

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM | TUESDAY | 10 NOVEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 31°C  
**Min:** 19°C  
**RH:** 79%  
**Rainfall:** Nil  
**Forecast:** Clear skies.  
Max/Min temp.  
32/23 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+44,158)	(+469)
85,85,331	1,26,994
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+ 857)	(+4)
TS: 2,51,188	1,381
(+1,392)	(+11)
AP: 8,44,359	6,802

### CASES AROUND THE WORLD

5,10,19,347
DEATHS
12,66,074
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
216
worldometers.info/coronavirus

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Nija Ashwayuja Bahula Dasami till 3.20 am (Wednesday)  
**Star:** Magha till 7.53 am  
**Variyam:** 3.24 pm to 4.54 pm  
**Durmuhurtam:** 8.37 am to 9.22 am; 10.43 pm to 11.34 pm  
**Rahukalam:** 3 pm to 4.30 pm

**HJRI CALENDAR**  
**Rabbi-ul Awwal 23, 1442 AH**  
**PRAYERS**  
**(ROYAL MOSQUE)**  
**Fajar:** 5 am  
**Zohar:** 1.30 pm  
**Asar:** 5 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.35 pm  
**Isha:** 8.30 pm  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.05 AM**  
**SUNSET TODAY 5.28 PM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 12:55 PM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 2.38 AM**

## COUNTER POINT



I will not accept defeat even if I lose!

## SHORT TAKE

## COVID VACCINE 90% EFFECTIVE, SAYS PFIZER

**New York:** Pfizer says an early peek at its vaccine data suggests the shots may be 90 per cent effective at preventing Covid-19, indicating the company is on track later this month to file an emergency use application with US regulator Food and Drug Administration. Monday's announcement doesn't mean a vaccine is imminent: This interim analysis looked at 94 infections recorded so far in a study that has enrolled nearly 44,000 people in the US and five other countries. Pfizer Inc did not provide any more details about those cases, and cautioned the initial protection rate might change by the time the study ends. Even revealing such early data is highly unusual. "We're in a position potentially to be able to offer some hope," Dr. Bill Gruber, Pfizer's senior V-P of clinical development, said. — AP

## Markets surge to all-time high

**Mumbai:** The equity markets surged to a new all-time high surpassing January 20, 2020 highs amid strongly positive global and domestic cues as well as sentiments turning bullish ahead of Diwali, an auspicious time to make new investments for the Indian investment community.

■ Full report on Page 7

## NATION | 4

**BJP rigged bypolls in UP, alleges Akhilesh**



## WORLD | 5

**Russia, China yet to greet Biden on win**

## SPORTS | 8

**Kohli to go on paternity leave during Oz tour**



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## Diwali in Delhi



Visitors flout social distancing norms at Sarojini Nagar market ahead of the Diwali festival in New Delhi on Monday. Delhi recorded over 70 fatalities due to Covid taking the toll to 7,060 and registered 5,023 fresh cases.

— PTI

# NGT's ban not applicable, Diwali will have fireworks

## AP plans green crackers over 'moderate' air

**T.S.S. SIDDHARTH and SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC HYDERABAD, VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 9**

It will be a Diwali with fireworks for the two Telugu-speaking states this year. And the fireworks must be of the less polluting variety. They have escaped the National Green Tribunal ban on firing crackers in all cities and towns where the air quality during November falls under the "poor" and worse categories. Cities that recorded a 'moderate' or better air quality last November can go ahead with the traditional celebrations. The Pollution Control Boards in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on Monday

evening said the air quality in the two states in November last year fell in the 'moderate' category and met the NGT's norms. However, the NGT made it clear that any fireworks that are set off must meet the 'green crackers' norms, that emit less smoke and gases compared to the traditional fireworks, and any celebration that involves fireworks must be only held between 8 pm and 10 pm on November 14, the day of Diwali. There was some concern in Telangana state and Andhra Pradesh over whether some of their largest cities and towns could use fireworks, with the NGT issuing notices to both the states, along with

21 others, seeking their views on whether a ban needs to be put in place on the sale and setting off of fireworks this Diwali, particularly in 122 cities nationwide that did not meet the Central Pollution Control Board's air quality attainment norms. The NGT's poser came in a case it was hearing about the National Capital Region of Delhi over pollution caused by fireworks and the possibility of an increased spread of Coronavirus because of the aerosol particles emitted when fireworks are set off. In TS, Hyderabad and Ramagundam made the non-attainment list.

■ Page 2: NGT ordered drive against air pollution

# Cancel inspector's bail, AP tells HC

**DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 9**

In keeping with the state government's commitment to ensure justice to the bereaved family members of the mass suicide of Abdul Salam his family, the AP Police filed a 'bail cancellation petition' in the High Court on Monday. This followed the two prime accused in the case — CI Somasekhar Reddy and head constable Gangadhar — securing bail from a district court in Kurnool despite the inclusion of non-bailable sections like IPC 306 read with Section 34. The state government responded promptly and filed the petition in the High Court with the intention that justice be delivered and the accused punished. The police asked for can-

cellation of bail sanctioned to the two accused on the grounds that if they were released it might result in witnesses turning hostile and they might even intimidate new witnesses. The investigation authorities in the case are already having incriminating evidence against the two accused. The police apprehend that they could hamper the investigation by either threatening or coercing the witnesses. The cops had been allegedly targeting the family of Abdus Salam on the charge of a theft in his autorickshaw. Salam denied the charge. Later, Abdul Salam (42), resident of Nandyal, his wife Noor (36), daughter Salma (14), and son Kalandar (10) filmed a suicide video and then ended their life on Tuesday last week.

## YSRHU SETS UP BIO PARK WITH RARE PLANTS

**DC CORRESPONDENT KAKINADA, NOV. 9**

YSR Horticulture University is developing a bio-diversity park with 70 varieties of medicinal, aromatic and decorative indigenous plants at its campus in Venkataramannagudem of West Godavari district. These plants are expected to attract butterflies, honey bees, dragon flies and birds, thereby increasing the biodiversity. The university has procured several indigenous plants like Pagoda, Hill Lemon, Rudraksha, Will Lotus, Sambrani (Bacopa monnieri), Peacock tree, Rosary Pea (Banda Gurivinda), Black Turmeric, Ashoka (Saraca Indica) Velaga (Feronia Limonia).

■ Page 2: Bio parks will help in research

## BATTLE | ROYALE

**Batting heavy MI look to post huge total with 130 sixes compared to Delhi's 84**

# Mumbai sits pretty in IPL title clash against Delhi

**MOSES KONDETY | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 9**

After 52 days of exciting action, it's the final countdown at the IPL. Fittingly, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals, who have occupied the top two spots on the points table for most part of the League, will fight for the coveted cup on Tuesday night. For starters, the tournament itself is the winner, with the BCCI pulling it off in far away UAE in these crushing Covid times. The teams have certainly beat-

en the virus there. The title match promises fireworks ahead of Diwali with explosive players on both sides pointing to a cracker of a contest. While defending champions Mumbai sit pretty with the experience of playing five finals and winning the IPL on four occasions — in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 — Delhi are in their maiden big game that could add to nerves. Their paths to the summit clash too have been contrasting. While Mumbai made it at the first

● FOR STARTERS, the tournament itself is the winner, with the BCCI pulling it off in far away UAE in these crushing Covid times. The teams have certainly beaten the virus there.

attempt, Delhi clawed into it via the second Qualifier. Head-to-head, Mumbai are way ahead, having beaten the Capitals comfortably — by five wickets, nine wickets and 57 runs — in the three matches they have

played this season. "The journey has been a roller-coaster. Hoping we're able to play freely in the next game against MI, the biggest team," Capitals captain Shreyas Iyer said. His counterpart Rohit Sharma kept feet firmly on ground. "There will be a psychological advantage a little bit, yes, but again every day is a new game. You can't think too much about what has happened in the past," he said. A batting heavy side, Mumbai will look to blast their way past with hitters

like Kieron Pollard, Quinton de Kock, Hardik Krunal Pandya, Suryakumar Yadav and captain Rohit Sharma to set up a huge total should they bat first. For the record, Mumbai batsmen have slammed 130 sixes compared to 84 by the Capitals in the tournament. Delhi does boast of big bats too. Marcus Stoinis, Shimron Hetmyer, Shreyas, Rishabh Pant will need to step up to the plate and fire in the boundaries. On the bowling front, it

will be an interesting contest for the Purple Cap (awarded to one with the highest wickets) between Delhi pacer Kagiso Rabada (29) and Mumbai quick Jasprit Bumrah, who is fast catching up at 27. Trent Boult in the second Mumbai bowler in the top three, with 22 wickets. The Capitals also have a reliable attack in new-ball bowlers Anrich Nortje, Stoinis and crafty spinners R. Ashwin and Axar Patel. Whether they will be able to weather the storm remains to be seen.

# Bihar votes to give first post-Covid verdict today

**Bihar might witness rise of new generation of politicians**

**SREEPARNA CHAKRABORTY and NAYEAR AZAD | DC NEW DELHI/PATNA, NOV. 9**

Bihar is looking at a generational change in politics with the exit polls predicting that the Mahagathbandhan led by the RJD's Tejashwi Yadav is on its way to dethrone old socialist warhorse Nitish Kumar, the Bihar Chief Minister, who leads the JD(U)-BJP combine. But it remains to be seen whether the "Grand Alliance" of the RJD, the Left parties and the Congress will manage to romp home to power, as most of the exit polls have projected, or will merely emerge as the single largest entity, leaving the field open for post-poll alliances.

In case of a fractured mandate, it will be interesting to see which way the small caste-based parties swing as the process of government formation kicks off. Counting will be taken up at 55 centres in 38 districts across the state on Tuesday morning. Most exit polls have predicted a rout for the ruling JD(U)-BJP combine and a resounding victory for the



Workers prepare sweets ahead of the counting day for the Bihar Assembly elections in Patna on Monday.

— PTI

Grand Alliance led by Mr Yadav, the son of former CM Lalu Prasad Yadav. Bihar has 243 Assembly constituencies, and the most keenly watched on Tuesday will obviously be Raghapur in Vaishali district, from where Mr Tejashwi Yadav is seeking election. Mr Yadav is currently a member of the Legislative Council and this is his first Assembly election. Raghopur has in

the past been represented by his parents Lalu Prasad Yadav and Rabri Devi. A win for the Grand Alliance would be a redemption for Mr Yadav. A win will also revive the fortunes of the three Left parties — CPI, CPI-M and CPI-ML — part of the "Mahagathbandhan". The results will also indicate the political fortunes of Chirag Paswan, the LJP chief, who left the NDA in

Bihar and put up candidates against the JD(U). The exit polls have projected that the Grand Alliance will get more than 122 seats in the 243-member Assembly. Election officials and district administrations face the daunting task of restraining supporters of political parties from crowding the counting centres amid the Covid-19 outbreak.

# Reverse tenders saved ₹68 cr: Jagan

**DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, NOV. 9**

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy laid the foundation stone through virtual mode for Phase-2 works of Somasila High-Level Canal from his camp office in Amaravati on Monday.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, he reiterated that irrigation was a priority sector for the government, which will take up projects for a balanced regional development like the three capital concept. Polavaram would be completed by 2022 khariif, he pointed out. He said that the Somasila Phase-2 project would

address the irrigation needs of 46,453 acres apart from quenching the thirst of people in uplands of Udayagiri, Atmakuru, and other villages in the Prakasam and Nellore districts. Jagan Mohan Reddy said that the previous government proposed to spend ₹527.53 crore on the project.

"After forming the government, by going through reverse tendering about ₹68 crore has been saved and we brought down the cost to ₹459 crore and the project works are being gone about on a war-footing."

■ Page 2: Six projects to be ready in one year: CM

## AGRIGOLD: TS HC LETS AP GIVE ₹20K TO DEPOSITORS

**VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 9**

The Telangana High Court, which is hearing cases related to the AgriGold scam, approved an Andhra Pradesh government proposal to disburse ₹1,150 crore to depositors from the state who have invested ₹20,000 or less in the company. A division bench headed by Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao asked the AP government to complete the process before March 31, 2021. Explaining how it would identify genuine depositors to make the payment, the AP government told the court that the CID would gather details of the depositors through ward secretariats. The details would be vetted by the CID DSP and the revenue divisional officer. The secretary of the District Legal Services Authority, the collector and SP would certify the details. The AP government said that it would deposit the money directly into the bank accounts of eligible depositors. On a request of the AP government to transfer AgriGold related cases to the AP High Court, the bench said that the Chief Justice of the Telangana HC had been vested with the power to transfer the case. The court said it would hear regularly all cases related to AgriGold which were filed by depositors, bankers, bidders for the auction of the company's property so that they can be paid.



## SHORT TAKES

CHIEF JUSTICE TO  
HEAR SEC CASE  
ON LOCAL POLLSDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 9

AP High Court bench headed by Chief Justice J.K. Maheswari to hear the case pertaining to conduct of local body polls by the State Election Commission.

As the court heard the petition on Monday on non-conduct of local body polls, the advocate general informed it by saying that the state government filed an application in the Supreme Court on the same issue and it would come up for hearing on November 16. The AG informed the court that it might take up the matter thereafter.

As the SEC filed a counter affidavit following a notice served on it for non-conduct of elections earlier, the SEC's counsel filed an additional affidavit and it was not placed on record.

However, the court directed the registry to place the additional affidavit filed by the SEC on record.

NGT ORDERED  
DRIVE AGAINST  
AIR POLLUTION

FROM PAGE 1

In AP, the non-attainment list included Srikakulam, Pydi Bhimavaram, Vizianagaram, Bobbili, Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Rajamahendravaram, Eluru, Vijayawada, Velagapudi, Guntur, Ongole, Nellore, Chittoor, Tirupati, Tirumala, Kadapa, Yerrangunta, Anantapur and Kurnool.

In Hyderabad, Neetu Kumari Prasad, Telangana State Pollution Control Board member, told *Deccan Chronicle*: "People in Hyderabad can go on to celebrate the festival with crackers, but only in the stipulated time period of 8 pm to 10 pm. We have taken this decision because the ambient air quality of the city falls in the 'moderate' category."

In Vijayawada, authorities said that the decision to permit use of fireworks was taken based on air quality monitoring data from November 2019 which showed that the average ambient air quality values were good, satisfactory and moderate.

A senior AP Pollution Control Board official said: "Though we intended to recommend to the state government to impose a total ban on firing of crackers, following NGT order and verification of AQI values of last November, we intend to recommend to allow only green crackers in a stipulated period for Diwali."

The NGT, in its order, also directed all states and Union Territories to initiate special drives to check air pollution from all sources in view of its potential to aggravate Covid-19 infections.

BIO PARKS  
WILL HELP IN  
RESEARCH

FROM PAGE 1

The park will also have Maredu (Aegle marmelos), Taanikaya (Terminalia Bellerica), Telamaddi (Terminalia Bellerica), Kadamba (Anthocephalus cadamba), Medi (Ficus racemosa) and Neredu (Syzygium cumini).

Four plants belonging to each of these varieties are being planted. They will help students understand the value of indigenous trees, whose populations in the country are falling due to urbanisation.

Scientists at the university say these plants have a long life and release high levels of oxygen. University vice-chancellor T. Janakiram said many youths of the present generation do not even know about these trees. The university developing a biodiversity park for them will help protect such varieties of plants. The VC said many people in cities are showing interest in growing these decorative and aromatic plants, as they are environment-friendly and add to beauty.

A scientist at the university said such botanical parks will help students research on the varieties of insects that depend on the trees and how both compliment each others' growth.



Telugu Academy chairperson Nandamuri Lakshmi Parvathi goes through a book during the National Book festival celebrations organised by Visalandhra book house in Vijayawada on Monday. — C. NARAYANA RAO

ACB RAIDS APSP  
ASSISTANT  
COMMANDANTDC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 9

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) sleuths on Monday have simultaneously conducted raids on Assistant commandant of APSP's 3rd battalion in Kakinada, Panthula Sankar, 58, and his suspected benamies at 13 different locations across the state.

According to the ACB, following the complaints that the accused officer was possessing huge amount of assets, which are disproportionate to his income sources, the ACB sleuths conducted raids at multiple locations including Tirupati and Palamaner of Chittoor district, Rajampet and Nandalur of Kadapa district and Tadipatri in Anantapur district.



Central committee members Saurav Arora watch the damaged crop at the Kanchikacherla area in Krishna district on Monday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

State lost ₹1,200cr  
groundnut: ReportDC CORRESPONDENT  
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 9

Anantapur district administration submitted to the Inter Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) a report that at least ₹1,200 crore worth of groundnut crop has been damaged over 4.76 lakh acres in the district due to incessant rains during the Kharif season.

Members of the IMCT inspected Vajrakurur and Guntakal mandals on Monday to assess the damage due to heavy rains. The team comprised R.B. Kowl, consultant, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, and Dr Ponnuru Swamy, Joint Director of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare. Accompanied by state Agriculture Commissioner Aruna Kumar, the team landed by helicopter at the Vajrakurur High School Grounds.

The central team inspected groundnut fields in Vajrakurur mandal. Farmers Mahabub Bhasha and Shafulla told the team that they had invested ₹4.5 lakh towards the groundnut crop on 15 acres of land. Bhasha informed the team that normally there would be 30-40 nuts per plant during normal

TTD to enhance usage  
of solar power energy

SVBC will design Bhagavad Gita parayanam programme

AVINASH P.  
SUBRAMANYAM | DC  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 9

In a bid to reduce its carbon footprint as well as to meet its energy requirements, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has decided to enhance the usage of non-conventional solar power energy by setting up solar rooftop panels atop all its buildings in Tirumala and Tirupati.

During the first senior officers meeting here on Monday, TTD EO Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy directed engineering officials to arrange solar panels on the top of all buildings in Tirumala and Tirupati. "Enhancing the usage of

● TTD EO Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy directed engineering officials to arrange solar panels on the top of all buildings in Tirumala and Tirupati

non-conventional solar energy will not only reduce energy costs but also protect the environment.

"This project will be executed on a war-footing and all TTD buildings will become part of it," the EO said.

Further, Reddy instructed forest and garden wing officials to develop special and unique gardens in

Tirumala hills with the plant species as mentioned in ancient texts, vedas and puranas. "The flowers grown in these gardens should be used to deck up Lord Venkateshwara", he added.

He said that all the Vedic schools, being run by them, would be brought under the umbrella of S.V. Vedic University and the Sanskrit College at Secunderabad would be duly developed. As many sankertanas of Annamayya, Vengamamba and Purandhara Dasa are yet to see light of the day, he instructed scholars to work on them. "All the activities of

Hindu Dharma Prachara Parishad (HDPP) should be planned in such a way that they would be telecast on SVBC. The channel will design Bhagavad Gita parayanam programme exclusively for children. Some publications will be printed in simple language", the EO said.

Later, he urged vigilance officials to watch out for fake websites and ensure that devotees are not cheated while booking darshan, accommodation and seva tickets. Additional EO A.V. Dharma Reddy, JE Os P. Basanth Kumar and Sada Bhargavi, CVSO Gopinath Jatti and other senior officers were also present.

Govt junior college in  
every mandal: JaganDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 9

Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed officials to ensure that there is at least one government junior college in every mandal of the state.

Reviewing the Nadu-Nadu (Mana Badi) programme with officials at his Camp Office here on Monday, the CM said 159 mandals of the state do not have a government junior college. He instructed officials to scout around and set up a state-owned junior college in such mandals.

On progress of ongoing works at government school buildings under Nadu-Nedu Phase-I, Jagan Mohan Reddy said all tasks must be completed by February end. However, he said there should be no compromise



on quality of works. On Phase-II of Nadu-Nedu, he ordered that hostel buildings, along with amenities like cots, mattresses, bed sheets, blankets and almshouses, be completed by Sankranti 2022.

The Chief Minister expressed concern over students in tribal areas

attending nature's call outside, as bathrooms do not have running water. Referring to the software application that keeps tab on compliance with the menu being served to students in hostels, he asked officials to also come up with a software application for proper maintenance of bathrooms.

On Jagananna Vidya Kanuka, the CM asked officials to ensure that the quality of kits being supplied to students is good. He said in case schools reopen from June 12 during the next academic year, all students must be given their kits by June 1.

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## DROUGHT | MITIGATION | Somasila-Kandaluru doubling works will be initiated soon

## Six projects to be ready in one year: CM

FROM PAGE 1

According to the Chief Minister, the state government has prioritised the irrigation sector and has been taking up projects in all the three regions. Aiming at addressing the drought issue in Rayalaseema, the government initiated Rayalaseema Drought Mitigation Project at a cost of ₹40,000 crore.

It has also initiated the North Andhra Sujala Sravanthi project with ₹15,000 crore, for which tenders for the ₹3,500 crore first phase will be called soon and YSR Palanadu Karuvu Nivaranam project along with Chintalapudi lift

irrigation and two other projects on lower Krishna and one on the upper Krishna River are being taken up. Polavaram project would be completed by kharif of 2022 and will be dedicated to the nation.

Besides safeguarding the interests of farmers by saving every drop of water, they have prioritised development of the backward regions in Rayalaseema and North Andhra districts, he said.

The Chief Minister said that six irrigation projects Vamsadhara phase 2, Vamsadhara-Nagavali interlinking, Veligonda reservoir, Owk tunnel, Sangam barrage, and Nellore barrage works would be completed next

year. The Sangam barrage and Nellore barrage works would be completed and be dedicated to the people of Nellore district within two months.

Jagan Mohan Reddy stated that both Somasila-Kandaluru and Somasila-Rallapadu doubling works will be initiated with ₹918 crore and ₹632 crore, respectively.

Irrigation minister Anil Kumar Yadav, IT minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy, MPs Vemireddy Prabhakar Reddy and Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose, legislators Mekapati Chandrasekhar Reddy and Ramireddy Pratap Reddy and other officials were present on the occasion.

Hurt by MLA's  
taunts, woman  
attempts suicideDC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, NOV. 9

A village-volunteer of Nagaram in Mamidikuduru mandal of Konaseema area, and mother of two, Suvarna Jyothi, attempted to commit suicide by consuming phenol, anguished at Gannavaram MLA Kondeti Chittibabu's reprimand on Monday. She was admitted to the Government Hospital at Razole.

In her suicide note, she mentioned that Chittibabu had reprimanded her in the presence of hundreds of people over a house-site issue, though she was not at fault. As she belonged to a BPL family, she sought the officials for a house-site, but the MLA

scolded her.

Nagaram Sub-Inspector V. Srinivasa Rao said that the volunteer had asked for a house-site during the YSRC's Praja Sankalpa Yatra on Monday and the MLA had stated that house-sites could not be allotted to anybody as the issue was pending in the courts. He said that as a volunteer, she should be updated on the prevailing situation and inform the people. After concluding the meeting, the volunteer went to her house and took this extreme step. Nagaram police registered a case.

Meanwhile, Chittibabu visited the hospital and consoled the volunteer. He instructed the medical officials to render better medical treatment to her.

AP soldier martyred  
in terror operationDC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 9

A 37-year-old jawan from Chittoor district's Reddyvaripalle in Irala mandal was killed along with three other soldiers and an Army officer in Sunday's encounter between the militants and the security forces along the Line of Control (LoC) in Machil sector of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district.

There was gloom in Reddyvaripalle following the death of Havildar Praveen Kumar, who was the only son of Chikala Prathap Reddy and Sugunamma. He had married Rajitha 10 years ago and the couple has an eight-year-old daughter and a five-year-old son.

Inspired by many others from his village, Praveen, who completed his graduation, joined the Army about 17 years ago in 18 Madras Regiment. He served in the National Security Guard for almost three years.

According to his relatives from Reddyvaripalle, Praveen's family members were expecting his visit for Sankranti. They recalled his earlier visit to the village and said that he used to spend most of his time with friends and family members.

"Praveen has been an inspiration to many youngsters in the village to join the Army. He constantly encouraged the youth to join the armed forces. It is a terrible loss to both the family and the village. He was a great human being," a relative of Praveen said.

The defence ministry paid tributes to the soldier. His mortal remains would be shifted from Machil sector to New Delhi and from there to his native village. The last rites are likely to be performed at his native place Wednesday evening.

Deputy Chief Minister K. Narayana Swamy, minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, MP Reddeppa, MLA M.S. Babu gave the cheque along with the Chief Minister's letter and consoled the family members.



Praveen Kumar Reddy

CM ANNOUNCES  
₹50 LAKH  
EX GRATIADC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, NOV. 9

The state government on Monday announced an ex gratia of ₹50 lakh to the family of Havildar Ch. Praveen Kumar Reddy, who laid down his life fighting at the Line of Control (LoC) in an encounter on Sunday at Machil sector of North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

AP Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in his letter to the wife of martyred soldier said that the nation was proud of the bravery of Praveen Kumar. "His sacrifice is priceless and his loss cannot be filled," the Chief Minister wrote.

Reiterating that the state will stand with the family at this hour, The CM released the ex gratia to the family from the CM's Relief Fund. The CM offered his heartfelt condolences to members of the bereaved family and prayed to God to give them strength to overcome their grief.

Dy Chief Minister K. Narayana Swamy, minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, MP Reddeppa, MLA M.S. Babu gave the cheque along with the Chief Minister's letter and consoled the family members.

the family members of the martyred soldier.



Ministers Mekapati Goutham Reddy, Dr Anilkumar Yadav, Udayagiri legislator Mekapati Chandrasekhar Reddy, Kavali legislator Ramireddy Pratap Kumar Reddy during the launch of Phase-2 works of Somasila High Level Lift Canal at Krishnapuram in Nellore district



## SHORT TAKES

23-YEAR-OLD  
M.Sc STUDENT  
ENDS LIFEDC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, NOV. 9

A 23-year-old woman, Kalla Maha Venkata Lakshmi Prasanna, studying M.Sc in a private college committed suicide by hanging herself to a fan in her room in Jagannackpuram late Sunday night.

According to the One Town police, Prasanna recently moved from a hostel and was residing in a room in Jagannackpur. Meanwhile, last night she was found hanging and her relative lodged a complaint with the One Town police. The police registered a case and are investigating. The police suspected that her suicide might be linked to a love affair.

FARMER ATTEMPTS  
SUICIDE IN FRONT  
OF COLLECTORATEDC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, NOV. 9

Blaming the police of Kodavur police station for not registering a case against those who assaulted him, a farmer V. Venkiah, 48, of Sanjeeva Nagar (Kammampalem) Kodavur mandal attempted self-immolation after dousing his body with kerosene before the Collectorate in Nellore on Monday.

A few bystanders and the police present at the Collectorate foiled his attempt and shifted him to the Government General Hospital. His wife and daughters were present with him.

The victim alleged that he was beaten up by three people belonging to Sanjeeva Nagar on October 12, but the Kodavur police turned a blind eye to his complaint even after he took the issue to the notice of the rural DSP. He said he took the extreme step as the people who thrashed him following a land dispute threatening to attack him again.

SANCHAITA TAKES  
A DIG AT ASHOK  
GAJAPATI RAJUDC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 9

Chairperson of Simhachalam Devasthanam Trust and MANSAS, P. Sanchaita Gajapati Raju said the 'The Save MANSAS' campaign launched by Ashok Gajapati Raju was actually a 'save Ashok' as more skeletons will tumble out of the MANSAS closet and make him politically irrelevant.

Her tweets were in response to a signature campaign launched by TD against the alleged privatisation of the acclaimed MR College of Vizianagaram.

The TD party is also planning to launch a campaign 'Save MANSAS' by conducting meetings in all nine Assembly constituencies of Vizianagaram district to protect MANSAS Trust and Maharaja Educational Institutions, which have been providing education with affordable fee structure.

"The campaign should have been when you did not appoint a lawyer and allowed an ex parte decree against MANSAS causing a ₹13 crore loss. It should have been launched when you uploaded the incorrect date from 2016-2020 for fee reimbursement causing a Rs six crore loss to educational institutes," Sanchaita said in her tweets.

CENTRAL TEAM TO  
VISIT EG TO ASSESS  
CROP DAMAGEDC CORRESPONDENT  
KAKINADA, NOV. 9

The Central team will visit East Godavari on Tuesday to assess the crop loss due to the heavy rains. The team will meet the farmers at Podagatlapalli village at 11 am and inspect the horticulture crops; later they will inspect damaged roads through Jonnada, Mandapeta, Ramachandrapuram and Kakinada.

The team will visit Ramanakkapet in UKothapalli mandal where the paddy fields were badly damaged due to floods and rains. They will visit photo exhibition.

District Collector D. Muralidhar Reddy will give a powerpoint presentation on the damages during rains to the Central team. Later they will visit Rajupalem in Kirlampudi mandal, Kandrakota and J.Thimmapuram villages in Peddapuram mandal.

Metro train, flyovers  
set to boost real estate

Delhi-based firm will prepare a detailed project report

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC  
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 9

The four flyovers coming up on the National Highway passing through the heart of Visakhapatnam and be parallel to Metro train services will have a great impact on real estate prices in the city, particularly in the northern region of Visakhapatnam.

The flyovers are proposed at Madhurawada, Hanumanthawaka junction, Maddilapalem junction and Gajuwaka junction. GVMC, which will execute the project, has shortlisted a Delhi-based company to prepare a detailed project report. The project will integrate the metro rail, which will run parallel to the flyovers from Madhurawada to Steel Plant via Gajuwaka. "On their completion the flyovers and metro rail will boost land prices in the cluster of Madhurawada, Tagarapuvalasa and Anandapuram, the northern sector of Visakhapatnam where the IT SEZ is located," said Vizag Lok Sabha



The NAD flyover gets a circular shape while under construction at NAD Junction in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— DC

member M.V.V. Satyanarayana, the builder-turned-politician.

Talking to this correspondent on Monday, the MP said that the northern sector of the city would witness rapid development as plenty of vacant land was available and was close to all the educational institutions. The present prices are at ₹30,000 per square yard, he added.

Mr Chandu of Subham

Infra said the Madhurawada, Tagarapuvalasa and Anandapuram cluster, located 20 km from the Bhogapuram international airport and encircling Rushikonda layout, and the international cricket stadium, would be the future of Vizag city. "There are no industries and the Madhurawada region being close to reserve forest, it provides an excellent ambience," Mr Chandu said.

President of Vizag chapter of CREDAI, B. Srinivas said the flyover and metro would not only appreciate land prices in Madhurawada region but also lead to development of the entire city, including the old town. "Many residents of Maddilapalem and Dabagardens are coming forward to redevelop their residential areas to help widen roads for a quality residential ambience," Mr Srinivas said.

Railways spl squads to  
check crackers in trainsDC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 9

Railways have formed special squads to check passengers carrying Diwali crackers in the trains. The squads will keep a strict vigil on the passengers to stop them from carrying inflammable items on trains, for the safety of passengers, during the ensuing Diwali.

Carrying inflammable items during the train journey is strictly prohibited, an official said. Carrying inflammable objects like crackers, gas cylinders, acid, petrol and kerosene during a train journey is a punishable offence under the Railway Act 1989, and the offender may get imprisonment up to three years.

NADU-NEDU:  
OFFICIAL INTERACTS  
WITH STUDENTSDC CORRESPONDENT  
SRIKAKULAM, NOV. 9

Principal Secretary Praveen Prakash on Monday visited several villages and towns in Srikakulam district to assess the implementation of various welfare schemes that were launched by the government during the last 15 months.

As a part of the tour, Mr Prakash visited tribal welfare school in Seethampeta and Mandal Parishad Primary School in Veeraghattam and inspected the Nadu-Nedu scheme and interacted with the students, teachers and officials on the status of the scheme.

● Carrying inflammable objects like crackers, gas cylinders, acid, petrol and kerosene during a train journey is a punishable offence under the Railway Act 1989, and the offender may get imprisonment up to three years.

Waltair Division of East Coast Railway has advised passengers to be careful and not to carry and also not let their co-passengers to take inflammable objects while travelling on trains. If any passenger carries inflammable

items, the co-passengers must inform about it to the duty railway staff like TTEs, coach attendants, guards of the train, station managers, Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police personnel. One can also register complaints through security helpline 182.

The Division is alerting the public through frequent announcements to avoid carrying of inflammable items and to have a safe journey.

Steps have been taken by the Safety department of the Waltair Division to make the train passengers and the rail users aware of the dangers of carrying crackers and other explosive substances.

AP records a dip  
in Covid-19 deathsDC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 9

AP has registered a steep decline in deaths of Coronavirus-infected patients in the last one week, provided a much-needed relief to the state government.

On November 1, the state recorded 16 deaths. On November 2 it was 13, November 3 – 15, November 4 – 10, November 5 – 13, November 6 – 11, November 7 – 11, November 8 – 12 and November 9 – 11. While the deaths have lessened, the death toll recorded so far in the state has reached 6,802.

AP registered 1,392 new Covid-19 cases from out

of the 61,050 samples tested during the last 24 hours, raising the overall tally to 8,44,359.

Out of the total of 87,25,025 samples tested so far, 8,16,322 patients have recovered while 21,235 patients are still active with the virus.

Among daily Covid-19 cases, East Godavari continues to top the state with 341 instances of the virus, followed by 243 in West Godavari, 116 in Guntur, 105 in Chittoor, 100 in Kadapa, 84 in Anantapur, 76 in Nellore, 75 in Krishna, 66 in Prakasam, 61 in Vizianagaram, 47 in Srikakulam, 42 in Visakhapatnam and 36 in Kurnool.

TD ADVISES  
VEERRAJU TO  
JOIN YSRCDC CORRESPONDENT  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM,  
NOV. 9

The Telugu Desam intensified attack on BJP as the party is collaborating with the YSRC.

The TD State General Secretary, Ganni Krishna, suggested the BJP state president Somu Veerraju better join YSRC by leaving the BJP mask. He told the reporters on Monday that though TD was in opposition, Mr Veerraju was criticising TD instead of the ruling YSRC, but he is not able to bring funds to Polavaram project or achieving special category status. He said, "BJP wants to give SCS to AP after it comes to power. But, the BJP can't get the power even after 10 generations."

ENGG COLLEGE TO  
BE CONVERTED AS  
AP AGRI VARSITYDC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, NOV. 9

An Engineering College belonging to the Mekapati family at Udayagiri being converted as AP Agriculture University soon.

Industries and IT Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy disclosed this while addressing a gathering during the inauguration of Phase-2 works of Somasila High-Level Lift Canal at Krishnapuram in Marripadu mandal on Monday.

He also hinted about developing a handicrafts park at Udayagiri and MSME Park between Vinjamuru and Duttaluru towns. He said they are going to modernise Somasila North Canal to ensure drinking water to Vinjamuru town.

10 RED SANDERS  
LOGS, 10 AXES  
SEIZEDDC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, NOV. 9

The Kadapa district police officers seized ten red sanders logs and ten axes from the Obulavaripalli forest area on Monday morning.

The special task force police made a combing operation in the Obulavari forest area on Monday morning.

At the Eedi Bavi forest area at the Chittoor-Kadapa border, they have identified a few workers from Tamil Nadu who are cutting red sander logs. When the workers saw the cops in the forest, they threw stones at them and fled from that area. The police reached the spot and found 10 red sanders logs and ten axes used for cutting trees. They also found some food grains and utensils. When the information reached the district headquarters, the Superintendent of Police directed to deploy additional forces to search the workers.

Kadapa cops  
bust red sanders  
smuggling gangDC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, NOV. 9

The Kadapa police busted the red sanders smuggling gang, who were allegedly chasing the real smugglers and stole the red sander logs. The police arrested the main conspirator for this incident and kingpin international Red Sanders Smuggler Shaik Abul Hakeem aka Basha (41) and 11 others who involved in this incident. The District police superintendent Karur Karunapathi Nagendra Kumar Anburajan held a press conference at the district police office on Monday morning and explained the details.

On November 2, at 3.30 am a Scorpio vehicle containing the red sanders logs and smugglers dashed to the tipper at its diesel tank on Kadapa-Kamalapuram highway road in Vallur police station jurisdiction and four people were burnt alive. Two persons were shifted to RIMS Hospital, Kadapa and among them, one died while undergoing treatment. It came to light that two persons escaped from the incident place and reached Tamil Nadu. A Toyota Etios car which was used to chase the red sanders logs and the tipper was entirely burnt in the incident and the culprits in the car escaped.

In connection with the above incident and as per the instructions of Gowtham Shawang, Director General of Police, Superintendent of Police Anburajan has taken the incident as a challenge, formed five special teams to search in Bangalore, Coimbatore, Tirupathur, Vellore, and several places of Kadapa district besides used the technology and detected the case.

Based on CCTV footage from Kadapa city and the registration papers of the Toyota Etios car, the people who were travelled in the car and attempted the robbery, Jayaram Naik, Maheswara Raju and Viswanadha Reddy were arrested by the team led by

● Prime accused Shaik Abdul Hakeem (41), Bukke Jayaram Naik (33), Konduru Venkata Maheswara Raju (25), Kothapalli Viswanadha Reddy (26), Kothapalli Beeda Merin Prem Kumar (34), Doddagalla Naveen Kumar (22) Chittiboina Ravikanth (23), Konadala Gireeshkumar (30) and Peyyala Chiranjeevi (28) were arrested.

CI of Kadapa Rural police station in Rayachoty and seized a motorcycle from their possession.

Based on the information collected by the special teams deputed to Vellore and Coimbatore, the team arrested the main conspirator and kingpin international Red Sanders Smuggler Shaik Abul Hakeem aka Basha (41) of Coimbatore in Rajampeta and seized Hyundai Accent Car and ten red sanders logs from his possession. The team arrested Naveen Kumar, Ravikanth, Merin, Chiranjeevi and Gireesh in Kamalapuram and seized two motorcycles, five cell phones from their possession.

The main conspirator of the case and most wanted criminal in 14 cases of Kadapa district and 11 cases of Anantapur and other districts namely Shaik Abdul Hakeem aka Basha Bhai aka Basha, Coimbatore, Abdul Hakeem aka Basha Bhai is a native of Coimbatore. He used to meet his relatives frequently in Kadapa city.

During 2017 and 2018, he served jail time for nine months in Kadapa and Chittoor jails, and after his release, due to a close vigil of the police, Shaik Abdul Hakeem shifted his camp from Kadapa to Bengaluru, where he met Afroz and Fayaz, conspired with the drivers and with an intent to evade the payment of coolie amount to the coolies.

6 held for duping  
paddy farmersDC CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE, NOV. 9

Police booked seven persons including a miller and some middlemen for cheating farmers and the government while procuring and disposing of paddy on Monday. The accused include TD followers Kariyavula Madhusudhan Rao alias Madhu Naidu of Manubolu mandal and Gali Jaipal of Sarvepalli.

The other accused are Uppu Padmanabham, 30, of Edagali and Shaik Masthan, 49, of Anikepalli in Venkatachalam mandal, Dakklil Rajakishore, 37, of Kagitalapur in Manubolu mandal, Palagati Mallikarjuna Reddy, 44, of Innamadugu in Kovur mandal and rice miller Bolisetty Srinivasa Rao 49 of Srunagarapuram in Bapatla of Guntur district.

Gali Jaipal is at large. It may be recalled that TD leaders supported Jaipal when he raised a hue and cry over the irregularities in the process of paddy procurement a few days back.

Deputy superintendent of Nellore Rural Y. Harinath Reddy briefed mediapersons on the arrests on Monday.

According to the DSP, rice miller Srinivasa Rao has been buying paddy from Nellore district through rice brokers Mallikarjuna Reddy and Padmanabham since last few years.

As per the advice of Srinivasa Rao, the two rice brokers have been buying paddy from gullible farmers for much less than MSP

● As per the advice of Srinivasa Rao, the two rice brokers have been buying paddy from gullible farmers for much less than MSP fixed by the government but supplying the same to the government to obtain MSP and sharing the profits.

fixed by the government but supplying the same to the government to obtain MSP and sharing the profits.

Madhu Naidu, Rajkishore, Jaipal and Shaik Masthan have been helping the brokers to identify innocent farmers for procuring paddy and details of their landholdings besides bank accounts. The details are used to supply the paddy to the government on their names and bag the MSP.

Their *modus operandi* came to light when they submitted details of 18 acres of barren land while supplying paddy cultivated in the land, which was taken on lease by Jaipal at Edagali village in Venkatachalam mandal.

Based on a complaint from Kanupuru, Area Coordinator of DRDA, Venkatachalam police registered a case and the role played by all the accused was detected during the investigation carried out by CI K. Ramakrishna and SI SK Karimullah.

DSP said they have arrested all the accused except Jaipal and a team is formed to nab him.

## TRANSPORTATION | HUB

## The DPR will be completed in next two years

## New road from Mydukur to Singarayakonda

NAGESWARA RAO  
BALLEDA | DC  
KADAPA, NOV. 9

Instead of the Mydukuru-Vijayawada road, which is the main transportation hub in the district, the government has decided to build a new road connecting the Mydukuru and Porumamilla areas to the National Highway 16 near Kaval in Nellore district.

The proposed new road is passed through Porumamilla in Kadapa, Sitaramapuram in Nellore district, Chandrasekharapuram, Pamur and Kandukur in Prakasam district and connected to the Nellore –



Porumamilla – Sitaramapuram road

Ongole NH 16 in Singarayakonda. The total length of this road is 195 km.

At present, proposals have been prepared for the construction of a 48

km road from Singarayakonda to Malakonda at ₹243 crore. Officials say tenders will be completed soon and work will begin. In the second phase, DPRs will

be prepared for the construction of Malakonda - Sitaramapuram, Sitaramapuram - Mydukuru road.

This road is known as National Highway 167-B. Its construction is expected to alleviate the problems of farmers in the area and facilitate the transportation of agricultural produce.

The road is 195 km long and passes through Kadapa, Nellore and Prakasam districts.

The road stretches for 58 km in Kadapa district. From Mydukuru it joins Vanipenta, Kammavaripalle, Porumamilla, Rajasahebpet and Tekururam in Sitaramapuram in Nellore district.

To reach Vijayawada from various towns in the district, one has to travel through Mydukuru. Passengers are having trouble as there is only a two-lane road for the most part.

The present proposed Mydukuru - Singarayakonda National Highway 167-B will be constructed as a ten-meter road.

It is hoped that the problem will be resolved as it is a three-lane road. It is estimated that about 200 acres of land will be required for the expansion of 58 km within the district. Officials say land acquisition and DPR will be completed in the next two years.

<p><b>గుంటూరు నగరపాలక సంస్థ</b>  <b>“ఇ” - ప్రాక్యూర్మెంటు విండరు ప్రక్రియ</b>  <b>ఆ.డి.సి.ఎం.76/2020-21. తే. 06-11-2020</b></p>	
<p>గుంటూరు నగరపాలక సంస్థ పరిధిలో వివిధ ఆభివృద్ధి పనులు చేపట్టబడుతున్న “ఇ” ప్రాక్యూర్మెంటు విండరు ప్రక్రియ ద్వారా విండర్లను టెండర్లు కొనుగోలుకారులకు ముందు కేటాయించబడుతుంది. ఇతర వివరాలకు <a href="http://www.apgeprocurement.gov.in">www.apgeprocurement.gov.in</a></p>	
<p>“ఇ” ప్రాక్యూర్మెంటుకు విండర్ 76/2020-21</p>	
<p>మొత్తం పనుల సంఖ్య - 02  అంచనా మొత్తం - Rs. 1,82,00,000/-  విండరు బిడ్డింగు టైన్ లోడ్ చేయవలసిన తేదీ - 07-11-2020 సా. 11:00 గంటలకు  విండరు బిడ్డింగు చేయవలసిన తేదీ - 23-11-2020 సా. 3:00 గంటలకు  విండరు బిడ్డింగు తయారు చేసే తేదీ - 23-11-2020 సా. 3:15 గంటలకు</p>	<p>సెల్ - <b>సూపర్విజనింగ్ ఇంజనీర్</b>, నగరపాలక సంస్థ, గుంటూరు</p>



## SHORT TAKES

## PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCAM BUSTED

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, NOV. 9

The Crime Investigation Department (CID) of Assam police on Monday busted a racket of illegal siphoning of centrally funded pre-Matric scholarship meant for poor minority students by a group of school teachers, staff, middlemen, bank correspondents, and officials. The CID arrested at least 21 accused including six schoolteachers here.

Inspector General of Police (CID) Surendra Kumar said that Director of Assam Minority development Board Mahmood Hassan had lodged an FIR regarding the misappropriation of pre-Matric scholarship for 2018-19 and 2019-20. On the basis of evidence collected during investigation so far, 21 persons have been apprehended by the CID with the support of local police of Goalpara, Darrang, Kamrup and Dhubri districts, Surendra Kumar added.

Pointing out that investigation has revealed that the accused stole IDs and passwords to access the National Scholarship Portal to dupe students, set up fake beneficiaries without the knowledge of the schools in Dhubri, Kumar said that in Goalpara they found that scholarship was siphoned off with involvement of headmaster of at least three schools.

## ODISHA: 3 JAWANS SUSTAIN BURNS IN FIRE MISHAP

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 9

Three jawans of the Odisha Special Armed Police (OSAP) suffered critical burns due to an accidental fire caused by mosquito repellent coils in Bhadrak town on Sunday night.

According to reports, the armed personnel were sleeping post their duty at the Puruna Bazar Police Station in Bhadrak town when the repellent coils they used came in contact with some inflammable material stored nearby.

The trio sustained severe burns and were rushed to the Bhadrak hospital. According to reports, they are stated to be serious. Sources said the injured jawans identified as Manoranjan Ghadei, Sangaram Tudu and Ganesh Nayak belong to the 5th Baripada Battalion of the Odisha Special Armed Police.

According to Puruna Bazar police, the mosquito nets used by the jawans were gutted in the fire. Senior police officials visited the injured jawans in the hospital in the morning. The jawans were shifted to Cuttack SCB Medical College and Hospital as their health condition deteriorated.

Additional Superintendent of Police (SP) Bikas Das informed, "We have registered a case under Indian Penal Code (IPC) 435, 336 to investigate this mishap."

## NADIADWALA'S WIFE APPLIES FOR BAIL

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 9

Shabana Saeed, wife of Bollywood producer Firoz Nadiadwala, on Monday filed bail application after a local court remanded her to judicial custody in connection with a drugs case. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Sunday had arrested her after the agency found 10gms of marijuana in a raid at her residence.

Apart from Saeed, the NCB has also arrested four other people who are alleged suppliers and peddlers.

According to the agency first they nabbed one Wahid Abdul Kadir Shaikh alias Sultan Mirza from Andheri (west). During interrogation he revealed that he had supplied marijuana to Saeed. Following this one of their teams rushed to Saeed's residence in Juhu.

The agency has claimed to have found 10gms of marijuana in presence of two independent panch witnesses during the search of her residence. The NCB on Monday produced Saeed before Esplanade court.

The court remanded her to judicial custody till November 23. Her lawyer Ayaz Khan moved a bail application for her as soon as she was remanded to JC.

The court asked the NCB to file a reply on the bail plea and deferred hearing on her plea till Tuesday.

## BJP RIGGED BY-ELECTIONS IN U.P., ALLEGES AKHILESH

Lucknow, Nov. 9: A day before the announcement of the results for by-elections to seven Assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday accused the BJP of rigging the elections in its favour. He, however, did not elaborate on the accusation, and said he would provide detailed information after the results are out on Tuesday.

At a press conference after a number of former lawmakers from the BSP and the Congress joined the party, Yadav said, "The BJP has done 'dhandhli' (rigging), 'dhokha' (fraud) and whatever it could by (misusing) the administration. The government had made such an arrangement that the voters could not come out (to exercise their franchise)."

"I will give detailed information after the results of the by-election are declared on November 10," he said. About the Bihar polls, the SP president exuded confidence that the exit polls predicting an edge for the RJD-led opposition alliance over the ruling NDA would be correct and that the tenure of those who "started spreading hatred in the society" was coming to an end.

Even abroad, those who wanted to rule by dividing the society have been ousted by the people, he said. "I am happy that there is a group of journalists there (in the US), which claimed that in past four years there, a president lied more than 22 thousand times. If the journalists here count the lies of the UP CM and the PM, then it will come out in lakhs."

On demonetisation, he said those who had no black money suffered a lot and those with black money left the country. "The BJP is responsible for the condition of the country's economy. The result of demonetisation is that, till date, the economy of the country has not been able to recover. It not only ended the big businessmen, but also the small traders, farmers and the poor," Yadav said. — PTI

## 19 COAL MINES SUCCESSFULLY AUCTIONED, SAYS JOSHI

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

The Centre on Monday expressed optimism that revenues to the tune of ₹6,565 crore would be garnered annually after successful completion of commercial coal mining auction.

Union coal minister Pralhad Joshi announced this in a press conference, after completion of the bidding process of the auction.

He informed that 19 mines have successfully been auctioned, which is the highest number of successfully auctioned mines in any tranche of coal auctions.

The Centre had launched India's first auction of coal mines for commercial mining on June 18, 2020.

Joshi said that the mines have witnessed fierce competition and companies have offered great premiums. The highest premium remained at 66.75 per cent whereas the average premium remained at 29 per cent.

Out of 38 mines put on auction, financial bids were received for 19 mines, in other words the success of the auction remained at 50 per cent.



Pralhad Joshi



RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav celebrates his birthday with family members in Patna on Monday.

— PTI

## RJD workers told to accept poll result with restraint

Most of the exit polls predict a landslide victory for the grand alliance

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, NOV. 9

RJD leader and chief ministerial candidate for the grand alliance in Bihar, Tejashwi Yadav on Monday celebrated his 31st birthday with simplicity and also urged party workers to avoid visiting his house to greet him.

However, in few places in Patna hoardings and posters were erected to wish him on his birthday and projected him as the future chief minister of Bihar.

His birthday falls a day ahead of the counting of Bihar Assembly election results. With most of the exit polls predicting a landslide victory for the

grand alliance, Tejashwi Yadav wanted to send out a message of restraint and simplicity by celebrating a quiet birthday.

The grand alliance is projected to get more than 122 seats in the 243-member Bihar Assembly in the exit polls.

"It's the personal decision of Tejashwi Yadav to celebrate his birthday with simplicity. So the party humbly requests you (party workers) to avoid visiting his house to personally greet him. Be vigilant and remain in your areas for the counting on November 10", a message released by the RJD on the social media said.

In another message, the party also asked its work-

ers not to indulge in any kind of celebratory firing and improper behaviour towards its opponents on the day of counting on November 10.

"Whatever the election results will be on November 10, it should be accepted with restraint and simplicity. Party will not accept fireworks, celebratory firing and rude behaviour against our political rivals", the message read.

RJD insiders said that the guidelines for Tejashwi Yadav's birthday and counting were issued after a meeting on Saturday evening. Sources said that Tejashwi Yadav was not present in the meeting but he was con-

sulted on the phone.

"The party is concerned about Lalu Yadav's health conditions and doesn't want to celebrate in his absence. All of us are hopeful that he gets bail by the court soon", a party leader said.

The Jharkhand High Court on November 6 had deferred Lalu Yadav's bail hearing to November 27 after CBI sought more time to file a reply in the case.

He has been in custody for two years and was not able to campaign for the Assembly elections for the first time in four decades.

The case pertains to fraudulent withdrawal of ₹3.76 crores from the Dumka treasury between

December 1995 and January 1996.

He has however been granted bail in many other cases related to the scam.

Elections in the state were held in three phases on October 28, November 3 and 7 and results will be announced on November 10.

The election commission has set up 55 counting centres in all the 38 districts of the state.

Security personnel of Central Industrial Security Force, Bihar Military Police and district arm forces have been deployed at the counting centres and observers have been asked to keep a tab on the counting process on Tuesday.

## MP BYPOLLS: BJP SEES NO THREAT TO SHIVRAJ GOVT

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, NOV. 9

Hours before the announcement of results for the crucial by-elections to 28 Assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh, ruling BJP on Monday exuded confidence that there would be no threat to Shivraj government whatever may be the outcome of the polls.

The Opposition Congress which has claimed that the poll results would spring a surprise facilitating the party to return to power in the state has, however, kept its cards closed over its future course of action.

State minister Aurobind Bhadoria told reporters that Shivraj government has already managed majority and there would be no threat to its stability whatever may be outcome of the by-elections.

"BJP has a strength of 107. Seven non-BJP members have already extended support to Shivraj government. Another non-BJP MLA is going to support us. A Congress MLA has resigned taking the effective strength of 230-member MP Assembly to 229. Hence, we do not see any threat to stability of the Shivraj government."

"On the other hand, Congress which has 87 MLAs needed to win all the 28 seats to fancy a chance of returning to power", he added.

He, however, said that the BJP was confident of winning a majority of the 28 seats that have gone to by-elections on November 3.

Congress veteran and former chief minister Kamal Nath returned here from Delhi on Monday after holding discussions with the AICC general secretary in-charge of MP Mukul Wasnik in the national capital on the future course of action by the party.

Nath too kept his cards closed on his future strategy. "We will spring a surprise in the by-elections and return to power in the state", he has said.

## DKS says prof who ended life was forced to pay bribe for V-C's post

VINAY MADHAV | DC BENGALURU, NOV. 9

The suicide by former Bengaluru University Professor N.S. Ashok Kumar, who retired as Registrar of Rajiv Gandhi Health University has kicked up a row in Karnataka, with opposition Congress alleging that the professor was pushed to suicide after losing the race for Bengaluru Central University Vice Chancellor.

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar has demanded judicial inquiry into the death of Ashok Kumar, stating that he was forced to pay ₹2.5 crore bribe to become Vice Chancellor, but was not given the post.

Ashok Kumar had left behind a suicide note saying that no one was responsible for his death and requested his body and eyes be donated. However, since post mortem was conducted on the body, only eyes were donated.

Ashok Kumar, who was living near Silk Board junction with his wife, had served in Bengaluru University Journalism and Mass Communication Department for a long time. He was in close contact with most of the journalists, who had passed out of the department. Before his retirement, he was moved by the government to Rajiv Gandhi Health University as Registrar (Evaluation).

However, he was in the race to become Vice Chancellor of one of the three Universities in Bengaluru.

Last Friday, the government announced a list of Vice Chancellors to various Universities, including Bengaluru Central and the name of Dr Ashok Kumar was not in the list. On Saturday evening, Ashok Kumar was talking to his wife till late in the night. After his wife went to bed, Ashok Kumar went to his study room. When he did not come out till 7 am on Saturday, his wife got suspicious and went to the study room to find him hanging from the ceiling fan.

Shivakumar charged that Ashok Kumar was

forced by officials and middlemen to pay ₹2.5 crore for getting appointed as Vice Chancellor.

Since he did not have money, Ashok Kumar had borrowed money from friends as well as from the market.

"Ashok Kumar was a strong person and he realised that he could not recover money from the coterie of officials and powerful people, to whom he had paid money. Though he has left suicide note saying that no one was responsible for his death, the debate over his suicide is revolving around this. The government should immediately order judicial inquiry into his death from a sitting High Court Judge," he added.

NO | RELIEF Goswami has been arrested in connection with the suicide of an interior designer

## HC denies interim bail to Arnab Goswami

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 9

The Bombay High Court on Monday refused to grant interim bail to *Republic TV* Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami and two others in a 2018 case of abetment of suicide of an interior designer.

The HC noted while rejecting the interim bail pleas of Goswami and the two other accused Feroze Shaikh and Nitish Sarda that "no case has been made out against applicant under section 439 of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) to grant interim bail considering extraordinary jurisdiction to court".

A division bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and M.S. Karnik made it clear in their order that applicant Arnab Goswami can approach Alibaug sessions court and file interim bail application under section 439 of CrPC, and it should be heard and disposed of within four days of filing the application.

Goswami and the two others were arrested by Alibaug police in Maharashtra's Raigad district on November 4 in connection with the suicide of architect-interior designer Anvay Naik and his mother in 2018 over alleged non-payment of dues by companies of the accused.

The Court in its 56-page order noted that the fact that the magistrate did not give notice and opportunity to Goswami to file a protest petition before accepting the report, goes to the root of the matter. The judges held that there was no doubt in their minds that the state government can always direct a further investigation to concerned police officers, as done in the present case.

Merely, because a magistrate accepted the A summary report submitted by police would not mean and preclude the investigation officer to invoke CrPC section 173 to commence further investigation after

intimation to Magistrate HC noted.

The bench noted that "Rejection of interim order shall not be construed as an impediment to the petitioners seeking alternate remedies."

Goswami has now filed a bail application in the Alibaug sessions court. The sessions court is currently also hearing the revision application filed by the Alibaug police challenging a November 4 order of a magistrate's court denying them custody of Goswami and the two other accused in the case and remanding the three in judicial custody.

## KOSHYARI ASKS HOME MINISTER TO ENSURE GOSWAMI'S SECURITY IN JAIL

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, NOV. 9

A day after Arnab Goswami alleged that his life was under threat while being shifted to Talaja jail in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari on Monday spoke to State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh expressing concern over the security and health of the *Republic TV* editor-in-chief, who has been arrested in connection with an

abetment to suicide case. According to the statement released by the governor's office, Koshyari asked the Home Minister to allow the family of Goswami to see him and to speak to him. The Governor had earlier conveyed his concern over the manner of arrest of an editor.

After his arrest from his residence, Goswami was taken to Alibaug, where the court remanded him in judicial custody till November 18.



## IN BRIEF

AUSTRIA RAIDS  
HAMAS, MUSLIM  
BROTHERHOOD

**Vienna, Nov. 9:** Investigators in several Austrian regions carried out raids early Monday on people and organisations suspected of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas groups, prosecutors said.

Authorities said there was no link between Monday's action against suspected Islamic radicals and the attack in Vienna a week ago in which an assailant described as a supporter of the Islamic State group fatally shot four people before being shot and killed by police.

Prosecutors in Graz said over 70 people are under investigation in the new case and 60 properties, including apartments and offices, were searched, the Austria Press Agency reported.

Thirty people were taken in for questioning. Prosecutors said they are looking into suspicions of terror financing, criminal organization and money laundering among other offences. They said the raids resulted from more than a year of investigations.

SUICIDE CAR  
BOMBER KILLS  
FOUR IN KABUL

**Kabul, Nov. 9:** A suicide car bomber in Afghanistan killed at least four people and wounded 40 in an attack on a police base in the country's southern Kandahar province, a provincial official said Monday.

Paramedics still searched the rubble of homes destroyed by the blast hours after the attack late Sunday night in the province's Maiwand district, said Mohammad Ashraf Naderi, the provincial director of Kandahar's public health department.

He said those wounded included both soldiers and civilians.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, though suspicion immediately fell on the Taliban. Kandahar long has been a stronghold for the militants since the 2001 US-led invasion following the Sept. 11 attacks masterminded by al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, whom the Taliban hosted at the time. Violence has soared in Afghanistan in recent months, even as the Taliban and government negotiators hold peace talks in Qatar.

The two sides have made little progress and attacks continue despite warnings from the US that continued violence could derail the talks. Under a February agreement signed with the US, the Taliban have committed to fighting militancy and those who threaten the US in Afghanistan, specifically the Islamic State group and al-Qaida. Earlier this month, Islamic State militants stormed Kabul University, sparking an hours-long gunbattle that killed 22 people.

ERDOGAN'S  
SON-IN-LAW  
QUITS FM POST

**Ankara, Nov. 9:** Turkey's finance minister and son-in-law to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced his resignation on social media Sunday.

Berat Albayrak said on Instagram that he was stepping down from his post for health reasons and would spend more time with his family. Albayrak, 42, was appointed minister of finance and treasury in July 2018, having previously been energy minister for nearly three years.

His resignation follows the dismissal over the weekend of central bank chief Murat Uysal and his replacement by former Finance Minister Naci Agbal. "I decided not to continue my duty as a minister after five years in office due to health problems," Albayrak said.

"I will spend time with my mother, father, wife and children, whom I have neglected for many years out of necessity and who have never spared me their support."

The resignation was confirmed by officials at the Finance Ministry, broadcaster HaberTurk reported, although it was unclear if it would be accepted by Erdogan. In April, Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu resigned on Twitter, only to withdraw the announcement within hours after Erdogan refused to accept it. Albayrak, who has four children with Erdogan's daughter Esra, has presided over a rough period in the Turkish economy.

The country was recovering from a currency crisis in 2018 when the deadly coronavirus pandemic struck and Albayrak's stewardship came under much criticism.

Russia, China will not greet  
Biden till poll result official

Brazil, Turkey, Mexico leaders are also yet to congratulate US President-elect

**Moscow, Nov. 9:** Russian President Vladimir Putin won't congratulate President-elect Joe Biden until legal challenges to the US election are resolved and the result is official, the Kremlin announced Monday.

Putin is one of a handful of world leaders who have not commented on Biden's victory, which was called by major news organisations on Saturday. But President Donald Trump's team has promised legal action in the coming days and refused to concede his loss, while alleging large-scale voter fraud, so far without proof. When Trump won in 2016, Putin was prompt in offering congratulations — but Trump's challenger in that election, Hillary Clinton, also conceded the day after the vote.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Monday that this year is different. "Obviously, you can see that certain legal procedures are coming there, which were announced by the incumbent president — therefore this situation is different, so we consider it correct to wait for the official announcement," he said.

The leaders of China, Brazil and Turkey also are holdouts in offering congratulations. And Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador also said he would wait to comment until the legal challenges over the vote were resolved. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin on Monday offered a similar explanation of why President Xi Jinping has stayed silent. "We understand the presidential election result will be determined following US laws and procedures," he said. Peskov suggested that when the time comes, a congratulations message from Putin would come with all the expected protocol. "I remind you that Vladimir Putin said more than once that he will respect any choice of American people, and will be ready to work with any chosen president of the United States," he said.

For now, Putin's holding back allows a delay in addressing that fraught question of how to improve relations. Although Russian politicians widely lauded Trump's election in 2016, expecting him to make good on his



Aung San Suu Kyi

SUU KYI'S PARTY  
CLAIMS MAJORITY  
IN MYANMAR

**Yangon, Nov. 9:** Myanmar's ruling National League for Democracy party claimed Monday that it has won enough seats in Parliament to constitute an absolute majority and retain power. It made the claim even though the state Union Election Commission has not yet completed releasing results from Sunday's election.

"I can now confirm that we're now securing more than 322 seats," said Monywa Aung Shin, a spokesperson for the NLD information committee. There are 642 seats in Parliament.

There were no reliable official figures available on voter turnout, and the Union Election Commission had earlier said that it might take as long as a week to release full results. A victory by the NLD had been widely expected, though it had been speculated that its deterioration of relations with ethnic minority-based parties, with whom it had cooperated in the last election in 2015, might cut its totals.



Supporters of US President-elect Joe Biden rally at Black Lives Matter plaza near the White House in Washington on Sunday. Joyous celebrations erupted in Washington after Joe Biden was declared winner of the US presidency, as several people poured into the streets of the US capital — some of them chanting, cheering and singing in front of the White House.

promises of improving relations, his administration disappointed Moscow by enacting sanctions, expelling scores of Russian diplomats in the wake of the poisoning of double agent Sergei Skripal and authorising lethal weapons sales to Ukraine.

But Russia is characteristically wary of Democratic US administrations because they tend to be more forward about criticizing Russia on human rights and democracy issues. Biden, in a 2011 trip to Russia while vice president, epitomized that approach in a speech at Moscow State University, the country's most prestigious higher education institute. "Don't compromise on the basic elements of democracy. You need not make that Faustian bargain," he told students.

Tackling the Covid-19 pandemic, economic crisis, systemic racism and climate change are the top priorities for the Biden administration, according to his transition team, as President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris gear up for building back everything "better than ever".

Following a tense week of vote tallying, Democratic presidential candidate

Biden, 77, on Saturday won the state of Pennsylvania and vaulted ahead in the race to become the next president of the United States. Biden's win in the key battleground state put him over the threshold of 270 electoral votes, cutting off all avenues for his opponent, incumbent Republican President Donald Trump.

As Biden's vice president, Harris, 56, will make history in myriad ways, becoming the first woman — and the first woman of colour — to occupy the office. The Biden team updated its website to showcase four policy areas the incoming administration will prioritise: Covid-19, economic recovery, racial equity and climate change. "We aren't just going to rebuild what has worked in the past. This is our opportunity to build back better than ever," said the Biden-Harris transition team on Sunday, giving details of the priorities for the next administration which will be inaugurated on January 20, 2021.

"President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris are confronting a pandemic, an economic crisis, calls for racial justice, and climate change.

The team being assembled will meet these challenges on Day One," the campaign said. Once sworn into office, Biden and Harris will provide the much-needed national leadership to tackle the pandemic and begin our nation's recovery, it said.

The mandate of the transition team is to put in place the infrastructure that can ensure a smooth transition from the outgoing administration and efficiently run the administration on day one. Observing that the American people deserve an urgent, robust, and professional response to the growing public health and economic crisis caused by the coronavirus outbreak, the team said that Biden believes that the federal government must act swiftly and aggressively to help protect and support the families, small businesses, first responders, and caregivers essential to help them face this challenge.

The Biden-Harris administration will always listen to science, ensure public health decisions are informed by public health professionals and promote trust, transparency, common purpose, and accountability in the government, it said. — Agencies

ELECTION WAS  
FUNDAMENTALLY  
FAIR, SAYS BUSH

**Washington, Nov. 9:** Former Republican US president George W. Bush has said that the American people can have confidence that the 2020 presidential election was "fundamentally fair, its integrity will be upheld, and its outcome is clear".

Bush, however, also said that outgoing President Donald Trump has the right to request recounts and pursue legal challenges, with any unresolved issues to be "properly adjudicated." In a statement after speaking to President-elect Joe Biden over phone, Bush said he extended his warm congratulations to Biden and thanked him for "the patriotic message" in his address.

Bush, 74, who was the US president from 2001 to 2009, said that while he and the Democrat leader have political differences, he knows Biden "to be good man who has won his opportunity to lead and unify our country." — PTI

Worldwide virus  
tally crosses 5 cr,  
with 12 L deaths

**Boston, Nov. 9:** The Coronavirus has hit another sobering milestone: more than 50 million positive cases worldwide since the pandemic began.

Johns Hopkins University's Coronavirus tracker reported more than 50.2 million Covid-19 cases globally as of Sunday. There have been more than 1.2 million deaths from the disease worldwide since the pandemic started. The US, with about 4% of the world's population, represents almost a fifth of all reported cases. The country has had more than 9.8 million cases and more than 237,000 deaths from the virus since the pandemic started, according to Johns Hopkins University's data.

Coronavirus cases and deaths also continue to soar in the US, as they are in many countries. The US reported more than 126,000 positive cases and more than 1,000 deaths from Covid-19 on Saturday, according to the university. — AP

Murthy named co-chair  
of Joe virus task-force

**Washington, Nov. 9:** Indian-American physician Dr Vivek Murthy on Monday was named one of the three co-chairs of the Covid-19 task-force that will guide President-elect Joe Biden on dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic that has claimed over 236,000 lives in the country. Dr Murthy, 43, a former US Surgeon General, along with two other co-chairs — Dr David Kessler and Dr Marcella Nunez-Smith — would lead a team of leading public health experts who will advise Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris on the deadly virus. The US is currently the world's worst-hit nation from the pandemic.

"Dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic is one of the most important battles our administration will face, and I will be informed by science and by experts," Biden said. New cases are rising in at least 40 states, with more than 9.3 million total infections and more than 236,000 deaths, a media release announcing the Covid-19 Advisory Board said. "The Advisory Board will help shape my approach to managing the surge in reported infections; ensuring vaccines are safe, effective, and distributed efficiently, equitably, and free; and protecting at-risk populations," he said. — PTI



The empty courtyard of a closed school in Athens. Greek middle and high school students stayed at home on Monday under the confinement measures in Greece, and took their first online classes despite internet connection difficulties, on the first day of the return of distance education in the hope to stem the Covid-19 pandemic. — AFP

UK, EU push for  
Brexit trade deal

**London, Nov. 9:** Negotiators from Britain and the European Union were meeting Monday to seek a breakthrough in gridlocked trade talks, with just days until a deadline to strike a post-Brexit deal.

EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier is due to meet his British counterpart, David Frost, in London, after both sides warned there is little time to

bridge big differences between them. Barnier tweeted that he was "Happy to be back in London today, redoubling our efforts to reach agreement on the future (EU-U.K.) partnership." Although PM Boris Johnson said Sunday that a deal is "there to be done" before the two sides' mid-November deadline, obstacles remain. — AP

Pak media mogul gets bail after 8  
months in three-decade-old case

**Islamabad, Nov. 9:** Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday granted bail to the owner of the country's leading media house, the Jang Group, after eight months he was arrested in a three decades-old land allotment case. Mir Shakilur Rehman, the owner of Jang Group of Newspapers, which includes Geo TV, was arrested on March 12 by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the eastern city of Lahore in a case related to a land he allegedly acquired illegally in the tenure of then chief minister of Punjab, Nawaz Sharif, 34 years ago.

The court granted Rehman bail against a surety bond of Rs 10 million. The Lahore High Court had earlier denied bail to Rehman, after which he had appealed in the Supreme Court. The NAB alleged that Rehman was given 54 plots of land in Lahore's Jauhar Town phase-II by then Punjab chief minister Sharif in 1986 in violation of the relevant laws.

However, after hearing the argument, the top court accepted the bail application. Rehman's arrest was widely condemned by rights bodies and media groups and those linked with his media outlets had been regularly protesting against the prolonged detention. They alleged that he was a victim of Prime Minister Imran Khan's vendetta. — PTI

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However, after hearing the argument, the top court accepted the bail application. Rehman's arrest was widely condemned by rights bodies and media groups and those linked with his media outlets had been regularly protesting against the prolonged detention. They alleged that he was a victim of Prime Minister Imran Khan's vendetta. — PTI

Christian girl sent  
to shelter home

**Islamabad, Nov. 9:** A Pakistani high court on Monday sent a minor Christian girl to a shelter home after she was allegedly converted to Islam and married to a Muslim man. Arzoo, 13 who is a resident of Karachi's Railway Colony, went missing on October 13 and later it was found that she married Syed Ali Azhar, a 45-year-old Muslim man, after converting to Islam, according to the First Information Report regis-

tered by the girl's father. A division bench headed by Justice KK Agha in the Sindh High Court, where the case was being heard, ordered the provincial health secretary to constitute a special medical board to determine Arzoo's age. The board informed the SHC on Monday that the girl is between 14 to 15 years of age. According to the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) record, she is 13 years old. — PTI

## WARRIORS | REMEMBERED

2.5-million volunteer force was largest in history, says Johnson

## UK honours WW-II British Indian Army

**London, Nov. 9:** UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has paid a special tribute to the British Indian Army, the largest volunteer force in history that was put together to fight on the frontiers of the Second World War, for their immense contribution to the victory of the Allied Forces against Nazi Germany. In a message for the Remember Together campaign, set up to honour the millions of Commonwealth troops who

joined the war effort as part of the then British Empire, Johnson said it was important to "remember their sacrifice and celebrate their achievement".

"In every theatre of the Second World War, volunteers from India, Africa and the Caribbean made an immense contribution to victory," said Johnson, in a statement to coincide with the annual Armistice Day commemoration this week for war martyrs. "The British Indian Army

mobilised 2.5 million personnel and became the largest volunteer force in history," Johnson said.

"When Britain embarked on the liberation of South-East Asia, assembling nearly a million troops in the 14th Army, the great majority of the soldiers in this magnificent unit came from India and Africa. Volunteers from as far away as Sierra Leone and Nigeria helped to release Myanmar from Japanese occupation," the

UK prime minister noted. "All of these courageous people chose to fight for freedom under the British flag. Their service helped to defeat a terrible evil and allow millions to live in peace and prosperity," he said. The Remember Together campaign, a joint initiative by the Royal British Legion and British Future as part of the Together Coalition, has been campaigning for greater efforts to commemorate, teach and docu-

ment the service of soldiers from Commonwealth nations in the Second World War.

The Remember Together initiative seeks to address that imbalance, ensuring that the service and sacrifice of all those who fought are commemorated and helping to make remembrance feel relevant and inclusive to people of all creeds and colours in Britain today," the campaign said in a statement. Opposition Labour Party

Leader, Sir Keir Starmer, also commended the bravery of the Indian troops ahead of Armistice Day, which is commemorated annually on November 11 — the date in 1918 which marked the end of the First World War.

"We will never forget the bravery of the 1.5 million Indian soldiers that fought in the British Army in the trenches of World War I, or the allies we stood shoulder to shoulder," he said. — PTI



# DECCAN Chronicle

10 NOVEMBER 2020

## Govt needs to rethink cut in military pension

The proposal emanating last week from the defence ministry's department of military affairs, that is from the office of the Chief of Defence Staff, to cut pensions from several categories of personnel of the Army, Navy and Air Force, doesn't seem to be thought through. In its present form, what it has done is to possibly create grounds for grievance-building across the three services. This is not what its authors may have intended.

The proposal creates a strong disincentive for those seeking premature retirement for officers, junior commissioned officers (JCOs) and other ranks in the logistics, technical and medical services, covering the medical corps, ordnance corps, services corps and the military engineering service. Without these, the fighting jawan on the border, the air warrior in the skies and the soldiers of the combat branches of the Navy, cannot take one step forward.

Those who wish to sign off after even 25 years of commendable service will have half their pension cut, so draconian is the concept. To get full pension, premature release applicants must serve a full 35 years. How is that for "premature" retirement?

Such a procedure does not exist in the civil service at the Centre or the state level, and this makes the idea discriminatory, besides constituting a ground for breeding anxiety and dissatisfaction among even those military personnel who might not be directly affected.

In the Navy and the IAF, which use more technology to be what they are, suspicion of the terms of service may run deeper and could, arguably, act as a strong disincentive for young men and women with technical skills from joining the armed forces, which well-educated Indians anyway avoid, preferring better paid opportunities in civilian life.

We are already in the phase of thinking of theatre commands, instead of the present organisational structure, and integrated defence forces by pooling the assets and resources of the three branches of the military. None of this is possible without a buoyant, optimistic and overhauled and modernised services structure, ethos and environment.

It can be argued that the teeth-to-tail ratio can be improved by happily letting go those who wish to depart, keeping a smaller and fighting trim younger force, and enhancing expenditure manifold on technological scaling up and tending to a revolution in military affairs with greater devotion, much like what China achieved more than two decades ago.

The pension payout is less than salary payout, especially at the more serious levels. So, let people leave. Why should the government grudge them a few years of better paying working life in the civilian sector, besides keeping their regular pension? As for filling the services' requirements, it may be better to hire fresh, young, optimistic, personnel with improved incentives.

The present proposal fundamentally derives from cutting corners — to save funds since the defence budget is lower than previously and much less than China's or Pakistan's. This deserves to be raised (along with education and health). The time for tinkering is gone. Salaries and pensions, along with a technology upgrade and organisational restructuring, must be done on the strength of new contour lines which are yet to be drawn. That must be the first priority of the CDS, not fiddling with pension schemes.

## UAE shows the way

The world is applauding the United Arab Emirates for its milestone reforms that aim to consolidate the rule of law, signal its commitment to tolerance and safeguard women's rights. The most significant are the ones that make it permissible for citizens above 14 to cohabit and mandatory for honour killings to be prosecuted as murders. Alcohol consumption is no longer a crime and suicides no longer punishable. Non-Emiratis may use the laws of their home countries in deciding inheritance. Good Samaritans causing inadvertent harm may not be prosecuted under the new laws. The guiding principle of these changes, which mark the UAE's 50th anniversary as a nation, is that, unless an act constitutes harm to others or their interests as protected by the law, it will not be criminal.

Notably, however, these reforms aren't the result of a power shift. They are market driven and arrived riding on the back of economic concerns. As weaker demand amid lockdowns took its toll on crude oil prices, the UAE felt the need to promote itself as a tourist- and investor-friendly destination. Even earlier, the expat-populated UAE maintained a cosmopolitan lifestyle at the governance level, not effecting the more extreme punishments that it retained on paper. It may even have taken its cue from Saudi Arabia that, in turn, was pushed to the backfoot by an exodus of atheists and women, before announcing piecemeal liberal measures to contain it. That again shines hope. But the real challenges — reforms in the areas of guardianship laws and freedom of movement of Muslim women — demands for which have been raised in Saudi Arabia and which might find a resonance in certain milieus in UAE — remain.

The message that goes out to the world is this — personal and civil laws need not be rigid and can move with the times. It applies equally to all secular, diverse and multicultural nations, such as India. It is a good example for others to follow.

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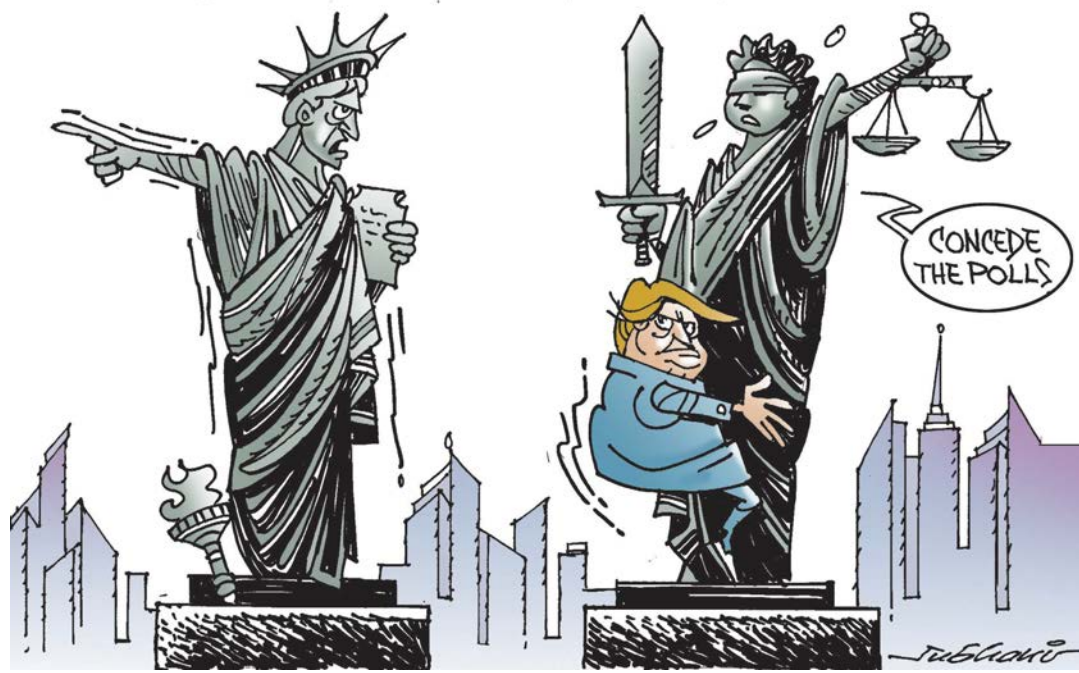
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Subhani



## Why presidential system might not suit India well



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

Donald Trump's eccentricities and extravagances do not in themselves constitute a convincing argument against any system of presidential governance. But a system that allowed its chief executive to ride roughshod over public concerns, substitute populist slogans for well-considered policy decisions and undermine established institutions while encouraging slander and libel against political adversaries can only be catastrophic for democracy.

To heal the wounds of the last four years and, as he puts it, erase the divide between "red" states and "blue" states to uphold only the "United States" must be President-elect Joe Biden's first task. His huge majority, particularly in the popular vote, is obviously an enormous asset. So is his running mate, Kamala Devi Harris, now the vice-president-elect, whose gender and ethnicity make her of historic importance.

But the additional support that President Trump attracted this time, proving the opinion polls wrong, confirms that he is by no means a spent force politically. Millions of Americans worship at the altar of brute force that he is thought to represent; and many world leaders secretly aspire to the methods and priorities that made the US President such a sinister authoritarian figure of formidable power.

It may be revealing that Prime Ministers Narendra Modi, Boris Johnson and Benjamin Netanyahu and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia were probably Mr Trump's best friends among international politicians. Mr Johnson was even called his "visible and emotional clone". But it's not only the end

product that excites comment. The unique US electoral college system ensures that whichever candidate gets the most votes in a few key swing states, including Florida and Pennsylvania, ends up winning the White House. Mr Trump himself lost the popular vote by nearly three million ballots to Democrat candidate Hillary Clinton in 2016, and yet ended up reaching the presidency.

Underlying these and other peculiarities is the fact that the American system — like the French — is really a form of disguised absolute monarchy. France's Bourbon heir, the Comte de Chambord, would have been crowned King in the 1870s if only he had not insisted on replacing the tricolour, adopted during the French Revolution of 1789, with the white Bourbon lily or fleur-de-lis. He even rejected a compromise whereby the fleur-de-lis would be the King's personal standard while the tricolour remained the national flag. The already finalised monarchical constitution had to be hastily adapted to republican requirements.

American monarchism centres on a profound misunderstanding of the role of England's King George III. Believing they had defeated the all-powerful British sovereign in the War of Independence, the Americans sought to model their presidency on the Crown. What Congress didn't realise

**To heal the wounds of the last four years and erase the divide between 'red' states and 'blue' states to uphold only the 'United States' must be Mr Biden's first task**

**Jawaharlal Nehru was as much an elective monarch as any French or American President, but he respected the institutions he had helped to create**

that in demanding that "His Highness the Lord Protector and President of the United States of America" should be styled "His Elective Majesty" and be surrounded by the "Splendor and Majesty" (*sic*) of Europe's royal courts was that George III had no formal constitutional power. His informal influence, although considerable, resulted from a mix of patronage, persuasion and manipulation.

That sounds rather like the operational style of the Trump administration which often seemed to blur the dividing lines between politics and private business, with the President's threatening rhetoric on China contrasting with reports of his little-known undeclared bank account there. The erratic dismissal of one presidential adviser after another, the alienation of weaker neighbours like Canada and Mexico, the mismanagement of the coronavirus pandemic and inability to handle the impact of technology on jobs or the challenge of climate change have helped to diminish the United States on the world stage. So has indifference to the treatment of African Americans and the bullying tactics of neo-fascist gangs across the country.

Mr Trump probably still hopes that the US Supreme Court's 6-3 conservative majority — the result of presidential appointments such as that of Amy Coney Barrett as a judge just days before the election — will ultimately overturn the voters' mandate and reward him with the second tenure of which he, claiming to be the recipient of more than 71 million votes, feels he has

been unjustly robbed.

It took five weeks in 2004 for George W. Bush to establish his right to the presidency. If the system were replicated in India — and every presidential election in the US revives the old debate against the parliamentary system — it might take anything up to 50 years. In fact, such disputes would swamp the electoral process in unending litigation. Many Americans felt in 2004 that the system had treated vice-president Al Gore, who also got a majority of the popular vote and had the better moral claim, shabbily. If legal and constitutional channels were closed, that feeling would explode in India in bloodshed — that is if the ranks of Indian politicians could produce an Al Gore ready to sacrifice ambition to propriety.

The American system has much to commend it. It respects federalism. It sanctions greater accountability. It separates the executive from the legislative process. It provides for direct elections. A series of checks and balances ensures operational fairness. But it evolved out of the American experience; it reflects the American Dream. It does not have to pamper castes, put down communities, and devise sophisticated means of promoting majority interests without provoking allegations of partisanship.

Jawaharlal Nehru was as much an elective monarch as any French or American President, but he respected the institutions he had helped to create. Indira Gandhi continues to be severely castigated for bending institutions to her will but must be given the credit for shying away from contemplated constitutional changes when reminded of the Supreme Court's views on the basic features of India's democracy. India and the world are watching Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Ultimately, it is not the Constitution that is at fault but the men and women who operate it. It is the singer, not the song.

*The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author*

### LETTERS

#### UNIFYING SPEECH

It's a great relief to hear the changed tone, tenor and language from American power corridors. The President-elect Joe Biden's soothing remarks have drowned scathing remarks by outgoing President Trump. The incumbent President should pave way for smooth transition of power.

**Dr D.V.G. Sankararao**  
Vizianagaram

#### POLICE ACTION

Even though Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy was personally monitoring the progress of the case, can we expect the police to work honestly in the future and expect no political interference in police department? (*2 cops held for abetting suicide, DC, Nov. 9*). As long as there is interference, it is impossible to do justice to the common man.

**P. Govardhana Rao**  
Kankipadu, Krishna district

#### POACHING SCARE

It seems the Congress has made arrangements in different hotels in different states to stop poaching of MLAs by NDA in the event of a hung Assembly in Bihar. Why should they give tickets to such people vulnerable to horse trading? We wonder what kind of people are contesting. The only solution seems to be a right to recall the MLA that is not available to voters.

**D.S.P. Rao**  
Kakinada

### 50 YEARS AGO IN

## DECCAN Chronicle

### MPs resent US arms aid to Pak

NEW DELHI, NOV. 9

External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh said in the Lok Sabha today that while the Soviet Union had assured India that it would not make further arms supplies to Pakistan, the United States decision to resume arms sales to that country was a cause for grave concern.

Answering call attention motions on arms supplies by the United States and the Soviet Union which figured in the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha on the opening day of the winter session of Parliament, the Minister said that what was particularly disquieting on the U.S. deal was that Washington tried to justify it on the ground that the new supplies were replacements for the equipment given in the past.

"The mere acceptance, in principle, of any responsibility for replacement becomes a cause for grave concern, the Government told both Houses of Parliament.

Maleeha Lodhi



## What America's post-Trump foreign policy might look like

Never have Americans seen an election in their recent history quite like the 2020 presidential contest. Never has the world watched with such concern the political tensions, bitter rhetoric and legal fights that marked the turbulent run-up to the election. The close race kept people on edge for days following the election as votes were counted in the crucial battleground states.

The American people chose Joe Biden to lead their country in what has been described as "an election of a lifetime" which will have "decade-defining consequences". This has come as a relief to many people in America and beyond. For the international community, the overarching question is how the new occupant of the White House will change American foreign policy in the post-Trump era.

To begin with, Mr Biden will be preoccupied with managing domestic challenges with the pandemic still wreaking havoc across the country, polarisation undermining

national cohesion and racial tensions waiting to be seriously addressed. Uniting a deeply divided country will undoubtedly be his first order of business. As he reiterated after the election: "I will govern as an American President. There will be no red states and blue states. Just the United States of America."

The outcome of the congressional election too will present a challenge as the Senate is likely to remain in Republican control. This will pose formidable problems of divided government and legislative gridlock. Mr Biden will be obliged to deal with an unfriendly Senate which will make governance difficult while his pledge to heal a divided nation will require vigorous efforts.

That Mr Trump got more popular votes now than in 2016 indicates how widespread support remains for "Trumpism". If Mr Trump continues to play an active political role this could further complicate Mr Biden's task.

But as a course correction is also needed in America's relations with the world this will not wait for the domestic agenda to be tackled. Some argue that this is where Mr Biden may have a less constrained hand. What then is a Biden presidency likely to do? The selection of his foreign policy team will be an early pointer to the foreign policy he will pursue.

As someone with rich experience in foreign policy, Mr Biden is expected to follow a more traditional approach fundamentally different from Mr Trump's unpredictable and whimsical policies pursued at great detriment to America's global standing. In contrast to Mr Trump's intensely unilateral "America First" policy, Mr Biden would seek to restore his country's multilateralist credentials.

In broad brush terms a Biden administration is likely to see the revival of a more stable foreign policy, renewal of commitment to multilateralism, reaffirmation of ties

with allies, reversal of Mr Trump's abandonment of the Iran nuclear deal, re-engagement with key international institutions, a return to the Paris climate agreement and recommitment to alliances, especially Nato.

On Afghanistan and the US commitment to withdraw its remaining forces, Mr Biden's policy will not differ much from Mr Trump's. He has long been a critic of America's prolonged military engagement and as vice-president had opposed the military surge President Barack Obama ordered in 2009. Asked in an interview earlier this year what he would do if the Taliban ended up in power, he said: (I have) "zero responsibility. The responsibility I have is to protect America's national interest and not put our women and men in harm's way to try to solve every single problem in the world by the use of force".

A significant departure from Mr Trump's policy would be re-entering the Iran nuclear deal. Mr Biden

has repeatedly asserted he would re-commit to JCPOA if Iran complied and seek to strengthen it with partners. He believes this would help to re-establish US credibility. In the Middle East, it remains an open question how Mr Biden's frequent criticism of Saudi Arabia would translate into policy. His support for Israel will continue to be firm.

The biggest foreign policy challenge will remain America's relations with China. Predictability and stability in US foreign policy would be the most important change from the Trump years. But it is the home front where bitter discord and divisions have made the country virtually ungovernable that will receive the greatest attention from the next President.

*The writer is a former Pakistan ambassador to the UN and the United States*

*By arrangement with Dawn*



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	42,597.43	1.68
Nifty 50	12,461.05	1.61
S&P 500*	3,609.74	2.86
Dollar (₹)	74.14	0.08
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.47	0.07
Euro (₹)	88.07	-0.23
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,183.277	0.53
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.59	3.14
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.876	0.005
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.930	0.110

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## RBI restrictions on Equitas Small Fin. Bank lifted

Equitas Holdings said the RBI has lifted the restrictions imposed on its small finance bank subsidiary in September last year. The RBI lifted the restrictions on Equitas Small Finance Bank (ESFB) subsequent to the listing of its equity shares, Equitas Holdings said in a BSE filing. The RBI had restricted ESFB from opening new branches and froze the remuneration of MD&CEO at the existing level.

## 15th Finance Commission submits report



The 15th Finance Commission submitted its recommendations on the ratio in which taxes are to be divided between the Centre and states over the next five years. The panel, headed by former bureaucrat N. K. Singh, submitted its report titled 'Finance Commission in Covid Times' to President Ram Nath Kovind. Its recommendations for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26 haven't been disclosed as the report is yet to be tabled in Parliament.

## Builders seek watchdog to bust cement cartels

The Builders' Association of India (BAI) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to constitute a regulatory authority for the cement sector to curb "cartelisation and undue profiteering". In the letter, BAI has demanded that the Cement Regulatory Authority should be constituted. Its president Mu Moahan said such an authority will prevent manufacturers from "indulging in unethical trade practices."

## Apparel exporters launch virtual exhibition

The Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPCC) has launched a virtual platform to exhibit garments round the year. Brands and buyers from across the world can visit the virtual fair and place orders. "Holding international exhibitions has become difficult due to travel restrictions. To overcome this, we have set up a virtual platform to exhibit our products 24x7, 365 days a year," AEPCC chairman A. Sakthivel said.



## Investors richer by ₹2.07 lakh crore Sensex and Nifty scale new peaks

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, NOV. 9

The market surged to a new all-time high, surpassing the January 20 peaks, amid strong global and domestic cues as well as sentiments turning bullish ahead of Diwali, an auspicious time to make new investments.

The Sensex closed 704 points higher at 42,597 after touching an intra-day high of 42,645.33 and the Nifty-50 at 12,461 was up 197 points after reaching a new high of 12,474.05 in the sixth straight session of gains for the bulls.

The BSE market capitalisation soared to Rs 165.67 lakh crore, making investors richer by over Rs 2.07 lakh crore. However, the broader market underperformed, with BSE Mid-cap Index gaining 1.01 per cent and BSE Small-cap Index rising 0.57 per cent, against 1.68 per cent jump in the Sensex and 1.61 per cent rise in the Nifty-50.

Hemang Jani, head-equity strategist, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said, "Both Nifty and Sensex finally managed to cross Jan. 20 high levels on the back of strong global cues and positive Q2 results by corporates. There is an expectation of more flows into emerging markets due to weakness in the US dollar and that is reflecting in the strong performance across emerging markets. We expect the Indian markets to remain strong as the major event (US elections) is out of the way and



## OIL SOARS ON VACCINE, SUPPLY HOPES

London, Nov. 9: Oil jumped by almost 10 per cent on Monday for its biggest daily gain in more than six months after Pfizer announced promising results for its Covid-19 vaccine candidate and Saudi Arabia said an Opec+ oil output deal could be adjusted to balance the market.

Brent crude was up \$3.37, or 8.5 per cent to \$42.82 a barrel at 1402 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was up \$3.54, or 9.5 per cent, at \$40.68. Both contracts rose more than \$4 earlier in the session. "Asset prices move

faster than the real economy, and oil and other risk assets are reacting positively today to the Pfizer vaccine news," said BNP Paribas analyst Harry Tchilinguirian.

Pfizer said its experimental vaccine was more than 90 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19, based on initial data.

"In the eyes of traders, a vaccine will help ensure no future lockdowns are needed and will bring people back to the streets, allowing road and air transport to recover," said Rystad Energy's Bjornar Tonhaugen. — Reuters

earnings recovery is becoming stronger."

Heavy buying by foreign portfolio investors continued for the third consecutive session; they were net buyers by Rs 4,548.39 crore. The rupee ended at 74.17 to the dollar against 74.20 on Friday.

According to Japanese brokerage Nomura, "For

India, November started on a positive note led by higher power demand and improving mobility data. The moderation in India's pandemic curve, ongoing lockdown relaxations and festive demand and if this trend persists over coming weeks, November monthly data could improve over October."

## Equity MFs see over ₹2,725 crore outflow

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, NOV. 9

The mutual fund industry's assets under management rose 5.10 per cent to Rs 28.22 lakh in October from Rs 26.85 lakh crore in September, as per monthly data released by industry body Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi).

Most debt fund categories witnessed inflows with cumulative inflows reaching over Rs 1.10 lakh crore.

Equity-oriented schemes witnessed outflows of Rs 2,725 crore while hybrid schemes, which also have equity exposure, witnessed outflows of Rs 1,682 crore on the back of record gains in the equity market.

Other ETFs (exchange traded funds) witnessed outflows of over Rs 2,661 crore due to profit booking on sharp gains in Sensex and Nifty-50.

Gold ETFs saw inflows which was more than four times higher at over Rs 384 crore compared to Rs 90.90 crore inflows in September while fund of funds investing overseas saw inflows worth Rs 338 crore.

"Equity-oriented mutual

funds witnessed net outflows for the fourth month in a row, and the pace of net outflow shot up from the previous month. During the month of October, the segment witnessed a net outflow of Rs 2,725 crore, which is significantly higher than the net outflow of Rs 734.4 crore witnessed in the month of September. Since July, equity-oriented mutual funds have witnessed a net outflow of Rs 9,939.3 crore," said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director-manager research, Morningstar India.

"Except for sectoral / thematic funds and large & mid capFund, all the other equity categories witnessed net outflows during the month. The sectoral / thematic fund category has seen the launch of new funds which garnered good traction from investors," Srivastava said.

The multi-cap category witnessed net outflow for the fifth month in a row and was the worst hit as new regulations mandate minimum investments in mid-cap and small-cap stocks and reduction in exposure to large-caps.

## TCS TO ACQUIRE POSTBANK SYSTEMS FROM DEUTSCHE BANK

New Delhi, Nov. 9: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Monday said it will acquire 100 per cent shares of Postbank Systems AG (PBS) from Deutsche Bank AG.

PBS has been the internal IT provider for Postbank AG, a subsidiary of Deutsche Bank, catering for the German retail banking market. PBS has about 1,500 employees across nine locations in Germany.

The transaction will see the employees of PBS become a part of the Mumbai-based company.

In a regulatory filing, TCS said "100 per cent of the shares will be acquired by TCS Netherlands BV (a subsidiary of TCS) and the "estimated transaction value at a symbolic 1 euro".

The transaction is subject to both parties finalising agreements, besides regulatory approvals.

Headquartered in Bonn, PBS' services include infrastructure operations, application operations and management and development. — PTI

## Huge stimulus needed to offset loss of working hours

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, NOV. 9

The country lost 5,948 crore working hours due to the lock-down restrictions in the last three quarters. An additional direct fiscal stimulus, of the size of 3-5 per cent of GDP, might be required to offset the lost hours, says an SBI analysis.

Going by the International Labour Organisation's calculation of the working hours lost and the size of the fiscal stimulus required, SBI Ecwrap, a State Bank of India research publication, found that the country had lost a cumulative 5,948 crore working hours in the March, June and September quarters.

The maximum hours lost was in the June quarter when the lockdown was the most severe, found the analysis, which has taken Q3 FY20 as the baseline.

Further, using the ILO methodology, SBI Research found that the direct fiscal stimulus of around 3 per cent of GDP provided by India, equals 2,206 crore working hours.

So an additional direct fiscal stimulus to the size of 3-5 per cent of GDP might be required to offset the gap between the equivalent fiscal stimulus hours and the loss in hours, the report said.

## Single premium plans drive life insurance growth in Oct.

FALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, NOV. 9

As business activity has started unlocking, life insurance companies have witnessed an improvement in new business.

The sector continued to report positive growth in October 2020 for the fourth straight month after witnessing a year-on-year drop in first year premiums in Q1 FY21. First year premiums of life insurers grew by 32 per cent last month to Rs 22,776 crore compared with Rs 17,272 crore in October 2019, driven by growth in individual business.

Single premium policies (primarily investment-oriented) have accounted for the growth of premiums in October. If these policies were removed from the analysis, then the overall first-year premiums would have witnessed a decline.

The life insurance sector returned to positive growth in their first year premium collection as business has picked up after the reopening of the economy, which has been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The sector reported an increase of 3 per cent in first year premium to Rs 1.47 lakh crore in year to date (YTD) October FY21 from Rs 1.43 lakh crore YTD October FY20.

But the overall sum assured declined by 7.4 per cent from Rs 25.5 lakh crore in YTD October to Rs 23.6 lakh crore in YTD October FY21.

Life Insurance Corporation of India,



which continues to focus on individual single premium policies and less profitable group business, grew by 36 per cent in October this year to Rs 15,548 crore and by 2 per cent during the seven months ending October 2020 to Rs 103,566 crore.

While private companies reported a growth of 5.5 per cent in YTD October FY21 versus 19.4 per cent in YTD October FY20. Individual single premiums grew by 243.7 per cent in October 2020 versus a decline of 38.8 per cent in October 2019. These policies have grown by 35.6 per cent in YTD October FY21 versus a rise of 29.8 per cent in YTD October FY20, driven by the current interest rate scenario.

"The life insurance business has witnessed a fall in Q1FY21 due to the lockdown and business disruption. However growth has returned to the industry in October 2020," said Care Ratings.

## CCI to probe Google Pay conduct

New Delhi, Nov. 9: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on Monday ordered a detailed probe against internet giant Google for alleged unfair business practices with respect to Google Pay as well as Google Play's payment system.

Google Pay is a digital payments platform while Google Play is the app store on its Android ecosystem. "... the Commission is of

the prima facie view that the Opposite Parties have contravened various provisions of Section 4 of the Act... These aspects warrant a detailed investigation," it said in a 39-page order.

The watchdog has ordered a detailed probe by its Director General (DG), which is the investigation arm, for alleged anti-competitive practices with respect to Google Pay.

Section 4 of the Competition Act pertains to abuse of dominant market position. The regulator says prima facie it is of the view that the "conduct of Google amounts to imposition of unfair and discriminatory condition, denial of market access for competing apps of Google Pay and leveraging on the part of Google, in terms of different provisions of Section 4(2) of the Act." —PTI

## October vehicle retail remains in the red despite festivities

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, NOV 9

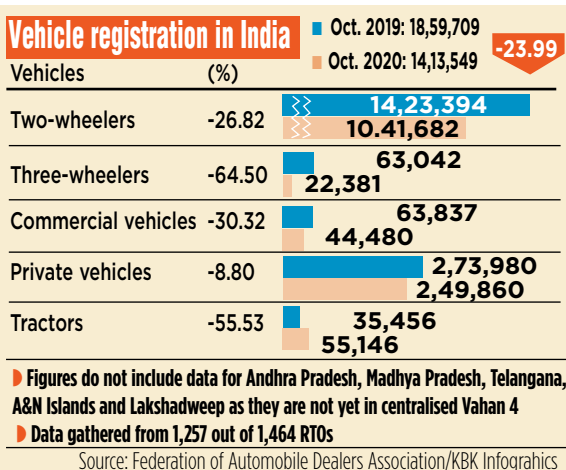
As India enters the last leg of festivities, even though customer walk-ins have improved, healthy conversions are yet to happen.

Except for tractors, sales of two-three-wheelers and passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles were in the red in October; the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations, or Fada, said on Monday.

Fada said passenger vehicle retail sales dipped 9 per cent at 2,49,860 units in October compared to year-ago sales of 2,73,980 units.

However, top automakers, such as Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors, Kia Motor, Mahindra, Honda Cars, Volkswagen, Toyota and MG Motor among others, had shipped 17.31 per cent more passenger vehicles to 3,33,842 cars last month from factory gates to dealerships anticipating high demand ahead of the festive season.

Total automobile retail registered a 5.11 per cent growth over the preceding month in October but



declined 24 per cent year-on-year as the festivals of Navratri and Diwali, when demand usually peaks in the Indian market, were split between October and November this year unlike last year when both the festivals were in October.

According to Fada, two-wheeler sales were down by 26.8 per cent, year-on-year. Commercial vehicle and three-wheeler sales declined by 30.3 per cent and 64.5 per cent, respectively.

However, the dream run for tractor makers contin-

ued as registrations improved by 55.5 per cent year-on-year.

"October continues to see positive momentum on a monthly basis but on a yearly basis the negative slide continues to increase," Vinkesh Gulati, president at Fada said.

"The 9-day Navratri period witnessed robust vehicle registrations but could not save October from going into the red as compared to last year when both Navratri and Diwali were in the same month," he pointed out.

## TALK SHOW APP 'STEREO' TO JOIN SOCIAL MEDIA WAVE

BEN STUPPLES  
NOV. 9

Andrey Andreev pocketed at least \$1.5 billion from Blackstone Group Inc after agreeing last year to sell his stake in the firm behind some of the world's most popular dating apps, including Bumble.

He's already moved on to his next act: Stereo, an audio-centric app that allows people to host, listen to and participate in live talk shows from their phones. Andreev and his team in London and Los Angeles plan on rolling out a full version globally this week after recently launching it in the US.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the vision behind the app is now there," Andreev, 46, said in a telephone interview.

Andreev is betting he can shift the social media landscape with his latest venture. His audio-focused form of social media won't contain real-life images. Instead, users create personalised avatars for their Stereo profiles. Those who have signed up so far include comedian Jeff Ross, a frequent participant of Comedy Central's televised celebrity roasts. Users who attract the most listeners to their broadcasts can make as much as \$25,000.

"It's all about your conversation, your voice, your thoughts and what you share with the people listening," Andreev said. "It's nothing to do with visual. You don't have to worry about your appearance."

Stereo is one of several projects Andreev is working on after leaving MagicLab—as the firm was formerly known—earlier this year with a team of 20 employees as a part of the deal with Blackstone. The PE giant valued the company at about \$3 billion when it bought a majority stake. — Bloomberg



## SHORT TAKES

Laxman's coach  
Ashok Singh diesDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 9

Ashok Singh, who had coached cricketers VVS Laxman and MSK Prasad, died on Monday after a prolonged illness. Last year he underwent surgery for brain cancer. He was 64 and is survived by his wife, three sons and a daughter.



Ashok Singh

The coach's last rites will be held on Tuesday at 12 noon at the Puranapul Crematorium. Ashok coached several Ranji Trophy and junior state cricketers for 30 years. He was also part of the then Ranji Trophy squad but failed to make his debut.

City hold Reds,  
Villa stun Arsenal

**London:** Kevin De Bruyne missed a penalty as Manchester City squandered the chance to close the gap on Liverpool on Sunday while Tottenham's Harry Kane celebrated joining the Premier League's 150 club. A win at the Etihad would have taken the Reds to the summit but the battle between the two dominant powers of recent seasons ended 1-1.

That meant Leicester clung onto top spot after leapfrogging Spurs, who beat West Brom 1-0, after a 1-0 win of their own at home to Wolves. In the late evening kick-off, Aston Villa hammered Arsenal 3-0, condemning Mikel Arteta's men to their fourth defeat in six league games.

Aston Villa, who climbed to sixth place after their win against Arsenal, went ahead at the Emirates when Bukayo Saka turned into his own net. Two goals from Ollie Watkins in the second half put the game beyond Arsenal, leaving Arteta disappointed with his team's showing. — AFP

Ibrahimovic grabs  
point for AC Milan

**Milan:** Zlatan Ibrahimovic missed a penalty before scoring a late equaliser as Serie A leaders AC Milan salvaged a point in a 2-2 Serie A draw against Hellas Verona on Sunday to let rivals Juventus and Inter Milan off the hook after both were held 1-1 in earlier games. "I'll let Franck Kessie take the next one, that would be better," said Ibrahimovic, who has now missed four of the last six penalties he has taken for AC Milan. Stefano Pioli's side are top of Serie A with a two-point advantage on second-placed Sassuolo, who were held to a goalless draw against Udinese on Friday. Champions Juventus drop to fifth, four points behind the leaders after Lazio's Felipe Caicedo scored five minutes into injury time to cancel out Cristiano Ronaldo's first-half goal. — AFP

Bradl bags more  
points for Honda

**Valencia, Spain:** A wet and wild first weekend comes to an end in Valencia as Stefan Bradl walks away with more points while Alex Marquez shows top-ten potential again. Sunday in Valencia got off to a busy start on a dry circuit, the Repsol Honda Team working to refine their dry race setup in just 20 minutes after a weekend of running in the wet. When the lights went out, Alex Marquez once again got off the line well, charging ahead to gain positions in the opening corners. Within just a lap the rookie was inside the top ten, battling first with Jack Miller and then with Dovizioso as he made his way forward. Stefan adapted to the conditions and changes in the front tyre, resulting in a 12th place finish, securing back-to-back points for the first time in 2020.

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL:** Final — Mumbai Indians vs Delhi Capitals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**Women's Big Bash League:** Melbourne Stars vs Adelaide Strikers from 9 am; Melbourne Renegades vs Hobart Hurricanes from 1.35 pm on Sony Six, HD

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## MI charged up for DC

## First timers Delhi stand between Mumbai and 5th IPL title

Dubai, Nov. 9: The unmatched legacy and hegemony created by the 'galacticos' of Mumbai Indians will be thoroughly challenged by a young Mumbaiaiker Shreyas Iyer, who will lead a passionate-but-unpredictable Delhi Capitals in a crack of an Indian Premier League final here on Tuesday.

After 52 days of the most closely-contested and widely-watched edition played on alien land in the backdrop of the raging Covid-19 pandemic, the BCCI can pat itself for pulling off a near flawless tournament that gave people a chance to withdraw from prime time negativity that dominated the air space.

And now, it's the coronation time with IPL's most successful skipper Rohit Sharma itching to win his fifth title amid a stormy couple of weeks.

On the other hand, the Capitals, a team that had flattered to deceive for a dozen editions, will finally realise their potential on the grand stage of T20 cricket.

There hasn't been too many editions where the two most deserving teams squared off in a summit clash unlike this edition where Mumbai reached the finals winning 10 out of their 15 games while Capitals, despite a slump, managed to triumph in nine out of their 16 games.

There haven't been too many teams that have shown the flair and balance of Mumbai Indians, an envy for any opposition.

Sample this scary piece of statistic and one can gauge the might of Mumbai. In all, their players have hit 130 sixes compared to Capitals' 84.

Quinton de Kock's panache has a foil in Rohit Sharma's style although proving a point to all and sundry about his hamstring injury would also be on the Indian's mind.

— PTI



Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma (left) and his Delhi Capitals counterpart Shreyas Iyer pose with the Indian Premier League trophy. — BCCI

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

**OVERALL:**  
● Matches: 27 ● Mumbai: 15 ● Delhi: 12

## MEETING IN 2020

- Mumbai Indians beat Delhi Capitals by 5 wickets in Abu Dhabi.
- Mumbai defeated Delhi by 9 wickets in Dubai
- Mumbai beat Delhi by 57 runs in Dubai (Qualifier 1).

## FOR THE RECORD

- Delhi Capitals entered the final for the first time while defending Champions Mumbai Indians will play in the final for the sixth time.
- Kagiso Rabada with 29 wickets at an average of 17.79 in 15 innings of as many matches, is the highest wicket-taker in this IPL.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

## IYER RELISHES MAKING IPL FINAL

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 9: Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer says qualifying for a maiden IPL final is "best feeling ever" after a roller-coaster journey in which his team has peaked at just the right time.

Delhi Capitals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 17 runs on Sunday to reach the final.

"(It's) Best feeling ever. Journey has been a roller-coaster. The emotions keep going high and low, so you can't have the same set of

routines. Have to keep chopping and changing," Iyer said at the post-match presentation.

"Hoping that in the next game as well, against MI the biggest team, we're able to play freely."

Iyer lauded the collective effort that carried the side through to the summit clash.

"End of the day we stuck together as a family. Very happy with the effort every individual has put in," he added. — PTI

SHAME WE COULD  
NOT MAKE FINAL,  
SAYS WILLIAMSON

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 9: It's a "shame" that Sunrisers Hyderabad could not make the IPL final, feels top batsman Kane Williamson but asserted that the side can take pride in its remarkable fightback to make the play-offs after the early struggle in the tournament.

Williamson's counter-attacking 67 went in vain as Delhi Capitals made it to their maiden IPL final on Sunday.

"Delhi is a very good side. They have been trying to find the rhythm to their play like we were and we managed to for a little period of time. Delhi was able to put it together against us and they played very well," Williamson said during the post-match press conference.

"It's a real shame not to make the finals but I think, particularly in the last three weeks, the guys can be proud of how they played." — PTI

## Sweet 16 for Trailblazers

## Mandhana and Co. won by 16 runs in T20 Challenge final

Sharjah, Nov. 9: Trailblazers defended a modest 118 with a brilliant bowling display to topple two-time champions Supernovas by 16 runs and win their maiden Women's T20 Challenge trophy here on Monday.

The summit clash turned out to be a low-scoring affair and it was not the best advert for women's cricket with strokeplay proving to be extremely difficult on a slow surface.

Barring Trailblazers Smriti Mandhana (68 off 49), the batswomen from either side struggled to get going.

In response to Trailblazers' 118 for eight, Supernovas could only manage 102 for seven.

Bangladesh star Salma Khatun (3/18) eclipsed Radha Yadav's (5/16) sensational five-wicket haul to fashion a comprehensive win for her team.



Trailblazers captain Smriti Mandhana en route to her 68 against Supernovas in the final of the Women's T20 Challenge at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Monday. — BCCI

Nonetheless, it was a welcome return to the field for Indian players who were out of action since March due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

With the dew around, pitches have played better in the second half of the IPL but Supernovas

found it tough from the word go on a slow surface.

After their spinners did well to restrict Trailblazers to a modest total, Supernovas were at the receiving end with left-arm spinners Sophie Ecclestone (1/26) and Rajeshwari Gayakwad

keeping things tight. — PTI

**Brief Scores:** Trailblazers 118/8 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 68; Radha Yadav 5/16) bt Supernovas 102/7 in 20 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 30; Salma Khatun 3/18, Deepti Sharma 2/9).

## BCCI, IPL teams lack coordination on injury issues

Hemant Kenkre  
Silly Point

Even as the Indian Premier League (IPL) culminates with a clash between first time finalists Delhi Capitals (DC) and tournament favourites Mumbai Indians (MI), reports of injuries to few Indian players are a big reason for worry. In a few days from now, the Indian team will embark on their tour of Australia where they will play Twenty20 and One Day (ODI) Internationals apart from a four-Test series that is an ongoing part of the World Championship of cricket.

The latest in the list of the injured lot, picked in the extended Indian squad, is leg spinner Varun Chakravarthi who made his mark in the IPL with a stellar show for Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR). The 29-year old Tamil Nadu bowler has a labrum tear in his shoulder which allows him to bowl but not to throw the ball while fielding.

A few days before the news of Chakravarthi's injury became known, wicket-keeper Wriddhiman Saha sat out of the last two matches of

Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) due to a hamstring tear which makes him a doubtful starter for the Australian Test series. Not a stranger to debilitations, Saha (in the past) came back from India's tour of South Africa in 2018 after injuring his hamstring and had missed the last edition of the IPL due to a thumb injury.

The hamstring problem also affected Rohit Sharma who was not picked by the Indian selectors for the tour along with Ishant Sharma (rib-cage muscle tear) and Bhuvaneshwar Kumar (thigh muscle injury). While Saha, Ishant and Kumar sat out of the IPL once their injuries were diagnosed, Rohit took the field to lead his team after resting for a few matches in the IPL. In Chakravarthi's case, it is learnt that he was carry-

ing the injury for a while and aggravated it by continuing to play in the tournament.

As one looks back in time an evident pattern emerges of many Indian cricketers who pick up injuries while appearing in the IPL or continue to hide existing ones and keep playing till the damage goes out of control. It is here that the coordination between the various franchisees of the IPL and the BCCI comes into the picture. Acquiring an injury is accepted as a part and parcel of the game and there is a standard operating procedure in place, set by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to deal with injury management.

During the IPL, monitoring the fitness of the players comes under the purview of the physiother-

apists of the franchisees who are to report issues (if any) to their counterpart in the BCCI to take further action. While the cases of Ishant, Kumar and Rohit were duly reported to the BCCI by the respective franchisees, Chakravarthi's injury was reported by KKR after their IPL campaign ended. The fact that he was carrying an injury was kept from the BCCI and the Indian selectors who picked him for the Australian tour.

The story continued when Rohit who was left out of all the squads for the Aussie tour, as was recommended by the BCCI physio, continued to play for MI casting doubts on the process of injury management.

He continued appearances for his franchise, inspite of gentle advice of

being cautious by Indian head coach, Ravi Shastri, and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly. While Shastri cautioned Rohit, speaking of his own experience with an injury, Ganguly said that hamstring tears are likely to be ruptured again and it may take Rohit a longer time to come back.

While Indian cricket fans hope that Ishant, Bhuvaneshwar, Rohit and Saha get fit for the Australian tour, it is disheartening to see (what looks like) a lack of understanding between the BCCI and IPL franchisees. The availability of Ishant and Saha will matter most when it comes to team balance for the Test series. A team without the most experienced pacer and the best wicket keeper will find it difficult to challenge the Aussies on their

home turf. The news that skipper and expectant father Virat Kohli may miss two Test matches further disturbs the balance.

More importantly, the scenario affecting Chakravarthi and Rohit brings ahead the need for better coordination between the BCCI and IPL franchisees. Immediate reporting of and managing injuries is an issue that hasn't been managed well.

The way the fitness issues of these two players has panned out, brings to the forefront a pertinent question when it comes to handling injuries of key players. In the case of a BCCI contracted player like Rohit Sharma, who takes the final decision whether the injured player should continue to play the IPL or go for rehab? The BCCI or the franchisees?

Virat to go on  
paternity leave

New Delhi, Nov. 9: India captain Virat Kohli was on Monday granted paternity leave by the BCCI after the first Test against Australia next month, while his limited-overs' deputy Rohit Sharma was added to the red-ball squad after being initially left out due to a hamstring injury.

Kohli will miss three Test matches in Australia to be with his actor wife Anushka Sharma as the couple welcomes its first child in early January.

"...Mr Virat Kohli had informed the BCCI about his plans to return to India after the first Test in Adelaide. The BCCI has granted paternity leave to the Indian captain. He will return after the first Test against Australia in Adelaide," Board secretary Jay Shah stated in a press release.

The centrally-contracted players are eligible for paternity leave and Rohit had availed it during the 2018 tour of Australia.

India's tour of Australia comprises three ODIs, as many T20 Internationals and four Tests. The series begins November 27. The Tests start on December 17 in Adelaide.

Kohli will miss the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne (December 26-30), New Year's Test in Sydney (January 7-11) and the final game at the Gabba (January 15-19).

Cricket Australia, which is already facing a lot of heat from the broadcasters Seven Network, would be worried as the Indian captain is a massive draw and his absence could severely impact the advertisement market.

Shah also gave an update on Rohit's fitness and said he will miss the ODI and T20 series.

## REVISED SQUADS

**T20I squad:** Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (vice-captain and wicket-keeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, T Natarajan.

**ODI squad:** Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Shubman Gill, KL Rahul (vice-captain & wicket-keeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Mayank Agarwal, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper).

**Test squad:** Virat Kohli (Captain), Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Wriddhiman Saha (wicket-keeper), Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, R. Ashwin, Mohd Siraj.

"The BCCI Medical Team has been monitoring Rohit Sharma's fitness and has briefed All-India Senior Selection Committee on the same.

"In consultation with Sharma, it has been decided to rest him for the ODIs and T20Is in Australia to regain full fitness and he has been included in India's Test squad for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy." — PTI

Starc opens up about  
living in bio-bubbles

Melbourne, Nov. 9: Australian pace spearhead Mitchell Starc has become the latest cricketer to raise concerns over the mental well-being of players staying in a bio-bubble as he feels it is "not sustainable" to live in such restrictions for a prolonged period.

In a world scarred by Covid-19 pandemic, cricket is currently being organised in bio-bubbles and the situation is unlikely to change anytime soon.

"It's not a sustainable lifestyle," Starc was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au.

"You're living in a hotel room with zero outside contact. Some guys haven't seen families or their kids for a long time, for those guys in the IPL."

While the cricketers competing in the IPL have been in a bio-secure bubble in UAE since August, many will have to enter another bio-secure arrangement when they represent their respective national teams in the upcoming events.

The Indian team will leave for its long tour Down Under after the IPL final on Tuesday, along with few Australian cricketers such as Steve Smith, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and David Warner, who were part of



Mitchell Starc

various IPL franchises.

Among others, England players will be touring South-Africa for six white-ball matches in less than a fortnight after the IPL, while West Indies players have to depart for New Zealand for another assignment.

"It's tough going we get to play cricket, (so) we can't complain too much but in terms of wellbeing of players, staff and officials, how long can you stay in hubs for?," Starc questioned the model. — PTI