the UAE's largest single pouring of fly ash concrete for the raft foundation of the temple.

The foundation stone of the temple was laid in April last year and work started from December. Dubbed a spiritual oasis for global harmony, the temple's final master plan revealed in the video shows a massive amphitheatre overlooking the shrine, the daily reported. A library, a classroom, a majlis and a community centre have also been featured within the compound in Abu Mureikha area. Waterfalls flanking the steps to the entrance of the shrine, and water bodies circling the temple complex can also be seen in the video.

The design of the master plan was completed in early 2020, and optimised engineered during the slowdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a spokesperson of the temple told the *Gulf News*. "This is the first time the visuals of the final design have been released through the video," said Ashok Kotecha, BAPS Hindu Mandir spokesperson. "The work on the historic temple is progressing with the support of the community and guidance from the leadership in India and the UAE. While navigating the challenges produced by COVID-19 and adhering to local best practices during the pandemic, stone work has continued in India," Kotecha said.

Kotecha said key values

and tales of universal wisdom, and the authentic ancient art and architecture would be revived through the stone carvings used for the temple.

"The stories and carvings include diverse portions of India's geography and Hindu belief systems. This would include [epics] Mahabharata and Ramayana as well as the Puranas and regional histories. In fact, this Mandir will be uniquely identified by its intricate mandavor [facade] which will share many traditional value tales from throughout India as well as unique designs of the Gulf," he said. The intricate carvings of the temple range from figurines only a few inches tall to statues of many metres. — PTI



The temple management of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi has released the first images of the final design of the traditional stone temple.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	43,277.65	1.60
Nifty 50	12,631.10	1.37
S&P 500*	3,543.39	-0.20
Dollar (₹)	74.18	-0.03
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.27	-0.96
Euro (₹)	87.57	0.50
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,338,662	1.31
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	43.14	0.74
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.916	0.040
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.961	0.003

* As of 8:30 PM IST

States may cut capital outlay on infra by 40%: Icra

Impacted by the pandemic, states are likely to cut capital outlay on infrastructure by up to 40 per cent, Icra said. States account for 37-40 per cent of the total infrastructure capital expenditure. Major states together had a budgeted capital outlay of over Rs 5.7 lakh crore for 2020-21 against Rs 5.1 lakh crore in 2019-20. "The capital outlay on infrastructure by states could decline 10-40 per cent in FY2021," Icra said.

WhatsApp adds shopping button to push catalogue



WhatsApp said it has added a new shopping button on its app to make it easier for people to discover a business catalogue to get details about the goods and services offered by a firm. More than 175 million people message a WhatsApp Business account every day. Previously, people had to click into the business' profile to see if it had a catalogue. Now, the shopping button, resembling a storefront icon, will lead to catalogue.

SBI board nod for divesting UTI Trustee stake

SBI said its board has approved divestment of over 8.5 per cent holdings in UTI Trustee Company. It said the nod from the executive committee of the central board is for divesting 8,510 equity shares constituting 8.51 per cent of the bank's stake in UTI Trustee Company Pvt Ltd. As per Sebi regulation, no sponsor of a MF, its associate or group firm can have 10 per cent shareholding or voting rights in another mutual fund.

Crompton promoters sell ₹1,630 cr shares

Macritchie Investments Pte Ltd and Amalfiaco Ltd, promoters of Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Ltd, offloaded the firm's shares worth over Rs 1,631 crore through open market transactions. Macritchie sold over 1.89 crore scrips at an average price of Rs 296.54 per scrip, valuing the deal at Rs 561.23 crore, as per bulk deal data on NSE. Amalfiaco offloaded over 3.6 crore shares at Rs 296.57 apiece.

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Pandemic helps nearly 80% schools to adopt tech

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 10

Covid-19 has helped faster technology adoption by schools. While only 15 per cent of the schools in India had working computers prior to Covid-19, now almost 80 per cent of them have made some level of technology adoption. Covid-19 has disrupted the education sector and forced them to adopt tech-

nology faster. Prior to the pandemic, out of the 15 lakh schools in the country, only 2.6 lakh or 14 per cent had working computers. This includes 35 per cent private aided schools, 30 per cent private unaided schools, 9.8 per cent government schools and 7 per cent other schools.

However, in the case of higher education, about 85 per cent of the 55,000 colleges had working comput-

er facilities, as per a study by Bengaluru-based RedSeer Consulting and Mumbai-based Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

"Schools and other education institutes were caught off guard after the onset of Covid and lockdowns. However, despite low technology maturity, both in terms of device/infrastructure readiness and teacher's technological

readiness, schools were remarkably resilient in adjusting to the 'new normal'," said Anil Kumar, founder, RedSeer Consulting.

In the past six months, technology adoption has been at different levels across schools. Less than five per cent schools use dedicated/advanced tech solutions like teacher-centric tools and administration management. Almost

20 to 30 per cent schools are using live tuitions, sharing digital content through shared cloud, e-mail and the like. Another 45 to 55 per cent schools have basic digital communication through WhatsApp and similar platforms and they share pre-recorded digital content. However, 15 to 25 per cent schools have shut down, with no tech adoption.

Further, 75 per cent of

the surveyed school students are making use of live lectures to connect with the teachers, which used to be under 10 per cent before the lockdown - an eight-fold jump. Private schools performed above average with 90 per cent students and parents making use of technology to join live classes, while this was 60 per cent for government schools. However, not a significant difference in

pattern was observed in bigger cities and smaller cities.

In the case of colleges, 80 per cent students are making use of live lectures to connect with the teachers, which earlier would be close to 30 per cent, a 2.5 times jump. Engineering colleges were equipped with technology requirements. But non-engineering colleges were also able to catch up fast.

Banks say it's a money losing proposition

Promote only RuPay card, FM tells banks

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, NOV. 10

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked banks to promote only RuPay cards and ensure that the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) becomes a brand-India product. But bankers argue that with no MDR charges on transactions, RuPay cards give zero revenue and they lose money on it. Besides, the card is not as competitive for customers as MasterCard, Visa and American Express cards.

Addressing the 73rd annual general meeting of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) virtually, Sitharaman said, "I would not think it is necessary today in India when RuPay is becoming global, for Indians to be given any other cards first

than RuPay itself. So, promote Rupyay cards. Make sure that the NPCI becomes a brand-India product, which can be promoted elsewhere in the globe and NPCI therefore should be a priority."

"Whoever needs the card, RuPay will be the only card you will promote," she said.

MDR, or merchant discount rate, usually 1 to 3 per cent of a transaction, is the fee charged to a merchant by payment processors for debit and credit card services.

After the government revoking merchant charges on digital payments, Rupyay debit cards seem to have lost their popularity with the banks, which are choosing Visa and MasterCard.

An IIT-Bombay study authored by Prof. Ashish Das has revealed that RuPay is facing differen-

tial treatment in the pricing structure. The study found that fewer RuPay debit cards were being issued by banks from September 2019 to August 2020. The study also revealed that only 65 lakh debit cards were issued in August 2020, compared with 4.6 crore cards in the same period of 2019.

A senior banker said, "RuPay is India's own card. There is no MDR on RuPay card, but banks generally lose money when MDR is not there, as there is a cost involved. So banks are happy to promote Visa and MasterCard. Even the RBI's Pathak committee had suggested not to make MDR zero. So the government has to relook at its decision."

"Secondly, MasterCard and Visa are already established international companies. The transac-

tion experience is seamless and they burn money to attract and retain customers with so many offers such as free lounge access at airports, campaigns, etc. On the other hand, the transaction drops are high with UPI transactions. The government should have a reasonable MDR to help us recover expenses on RuPay," added the banker.

Sitharaman also gave lenders a deadline up to March 31, 2021 to link all bank accounts with Aadhaar.

"I want Aadhaar card-seeded accounts." "... by March 31, 2021, every account should have a PAN where needed and where applicable, and Aadhaar in every one of your accounts," she said.

She also said banks should discourage non-digital payments and promote digital transactions.

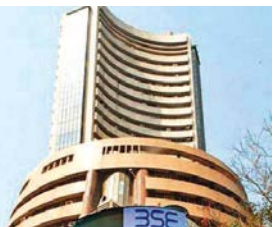
Sensex in 43K zone

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV.10

The bulls were unstoppable for the seventh consecutive session, as the global market rallied on hopes of a coronavirus vaccine hitting drug stores soon, fresh cases in India falling to 38,000 and the NDA seemed taking a comfortable lead in Bihar elections.

The Sensex closed above the 43,000-mark for the first time at 43,277.65, gaining 680.22 points and the Nifty -50 closed at 12,631.10, up 170 points.

However, underperformance and profit taking in the broader market shows the market rally is getting stretched now and could see some profit taking before Diwali. The BSE



Mid-cap Index fell 0.10 per cent while the Small-cap fell 0.48 per cent against Sensex's rise of 1.60 per cent.

The volatility index, NSE's India VIX, rose 7.28 per cent to 21.58.

Foreign portfolio investors pumped another Rs 5,627.32 crore into equities, as per the provisional data, making it Rs 20,340.45 crore investment in the last four sessions post-the US presidential

elections. FPIs have net invested Rs 15,874 crore in November so far.

The domestic institutions, meanwhile, have been booking profit and were net sellers by Rs 2,309.19 crore on Tuesday. Devarsh Vakil, deputy head of retail research, HDFC Securities, said, "Indian markets shot up on positive overnight cues from global markets and Asian peers opening higher."

Banking stocks continued to outperform, as the Nifty Bank Index gained a massive 3.89 per cent. At the same time IT and pharmaceuticals stocks corrected while beaten down stocks such as those tied to travel and leisure, movie theaters, and theme park moved up.

Blockchain-based platform launched for crop trading

JUSTINA VASQUEZ NOV. 10

Cerealia SA launched its blockchain-based physical agriculture trading platform for commercial use, allowing companies to trade wheat, sorghum and other commodities.

The launch followed a series of pilot transactions beginning in 2018. Firms from Japan, Dubai, Ukraine, Turkey, Algeria and Brazil participated in a pre-launch period before the platform was released on Tuesday to the general trading community, according to a company statement. Transaction volumes range as large as 20,000 tonnes of grain.

The Pully, Switzerland-based company said it's the first to combine the need in the international Russian wheat market for a fast trading platform with a more thoroughly traceable execution programme. Russia is the world's top wheat producer. Transactions span wheat as well as corn, barley and other grains and vegetable oil markets.

"Traders can now be 100 per cent certain they really did the trade, versus traditional over-the-phone brokerage," Andrei Grigorov, Cerealia's chief executive officer, said in the statement. "Instantly, they have digitally signed contracts and blockchain-

registered records 'forever'."

Agricultural commodity blockchain trading platforms have been projects among both startups and heavyweights in recent years. Prime Shipping Foundation piloted bulk commodities payments via blockchain, shipping wheat from Russia to Turkey. Covantis SA was announced in 2018 after the world's largest agricultural commodities traders--Archer-Daniels-Midland Co., Bunge Ltd., Cargill, Cofco Group, Louis Dreyfus Co. and the agriculture team of Glencore Plc -- teamed up to streamline trading.

— Bloomberg

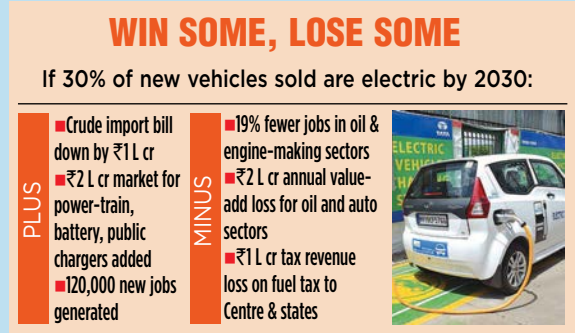
EV era: Oil bill to dip by ₹1 L cr; govts to lose ₹1 L cr revenue

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 10

India can save Rs 1 lakh crore on crude oil imports annually if electric vehicles (EVs) were to garner 30 per cent share of new vehicle sales by 2030, says a study.

Meeting the 30 per cent EV penetration target in 2030 will also have several environmental benefits, including a 17 per cent decrease each in primary particulate matter and nitrogen oxide and dioxide (NOx) emissions, 18 per cent reduction in carbon monoxide emissions, and a 4 per cent cut in greenhouse gas emissions relative to the business as usual scenario, found a study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), a New Delhi-based think-tank.

The higher EV penetration would also mean 19 per cent fewer jobs in the oil sector and the internal combustion engine-making sector combined. Further, the annual value-add loss in the oil and automobile sectors



could amount to about Rs 2 lakh crore. In addition, the central and state governments would lose over Rs 1 lakh crore in tax revenue annually from reduced sale of petrol and diesel.

However, the increase in EV penetration could also increase the combined market size of power-train, battery and public chargers to over Rs 2 lakh crore in addition to creating 120,000 new jobs in this sector. Further, a substantial number of new jobs are likely to be created in emerging areas such as battery recycling, telematics, and allied construction and services.

"As India recovers from the pandemic, a focus on developing India's domestic EV manufacturing sector and increasing the penetration of electric vehicles in road transport would help deliver on jobs, growth and sustainability. This would require creating a robust and comprehensive transition plan for electric mobility that capitalises on the opportunities created in the form of improvement in balance of payments, new markets, and jobs generated," said Abhinav Soman, one of the authors of the study and a researcher at CEEW.

MAHINDRA BIDS ADIEU TO PLANE MANUFACTURING

Mumbai, Nov. 10:

Mahindra Group on Tuesday said it has closed down its aircraft manufacturing business in Australia and is scouting for a buyer, more than a decade after venturing into high-cost plane-making business. The decision also comes little over a year after one of the planes, manufactured at the Australian facility, crashed in Sweden killing nine persons.

In 2009, Mahindra Group acquired 75.1 per cent stake each in two Australian aerospace firms, Gippsland Aeronautics (Gipps Aero) and Aerostaff Australia, for Rs 175 crore as part of its plans to manufacture aircraft and allied components to service global market.

"We have shut down our Gipps Aero business, which was into the manufacturing of 8- and 10-seater planes in Australia," Mahindra & Mahindra deputy managing director and group CFO Anish Shah told reporters in a post-earnings call. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Alia first female director in PCB

Islamabad: The Pakistan Cricket Board has appointed a female director for the first time. Human resources executive Alia Zafar has been included among four new PCB directors. The others are finance executive Javed Kurieshi, economist Asim Wajid Jawad and corporate executive Arif Saeed. Zafar and Jawad were appointed for two-year terms. The PCB's new constitution makes it mandatory to include at least one woman among four independent directors on its board of governors. I welcome the newly-appointed independent members, especially Ms Alia Zafar, the first female independent member, which is a giant step forward in enhancing the PCB's governance structure, PCB chairman Ehsan Mani said. — *AP*

Bangla captain tests positive

Dhaka: Bangladesh Test captain Mominul Haque has tested positive for Covid-19 and he is undergoing home isolation, according to a report here. Haque's coronavirus positive result came close on the heels of another senior player Mahmudullah Riyad contracting the virus which forced him to miss the Pakistan Super League play-offs. Bangladesh Cricket Board chief physician Dr Debashish Chowdhury confirmed Haque's test result to local news website. Haque, on his part, said that he had mild fever and got himself tested. "I only came to know yesterday that I have tested positive for Covid-19. I had fever for the last two days. Even I am running temperature today. But otherwise, there aren't any other symptoms," Haque said. — *PTI*

Bairstow to make Big Bash debut

Sydney: England wicketkeeper-batsman Jonny Bairstow will make his Big Bash League debut this year after signing for the Melbourne Stars. The 10th edition of Australia's Twenty20 tournament begins on December 10, although the 31-year-old will not be available until after Christmas. "I've always watched the BBL no matter where I've been in the world and it will be nice to finally be a part of it," said Bairstow late Monday. "I know the Stars are one of the competition's profile clubs and have a track record of being in contention in finals." Bairstow will join forces with the likes of Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa at the Stars. "His experience and versatility will be a valuable addition to our batting line-up, and we've got several 'keeping options in the squad as well," said Melbourne coach David Hussey. — *AFP*

Pak whitewash Zimbabwe in T20

Rawalpindi, Pakistan: Leg spinner Usman Qadir grabbed four wickets to guide Pakistan to a 3-0 whitewash of Zimbabwe with an eight-wicket victory in the third Twenty20 here on Tuesday. The 27-year-old Qadir — son of the late star spinner Abdul Qadir — finished with 4-13 from four mesmerising overs to restrict Zimbabwe to a paltry 129-9 in 20 overs. That proved a walk in the park for the home team, which cruised to victory in 15.2 overs losing just two wickets. Pakistan lost Fakhar Zaman (21) and Haider Ali (27) but debutant Abdullah Shafique top-scored with 41 and saw Pakistan home with Khushdil Shah (36 not out). — *AFP*
Brief scores: Zimbabwe 129/9 (Chibhabha 31, Qadir 4/13, Wasim 2/27) lost to Pakistan 130/2 (Shafique 41, Khushdil 36*)

Live on TV

CRICKET

Women's Big Bash League: Perth Scorchers vs Sydney Sixers from 9 am; Brisbane Heat vs Sydney Thunder from 1.35 pm on Sony Six

WWE

NXT: Bouts from 6.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1

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MUMB-HIGH FIVE!

Rohit & Co. hammer Delhi by 5 wickets to take fifth IPL title

Dubai, Nov. 10: A peerless Rohit Sharma led defending champions Mumbai Indians to their fifth IPL title with a one-sided demolition of Delhi Capitals here on Tuesday, closing an immensely successful tournament that had to be played in a controlled environment amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic. If last year's one-run win over Chennai Super Kings was an absolute cliffhanger, Rohit's aristocratic 68 off 50 balls made it an anti-climax with Mumbai Indians chasing the target of 157 in 18.4 overs.

Five IPL titles are certain to make Rohit the undisputed 'Numero Uno' player-cum-leader in the IPL Universe.

He has played way better knocks than this in the past and will play a few more special ones in the future.

But he might never play a more significant one considering the little whirlpool of controversy that his "once damaged and now on the mend hamstring" created.

The 'Hit-Man' has given an altogether new meaning to what has one known till now about crushing pain barriers.

A hamstring injury can be very painful but the manner in which India's regular white-ball skipper exploded inside the 'Ring of Fire' at the Dubai International Stadium, he was fighting a battle of his own. The cover drive was about his class, the whiplash behind square was his swagger and the so very familiar "Rohit Sharma pull shot" was an assurance to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly that "All Is Well".

And to prove a point, he fetched those doubles, tap and run singles including a misjudged one that saw Suryakumar Yadav (19) sacrificing his wicket for his skipper and rightly so. The carrom ball bowled by Ashwin was deposited to point fence with a cracking square cut and the straight six off leg spinner Praveen Dube was "Boss Man" written



Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma (left) and team celebrate their win over Delhi Capitals in the final of IPL Season 13 in Dubai on Tuesday. — *BCCI*

● **If last year's one-run win over Chennai Super Kings was an absolute cliffhanger, Rohit Sharma's aristocratic 68 off 50 balls made it an anti-climax with Mumbai Indians chasing the target of 157 in 18.4 overs.**

● **Five IPL titles are certain to make Rohit the undisputed 'Numero Uno' player-cum-leader in the IPL Universe.**

all over it.

There has never been an edition where a team has looked in a different league compared to seven others.

As Rohit had said earlier, it's not rocket science but investing in pure match-winners that has given Mumbai Indians such a menacing look.

Rome wasn't built in a day and neither a champi-

on outfit that has now won five titles out of the six finals it has played.

If Jasprit Bumrah wreaked havoc in the Qualifier one, Trent Boult (3/30) decided that final was his turn to inflict the damage and he did it with a first ball beauty that Marcus Stoinis will remember for years to come.

Nathan Coulter-Nile

looked like a weak-link but got the dangerous Rishabh Pant (56 off 38 balls) at the nick of time to put the brakes.

Rohit's batting only finished what looked inevitable but it was his captaincy that set it up.

Only 45 runs conceded in the last five overs during the DC innings was a game-changer as Shreyas Iyer (65 not off 50 balls) literally struggled during the end overs.

That was the time when save for Bumrah (0/28 in 4 overs), Boult and Coulter-Nile took the pace off the deliveries with slow bouncers and cutters making it difficult to hit.

And the decision to have off-spinner Jayant Yadav replace leg-spinner Rahul Chahar also proved to be a success. — *PTI*

Waugh sad about Virat pullout

Sydney, Nov. 10: Australian great Steve Waugh said on Tuesday he was surprised and disappointed that India captain Virat Kohli will miss three Tests to be at the birth of his first child, with his absence detracting from the blockbuster series.

The 32-year-old and his Bollywood star wife Anushka Sharma are expecting a child in January, and Kohli has been given permission by the Indian cricket board to return home after the first Test in Adelaide, which begins on December 17.

While the absence of the superstar batsman could improve Australia's chances of regaining the Border-Gavaskar trophy, it is a blow to broadcasters and cricket chiefs already feeling the effects of a pandemic-affected year.

"I'm a little bit disappointed he's not going to



AUSTRALIA TOUR

be there — and a bit surprised," former skipper Waugh, who played 168 Tests, said.

"This was really shaping up as one the key series of his whole career after he's achieved just about everything. But obviously family comes first."

India are due leave this week for Australia, where they will spend two weeks in quarantine in Sydney before the first one-day international on November 27.

Kohli will lead India in three ODIs, three T20 and the first Test — a day-night match in Adelaide — before heading home.

The second Test starts in Melbourne on December 26 followed by matches in Sydney on January 7 and Brisbane on January 15, all played under strict bio-security protocols. — *AFP*

'NOT HAVING VIRAT KOHLI FOR ALL TESTS WAS ON CARDS'

Melbourne, Nov. 10: Cricket Australia chief executive Nick Hockley is not surprised by Virat Kohli's withdrawal from three Test matches here as he prepares for fatherhood in January, taking solace from the fact that the superstar will be there for a major part of the eagerly-awaited showdown across formats.

The BCCI has granted Kohli a paternity leave and he will return to India after the opening Test, scheduled from December 17 in Adelaide. Hockley, who is CA's interim chief executive, said that Kohli missing a major part of the Test series was expected but he is glad that the stylish batter will be available for three T20 Internationals and as many ODIs starting November 27. "When they announced their pregnancy earlier, I think it was always on the cards," Hockley told Sydney radio station SEN.

"We're thrilled Virat is coming out for three ODIs, three T20s, the first ever day-night Test against India and we have to respect the fact he wants to be there for the birth of his first child." — *PTI*

BCCI INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SELECTORS

New Delhi, Nov. 10: The BCCI on Tuesday invited applications for replacing three outgoing selectors in the senior men's committee. The deadline for sending applications is Sunday, November 15, with an age-cap of 60 years and a minimum eligibility criteria of 30 first-class matches.

However, it goes without saying that international experience (7 Tests or a combination of 10 ODIs and 20 first-class matches) will be given preference. The three outgoing

selectors are Devang Gandhi (East Zone), Sarandeep Singh (North Zone) and Jatin Paranjape (West Zone).

While the BCCI has done away with the zonal policy officially, the convention has been to replace the candidate from the same zone as Sunil Joshi (South) replaced MSK Prasad, who was the chairman of the last committee.

Similarly, Rajasthan's Gagan Khoda was replaced by Railways' Harvinder Singh as the central zone selector last February. — *PTI*

CANCELLATION / PARTIAL CANCELLATION / SHORT TERMINATION / SHORT ORIGINATION OF TRAINS

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Railways have decided to Cancellation of Mail/Express/Festival Special/Partially Cancellation Special/Short Terminate/Short Originate following Passengers Special Trains in view of the Kisan Agitation at Punjab:-

CANCELLATION OF MAIL / EXPRESS TRAINS	
Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02425/02426 New Delhi-Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani Special	11.11.2020
22439/22440 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Vande Bharat Exp.	11.11.2020
02462 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Express	11.11.2020
02461 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	12.11.2020
02011/02012 New Delhi-Kalka-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	11.11.2020
02029/02030 New Delhi-Amritsar-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	11.11.2020
05211 Darbhanga Jn - Amritsar Express	11.11.2020
05212 Amritsar - Darbhanga Jn Express	13.11.2020
02919 Dr Ambedkar Nagar - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	11.11.2020
02920 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Dr Ambedkar Nagar Express	13.11.2020

CANCELLATION OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS	
Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02422 Jammu Tawi-Ajmer Express	11.11.2020
02421 Ajmer-Jammu Tawi Express	12.11.2020
02231 Lucknow - Chandigarh Express	11.11.2020
02232 Chandigarh-Lucknow Express	12.11.2020
04888 Barmer - Rishikesh Express	11.11.2020
04887 Rishikesh - Barmer Express	12.11.2020
04519 Delhi Jn.-Bhathinda Express	11.11.2020 to 20.11.2020
04520 Bhathinda - Delhi Jn. Express	12.11.2020 to 21.11.2020
04401 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	12.11.2020 to 19.11.2020
04402 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Express	13.11.2020 to 20.11.2020
02471/02472 Shri Ganganagar - Delhi Jn. - Shri Ganganagar Express	12.11.2020
03255 Patliputra Jn. - Chandigarh Express	11.11.2020
03556 Chandigarh - Patliputra Jn. Express	12.11.2020
09613 Ajmer-Amritsar Express	11.11.2020
09612 Amritsar-Ajmer Express	12.11.2020
09805 Kota Jn - Udhampur Express	11.11.2020
09806 Udhampur - Kota Jn Express	12.11.2020

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS			
Train No. & Name	Short Terminate at/ Short originate from	Partially Cancelled between Stations	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02903 Golden Temple Mail	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 10.11.2020
02904 Golden Temple Mail	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	11.11.2020
02925 Bandra Terminus-Amritsar Special Express	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 10.11.2020
02926 Amritsar-Bandra Terminus Special Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	12.11.2020
02715 Sachkhand Express	at New Delhi	New Delhi-Amritsar	11.11.2020
02716 Sachkhand Express	from New Delhi	Amritsar-New Delhi	12.11.2020
03307 Dhanbad-Firozpur Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Firozpur	of 10.11.2020
03308 Firozpur-Dhanbad Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Firozpur-Ambala Cantt.	12.11.2020
04649/73 Jaynagar-Amritsar Sarya Yamuna Exp.	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	of 10.11.2020
04674/50 Amritsar-Jaynagar Sarya Yamuna Exp.	from Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	12.11.2020
02057 New Delhi - Una Himachal Janshatabdi	at Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt. - Una Himachal	11.11.2020
02058 Una Himachal - New Delhi Janshatabdi	from Ambala Cantt.	Una Himachal - Ambala Cantt.	12.11.2020
02237 Varanasi-Jammu Tawi Festival Special	at Saharanpur	Saharanpur-Jammu Tawi	11.11.2020
02238 Jammu Tawi-Varanasi Festival Special	from Saharanpur	Jammu Tawi-Saharanpur	12.11.2020
08237 Korba-Amritsar Express Special	At Meerut City	Meerut City - Amritsar	11.11.2020
08238 Amritsar-Korba Express Special	From Meerut City	Amritsar-Meerut City	13.11.2020
02407 New Jalpaiguri - Amritsar Express Special	At Ambala Cantt.	Ambala Cantt.-Amritsar	11.11.2020
02408 Amritsar - New Jalpaiguri Express Special	From Ambala Cantt.	Amritsar-Ambala Cantt.	13.11.2020

Note : For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

Security Helpline
No. 182

Integrated Helpline
No. 139

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