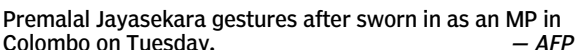


**NEW DELHI WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**TABLOID | 10**

## Sachin Tendulkar's peers talk of legend's craze for vada pav

Vol. 27 No. 204 | 16 PAGES | ₹5.00





## IN BRIEF

**Noida: 2 property dealers shot dead**

**Noida:** Two property dealers were shot dead at a residential society in Greater Noida with police suspecting a link to an old rivalry behind the act, officials said on Tuesday.

The incident took place around 9 pm on Monday when the duo was sitting inside a car at the Ajnara Le Garden residential society in Greater Noida (West), they said. Three people have been identified as key suspects in the episode, which the police said is linked to an old enmity between one of the deceased and a rival group that has claimed multiple lives. "Dalchand Sharma, 30, and Arun Tyagi, 22, were attacked by unidentified persons, who opened fire on them and fled. The two were severely injured and taken to a hospital but did not survive," an official from the local BISRakh police station said. Soon after the incident, in which multiple bullet rounds were fired at the victims, police personnel were deployed and searches launched to nab the assailants, the official said.

**Man held after he fired shots in the air**

**New Delhi:** A 26-year-old man was arrested after he allegedly fired shots in the air outside a grocery shop in Chandni Mahal area, police said on Tuesday. The accused Aarif, who is an auto rickshaw driver, was arrested from Bhajanpura in northeast Delhi, police said, adding that a pistol and seven live rounds were also recovered from him. The incident took place on Monday night outside a grocery shop near a cinema hall in Chandni Mahal area. The accused, also a resident of Central Delhi, was under the influence of alcohol and had bought the pistol to show off, he told police during interrogation. DCP (Central) Sanjay Bhatia said, "We were informed that two rounds were fired in the air outside a shop. Our staff from Chandni Mahal police station reached the spot. "A man named Aslam told the police that an unidentified man fired two rounds in the air near his shop. While searching the area, the police team found one fired round from the spot." Since none of the CCTV cameras installed in and around the shop were operational, several police teams were deployed to collect intelligence and trace the accused, he said.

**Man arrested for robbing woman**

**New Delhi:** A 22-year-old man was arrested for robbing a woman of her valuables by allegedly hitting on her head after entering her house in Southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar area, the police said on Tuesday. The accused, Shah Nawaj alias Sonu, a resident of Batia House in Jamia Nagar, was identified with the help of CCTV footage, it said. The incident took place on September 5 at a house in Batia House in Southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar, the police said. According to the complainant, she was alone at home with her six-month-old child. Around 2.00 pm, an unknown man entered her house, hit her on her head, and fled with her mobile phone, ornaments, and cash worth ₹8,000. Based on her complaint, a case of robbery was registered at Jamia Nagar police station and an investigation was initiated, said DCP (Southeast) R.P. Meena.

**Minor boy detained in murder case**

**Ghaziabad:** The Sihani Gate police here on Tuesday detained a minor for allegedly murdering a Class 12 passout, an official said. The incident took place on Sunday during a dance competition near a school at Block E of Nand Gram Colony, SP (City) Abhishek Verma told PTI. Nitin, 18, was taking a walk outside his residence after having dinner. In the meantime, his friend Ankit reached there and told him about a scuffle. Two boys from another group attacked Nitin with sharp objects. He was immediately rushed to the MMG Government Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. An First Information Report was lodged by the deceased's uncle Jag Mohan against two boys, aged 16 and 17. One of them is still at large, S.P. Verma said.

— PTI

■ 'Current situation is far better than in June' ■ Delhi bars to open today

**Corona cases will 'plateau' after 10-15 days: Jain**

**New Delhi, Sept. 8:** The sharp spike in Covid cases in the national capital will "plateau" after ten days or so, Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain has said, and asserted that home isolation policy has proved a "game changer" in taming the surge, a strategy the city government will continue to pursue.

In an interview, the minister said there was no need to panic, and added that "the current situation is far better than in June" when the city witnessed a big wave of infections. "One of the main reasons why we are seeing such a rise in the number of fresh cases is because we are going aggressive as far as testing is concerned. We have been conducting tests in markets, crowded places, mohalla clinics, hospitals, and many other places.

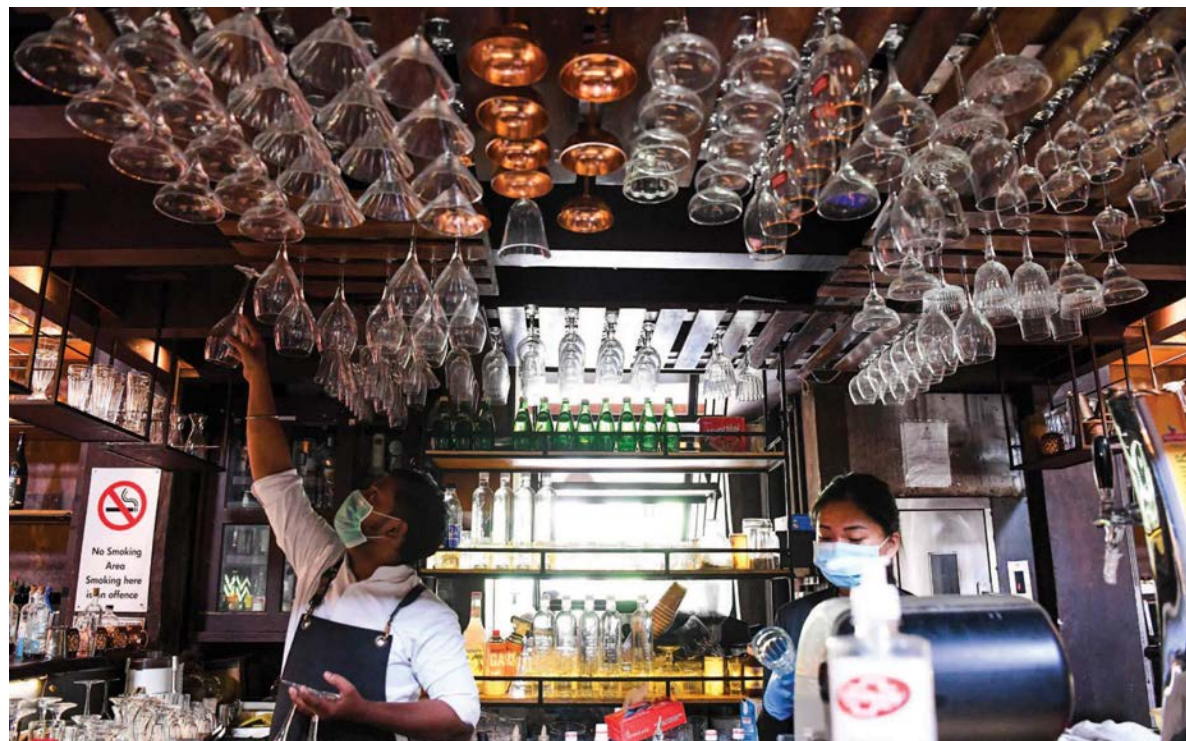
"The scale of testing per day has been almost quadrupled than what was in June," Jain said, maintaining that Delhi is doing more tests per million people than any other state.

The total number of tests done till September 7 in Delhi stands at 18,03,466, and the number of tests done per million was 94,919, according to the Delhi health department.

The minister also asserted that if the city government slows down on the coronavirus testing, it is possible that the number of new cases may come down, but Covid will go on for a long time.

The city had witnessed a massive spike in the number of coronavirus infections in June. Most of the days in the month recorded fresh cases in excess of 2,000 or 3,000. While on June 20, there were 3,630 confirmed cases registered with 77 deaths, on June 23, as many as 3,947 positive cases were recorded in the highest single-day spike in Delhi till date, with 68 fatalities.

In July, cases were reported in the range of



Restaurant employees clean their bar on the eve of the scheduled reopening of puns in New Delhi on Tuesday.

— AFP

1000-2000 daily. Situation improved a bit in August, as the daily count swayed in the range of 600-2000, and only on 30 August, cases were recorded in excess of 2,000.

However, September registered a sharp surge with as many as 18,778 fresh coronavirus cases reported in the first week alone, including 3,256 Covid on Sunday, the highest single-day spike here in 72 days as the city moved towards two lakh-mark with over 4,599 deaths due to Covid so far.

"There is a spike in the number of cases, but the fact is that we have also increased the scale of testing as we don't want to leave even a single person who has been infected untraced, including asymptomatic ones. This spike will come down in the next 10-15 days, and cases will sort of plateau and stabilise by then," Jain asserted.

— PTI

**No. of containment zones over 1K, likely to increase: Officials**

**New Delhi, Sept. 8:** The number of containment zones has crossed 1,000 in the national capital according to Delhi government's data and is expected to rise further with increase in testing, officials said.

According to district officials, the number of containment zones might rise with the increase in the number of coronavirus screening tests being conducted and the consequent climb in the cases of the infection here.

Last month, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced that testing to determine the prevalence of COVID-19 will be doubled to 40,000 per day within a week as

▶ **THE NUMBER** of containment zones might rise with the increase in the number of coronavirus screening tests being conducted and the consequent climb in the cases of the infection here

there has been a marginal increase in the number of coronavirus cases in the city.

The number of Covid containment zones in Delhi rose from 539 on August 1 to 716 on August 27 and subsequently to 976 on September 5.

It breached the 1,000 mark on September 6, when it reached 1,076 and subsequently increased to

1,114 the next day.

There were 437 containment zones marked in the city on July 1 and by July 31, it had risen to 692, according to official data.

On August 3, the containment zone count came down to 496. However, since the last week of August, the number of containment zones has been steadily increasing. On August 25, there were 654 containment zones or localised areas from where infections were reported. The number of containment zones rose to 763 on August 28, and then to 833 on August 31 and to 894 zones on September 2. By September 5, the containment zone count stood at 946.

— PTI

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

As city reported record 3,609 new cases, highest single-day spike after 76 days, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said that he has directed his health minister that doctor's prescription should not be demanded for Covid testing in the national capital. Delhi government, meanwhile, has launched an extensive awareness campaign with chief minister's pre-recorded calls and multimedia messages urging people to follow Covid safety precautions like wearing face cover, following social distancing and getting tested for the virus.

According to the Delhi health bulletin, 3,609 new cases were in the last 24 hours, the highest single-day case count since June 24. About 3,788 cases were reported on June 24. On Tuesday, the Delhi government also achieved its target of conducting 40,000 tests in a day. A record 45,797 tests were done in the last 24 hours. As many as 3,609 new cases and 19 deaths were reported in the last 24 hours in the national capital. Of the total 1,97,135 cases in the city, 22,377 are active and 1,70,140 patients have recovered. The virus-related fatalities have gone up to 4,618.

Delhi high court Tuesday ordered that

▶ **OF THE** total 1,97,135 cases in the city, 22,377 are active and 1,70,140 patients have recovered. The virus-related fatalities have gone up to 4,61

doctor's prescription will not be mandatory from now on for those going voluntarily for RT/PCR test to detect Covid infection in the city. Till now it was mandatory for a person to have a doctor's prescription or symptoms to get tested for the virus.

Mr Kejriwal said he directed health minister Satyendar Jain in the morning that doctor's prescription should not be asked for Covid testing. "Delhi government has increased testing multi-fold. I have directed Health Minister this morning that Doctor's prescription should not be asked for testing. Anyone can get himself tested," Mr Kejriwal tweeted.

The high court said people need to carry Aadhaar card for Delhi address proof and fill up a form as prescribed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for Covid testing.

In view of the recent increase in Covid positive cases, Delhi government scaled up the number of daily tests up to 40,000. Majority of the Covid tests being conducted are rapid antigen tests that give results quickly.

**Use of terrace allowed for south Delhi eateries****AGE CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) allows use of open space or terrace for licensed eating houses. The chairman of SDMC standing committee, Rajdutt Gahlot, said that the corporation has allowed use of open space for licensed eating houses.

"Open space or terrace open to air abutting the licensed eating houses

only will be allowed to use as service area. Applicant will have to submit NOC from the concerned person of the land for using the open space. Permission will be given for serving food in open to air terrace/part terrace (except refuge floor) on submission of building's structural safety certificate by registered structural engineer with clear mention of using terrace for serving food (dining)," Mr Gahlot added.

▶ **OPEN SPACE** or terrace open to air abutting the licensed eating houses only will be allowed to use as service area. Applicant will have to submit NOC from the concerned person of the land for using the open space

According to Mr Gahlot, the SDMC had received a representation from the National Restaurant

Association of India requesting that serving food in open areas and terraces adjacent to eating houses be allowed.

"Considering their representation and in order to generate revenue, we have passed this proposal in the standing committee. Nowadays, restaurants and the dining industry are trying to maximise outdoor space usage due to Covid conditions and social distancing norms," he said.

Mr Gahlot explained that the annual licensing fee for four-star hotels and restaurants would be ₹200 per square feet and lower categories would get licences at half the price. "Eating houses have to take separate permission from the Delhi Fire Service. No cooking will be allowed and stalls for ice-cream or fast-food won't be permitted in the open areas due to fire safety concerns," he added.

**CM should shift slum dwellers to 52K vacant govt housing: BJP****AGE CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta, on Tuesday, demanded Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to relocate slum dwellers, who are going to be removed due to the recent order by the Supreme Court, in 52,000 vacant housing units of the Delhi government.

Addressing a press conference with Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Mr Gupta pointed out that on the one hand the Central government is working diligently to pro-

vide housing to the slum dwellers, on the other hand the Delhi government is running away from its responsibilities.

"Out of the 378 slums on DDA land, 192 cluster tenders have been given and the survey work has started. DDA is currently working on 16 other schemes of 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahan Makan' (in situ development) in which 36,700 houses will be built. DDA, under the Union government, is working to provide housing to slum dwellers," said Mr Gupta. He said that Delhi BJP stands with the slum dwellers and will not allow any injustice with them.

"Around 52,000 housing units were constructed under the Rajiv Ratan Awas Yojna by the former Sheila Dikshit government. We demand Kejriwal to relocate slum dwellers who are going to be displaced due to the removal of 48,000 slums on the SC's order," Mr Gupta said in a press conference.

The SC, in its recent order, has directed the removal of slum clusters along the railway tracks in Delhi within three months. The court has also said that no political interference should be made in the implementation of its order.

**Metro's Blue Line, Pink Line to resume services today**

**New Delhi, Sept. 8:** Delhi Metro's Blue Line and Pink Line are set to resume operations on Wednesday after being closed for 171 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.

On Monday, the Delhi Metro had resumed services on its Yellow Line, with curtailed operations and a slew of measures for safety of passengers and employees. Metro services in Delhi-NCR were closed since March 22 due to the pandemic.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had recently issued guidelines allowing the Delhi Metro to resume operations in a graded manner, following which



A Metro employee cleans a coach ahead of its trial-run on the Blue Line in New Delhi on Tuesday.

— PTI

the DMRC had said it would be done in three stages from September 7-12.

Under stage one, Yellow Line or Line 2 and Rapid Metro were made operational with restricted serv-

ice hours.

Trains are to operate in batches of four-hour each from 7-11 AM in the morning and 4-8 PM in the evening in the first stage, it said.

While nearly 15,500 pas-

sengers availed the Yellow Line and Rapid Metro combined on Monday, on Tuesday, the figures after the end of services at 11 AM, stood at 8,300, officials said.

"As part of the stage-I of graded resumption of metro services, the Delhi Metro will resume operations after 171 days on its Blue Line i.e. Line-3/4 from Dwarka Sec -21 to Electronic City/Vaishali (65.35 km, 58 stations) and Pink Line i.e. Line-7 from Majlis Park to Shiv Vihar (57.58 km, 38 stations) from tomorrow," the DMRC said in a statement.

Services will be available on both of these lines from 7-11 AM in the morning

and from 4-8 PM in the evening along with Yellow Line and Rapid Line which are already operational as per the given timings, it said.

The re-opening of these two Lines will ensure availability of nine of the existing 28 interchange metro stations from Wednesday, including Rajouri Garden (Blue Line & Pink Line); INA Delhi Haat (Yellow & Pink Line); Mayapuri Vihar Phase - I (Blue Line & Pink Line); Rajiv Chowk (Blue Line & Yellow Line); Anand Vihar ISBT (Blue Line & Pink Line) and Sikanderpur (Yellow Line & Rapid Metro), the DMRC said.

— PTI

**Noida cop suspended over cremation of missing man****AGE CORRESPONDENT**

NOIDA, SEPT. 8

A police sub-inspector has been suspended for alleged negligence in identifying the body of a 20-year-old driver in Noida, who had gone missing, and cremating it as "unidentified", officials said.

The man's family was informed about his death and subsequent cremation by the police in a case of wrong identification, more than three weeks after he had gone "missing", they said.

"The action was taken against erring sub-inspector Pavan Kumar, attached

with Sector 39 police station, by Noida DCP Rajesh S. on Monday after a departmental inquiry found him guilty," a police said. Vishal Yadav, who worked as a driver of earth movers, had gone missing on August 17 after which his family approached the Sector 39 police station, where an FIR was lodged on August 20, the spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, an "unidentified" person's body was found in Greater Noida's BISRakh area on August 18, which was cremated after due procedures since nobody claimed the body, the official said.



## SHORT TAKES

## Tripura's healthcare has collapsed: Manik

**Agartala:** Raising concern over the rising number of Covid-19 cases in Tripura, former chief minister Manik Sarkar said that people have lost faith in the public healthcare system of the state. Speaking to reporters, the senior CPI(M) leader said that patients are afraid to get admitted to government hospitals in the state and queues are getting longer at private clinics. There is a shortage of PPE in the state. Doctors are afraid of going to Covid wards as they are not provided with protective equipment. Patients are afraid of getting admitted to the GB Pant Hospital as people over there are not getting treatment. People have lost faith in the public healthcare system," Sarkar said. A six-member team of CPI(M) legislators recently met Chief Minister Biplob Kumar Deb and apprised him of the situation, seeking immediate steps to boost testing, tracing and treatment of the coronavirus infected people, he said. — PTI

## Deputy collector held over bribery charges

**Aurangabad:** A deputy collector and two other employees of the district administration have been detained for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of ₹4.5 lakh in Maharashtra's Parbhani city, police said on Tuesday. A complaint was lodged against deputy collector Swati Suryavanshi, government official Shrikant Karbhajane and engineer Abdul Hakim for allegedly demanding 1.5 per cent of the cost of the developmental work proposal submitted by the municipal council of Gangakhed, an official said. Karbhajane and Hakim had demanded ₹4.5 lakh from the complainant, following which deputy collector also gave her consent for it, he said. A trap was laid by the anti-corruption team at the Collector's office, where Hakim was caught accepting the bribe amount, the official said. — PTI

## Man held for remark against govt hospital

**Chandigarh:** A resident of Ludhiana was arrested on Tuesday for alleged offensive remarks against a govt hospital in Patiala by referring it as the "centre for human organ trafficking", police said. Mandeep Singh, a resident of Jattapura village in Ludhiana, was booked under relevant sections of the IPC and the Disaster Management Act, they said. According to police, Mandeep had uploaded a post on FB last month in which he made disparaging remarks against government Rajindra hospital in Patiala. He referred to the hospital as being the "centre for human organ trafficking". — PTI

## CPI to hold all-India protest on Sept. 14

**New Delhi:** The CPI will observe September 14 as "All India Protest Day" to highlight the state of the economy, according to a statement issued by the party on Tuesday. "The party has decided to organise a protest on September 14, 2020, the day on which the Parliament is to meet. This is to highlight that the Indian economy is in ruins and democracy is in peril," it said. The protest "is to mobilise people against the disastrous policies of the Modi government which have caused massive unemployment, poverty and loss of livelihood. This is to demand that the finance minister has no moral right to continue for her false claims and lies about the economy", the statement said. — PTI

## MeToo: 'Ramani accused Akbar for public good'

**New Delhi, Sept. 8:** Journalist Priya Ramani told a Delhi court on Tuesday that she disclosed the alleged sexual harassment by former Union minister M.J. Akbar around 25-year later because back then there was "a vacuum in law and there was no platform either".

Ms Ramani made the submission before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja through her lawyer during the final hearing of a private criminal defamation complaint filed by M.J. Akbar against her.

In the wake of #MeToo

movement, Ms Ramani in 2018 accused M.J. Akbar of sexual misconduct around 25 years ago when he was a journalist. M.J. Akbar, who later became Union minister, resigned on October 17, 2018 following the allegations.

Senior advocate Rebecca John said that Ms Ramani's tweets were based on her own experience with Mr Akbar.

"Her experience is the fulcrum on which good faith rests. It is validated subsequently by the combined experience of multiple women making similar allegations," Ms John said, adding that many spoke

before her tweet while many spoke later.

She said Ms Ramani made the allegations in October 2018 since there was an "avalanche" taking place in India during the global #MeToo movement and that she felt "compelled to speak" after she saw several women, who had worked under Mr Akbar between 1993-2011, speaking out against him.

She said that Ms Ramani made the allegation in her "good faith" because "it was based on her own experience and that of multiple women who spoke publicly".

"Ramani said it was impor-

tant for women to speak about sexual harassment at the workplace. She hoped that the disclosure would empower women and encourage them to speak up. Silence is not an option. Speaking out on sexual harassment at workplace is in public good," Ms John said. She added that "it was important and necessary for women to speak up. Women are taught that silence is a virtue. This case has come at a great personal cost. I have nothing to gain. By keeping silence I could have avoided (a lot of trouble). But that would not have been right." — PTI

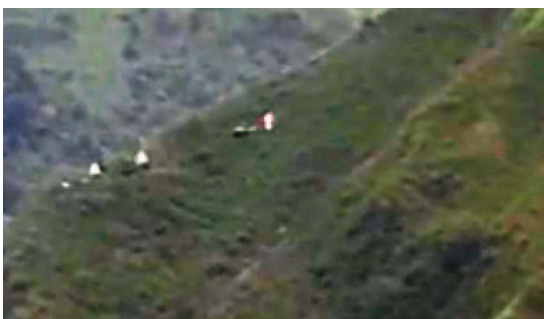
## Nepal hightens helicopter activity around Lipulekh

Coming amid India-China tension, Nepal move raises alarm

**VIKRAM SHARMA**  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 8

Amid heightened tensions between India and China along the Line of Actual Control, hectic activity by Nepal Army — particularly a sudden spurt in helicopter sorties around the Lipulekh pass on the border between Uttarakhand and Tibet Autonomous Region of China near the trijunction with Nepal — is being keenly watched by Indian agencies.

The increase in activity by the Nepal Army, around the time China is said to have deployed surface-to-air missiles and expanding its military base near Mount Kailash, not far away from the Lipulekh pass, suggests that Nepal could well be assisting China in the inhospitable mountain passes



Video grab shows Nepali helicopter flying around the Lipulekh pass.

under the garb of constructing its own outposts along the India-Nepal border, close to the hill state of Uttarakhand, where massive deployment of forces is underway.

Over the past couple of months, Nepal Army choppers have been seen undertaking multiple

sorties — something which sources describe as quite unusual — as the Himalayan nation has, more or less, left the people living on its border with India and China at the mercy of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China. The PLA is said to be not only supplying food and other essentials to the

villagers but is also believed to be slowly taking control of certain areas inside Nepalese territory.

Informed sources told this newspaper that while the annual trade at Purang town in Tibet — where traders from the three countries gather each year — had been suspended this year due to Covid-19, so also the Kailash Mansarovar yatra, the passes remained inaccessible for civilians. This made the task of enhancing its military bases near Mount Kailash easier for the PLA. Satellite images show the deployment of surface-to-air missiles and the ongoing construction activity to expand the base. The pilgrimage to Kailash Mansarovar traverses the Lipulekh pass.



Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, right, welcomes his Indian counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar for their meeting in Tehran on Tuesday. — AP

## Actress Surekha suffers brain stroke, seeks help

**Mumbai, Sept. 8:** Veteran Bollywood and television star Surekha Sikri suffered a brain stroke on Tuesday and has been admitted to the ICU of a hospital here, the actor's agent Vivek Sidhwani said.

The 75-year-old star is "critical but stable" he told PTI.

"She suffered a stroke earlier today. She is in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit). Her parameters continues to be monitored closely. She is critical but stable. She was admitted to a hospital in Mumbai this afternoon," Sidhwani added.

The nurse who looks after Sikri said that she suffered the stroke



Surekha Sikri

around 11 am while drinking juice.

"I couldn't take her to a better hospital as we can't afford high fee. We do not have that kind of money," she told a daily newspaper.

She then appealed to members of film fraternity to support the vet-

eran actress in these tough times. A recipient of three National Film awards, Sikri, a film, theatre and TV veteran, is best known for her performances in *Tamas*, *Mammo*, *Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro*, *Zubeidaa* and daily soap *Balika Vadhu*. She received widespread praise for her role of a grandmother in Ayushmann Khurrana-starrer *Badhaai Ho* (2018).

She won the National Film award for the Best Supporting Actress for the film.

The actor was not doing well at that time and had turned up in a wheelchair to accept the award. — PTI

## BJD MP's wife gets police cover

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO**  
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 8

The Odisha police on Tuesday provided protection to noted Odia film actress and BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty's wife Varsha Priyadarshini, a day after she sought security citing threat to her life. An armed policeman was deployed at the residence of Anubhav Mohanty at Nandi Sahi in Cuttack city, 25 km from here.

Though the celebrity couple's fight is now out in the open with each one accusing the other of being responsible for the marital discord, Varsha is presently staying at her in-laws' place. On Monday, two youths had allegedly entered Varsha's bedroom at her in-laws' house and clicked photos while she was taking her lunch. Following the incident, she had telephoned the police helpline (Dial 100) and sought protection.

## ■ 'But Moscow is not playing mediatory role'

## Russia encourages India and China to talk: DCM

**SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

Russia is "encouraging" India and China to talk to each other but is not playing a mediatory role, Russian Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Roman Babushkin said on Tuesday, while confirming that Indian external affairs minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar would be meeting his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Moscow that will take place on September 10. He also pointed out that both Asian neighbours have "strong armies and nuclear weapons", indicating therefore that Moscow was quite concerned over the Sino-Indian border tensions. Russia, which has close ties with both India and China, has emerged as a key player in persuading both Asian giants to engage in dialogue.

Asked about whether Russia was playing a mediating role between the two Asian giants, the Russian DCM said Russia did not want to mediate unless both sides want it. "Russia ... enjoys good ties with India and China. We hope our Indian and Chinese friends will find a mutually acceptable solution through dialogue. We will be happy to

see positive results," the senior Russian diplomat said.

Opposing any escalation of Sino-Indian border tensions, Mr. Babushkin said, "We should avoid that. Both countries (India and China) have strong armies and possess nuclear weapons.... We are confident both are responsible international powers." He added, "We are encouraging the countries for dialogue to expand common ground ... We are supporting the principle of dialogue ... We would encourage every effort (for peace) ... Russia promotes a political solution and a diplomatic solution (on the current tensions between India and China)."

The Russian DCM also said that while multilateral fora like the SCO and BRICS do not permit discussion on any bilateral issue between two members at the Summits, bilateral discussions can certainly take place between any two member-nations on the sidelines of such Summits. In this context, he confirmed that Indian EAM Jaishankar would be meeting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the forthcoming SCO summit at Moscow. Just recently, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had also met his Chinese counterpart in the Russian Capital.

## India, Russia to ink pact on defence help

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

India and Russia are expected to ink a mutual defence logistics support agreement soon with each other during the annual bilateral summit between the two countries that will take place in October or November this year, Russian Deputy Chief of Mission Roman Babushkin said on Tuesday, adding that Russia has decided not to sell weapons and defence equipment to Pakistan because of Indian "sensitivities and requests". The senior Russian diplomat also said Russian supply of the S-400 missile defence system to India is "on schedule" but added that in case of India asking for the expediting (fast-tracking) of this, the Russian side "will do its best".

India already has similar defence logistics support pacts with the US, France, Singapore and Australia. New Delhi is expected to ink such a pact soon with Japan as well apart from Russia which is India's time-tested friend and key defence supplier.

## India slams China media over NSA reports

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 9

India on Tuesday lashed out at media reports in the Chinese state media, saying comments attributed in those reports to national security adviser Ajit Doval were "false". The MEA said, "We have seen reports in Chinese state media, including in *China Daily* and *Huanqiu Shibao* (*Global Times*), which had attributed some comments



Ajit Doval

to NSA Ajit Doval. These reports are completely false and are not based in facts. We urge the media to refrain from such speculative reporting." These reports had apparently claimed that Mr. Doval had spoken of a long-drawn stand-off with China. Incidentally, the Chinese state media has been particularly hostile and aggressive in its references to India in the past few months.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR -----Telefax:- 0194-2496089, Email ID:- xonmichdk@yahoo.in----- Gist of e-tender NIT No: MHCHD/TS/2020-21/79/e-tendering Dated 05.09.2020					
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir IT, e-tenders, valid for 180 days, are invited from the Registered, reputed & experienced firms as detailed in the NIT for below mentioned works:-					
Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Earnest Money (Lacs of Rs)	Time of completion (in Days )	Position of funds
1	2	3	4	5	6
Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Medical Gases Pipeline system at CHC Kupwara along with operation for Six Months and Maintenance for 3 years	84.00	2000	1.68	20	Available
1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website <a href="http://www.jktenders.gov.in">www.jktenders.gov.in</a> from 05.09.2020 (18.00 hrs) and can be downloaded from 05.09.2020 (18.00 hrs) to 16.09.2020 (15:00 hrs) in two (02) covers. 2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from 06.09.2020 (10.00 hrs) to 16.09.2020 (15:00 hrs) in two (02) covers. 3. Opening of Bids:- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on at 17.09.2020 15:00 hrs or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar. SD/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar DIPK-5201/20 DATED 08.09.2020					

DELHI MEDICAL COUNCIL GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI Room No. 308A, 3rd Floor, Administrative Block, Maulana Azad Medical College, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002 Ph: 011-23237962, Fax: 011-23234416 E-mail: delhimedicalcouncil@gmail.com, Website: delhimedicalcouncil.org	
In exercise of powers conferred under section 30 of the Delhi Medical Council Act, 1997 (Delhi Act 5 of 1997), the Delhi Medical council is pleased to make the changes in the following rules:-	
<b>43. Honorarium for attendance of meetings</b> A sum of two thousand rupees per meeting shall be payable as Honorarium to members of the council, Executive Committee or co-opted members from outside/assessor for attending meetings.	
<b>44. Fees</b> Fees shall be levied by the council as shown below :-	
Application Type	Registration Fees
Change of Name in the register	Rs 2000
Additional Qualification	Rs 2000 per qualification
For issue of a certified copy of an entry in the register	Rs 2000
(a) Provisional Registration-Indian Medical Graduates	Rs 2000
(b) Provisional Registration-Foreign Medical Graduates	Rs 8000
(a) Permanent Registration-Indian Medical Graduates	Rs 2000
(b) Permanent Registration-Foreign Medical Graduates	Rs 8000
Renewal of Registration	Rs 2000
Certificate of Good Standing	Rs 2000
No Objection Certificate	Rs 2000
<b>Dr. Girish Tyagi (Registrar)</b>	



## SHORT TAKES

## A-I job: SC to hear transgender's plea

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it would hear after three weeks a transgender woman's plea challenging Air India's decision to deny her a job as a cabin crew member. A bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna said that the matter has been already notified for hearing and would be taken up after three weeks. Senior advocate Anand Grover, appearing for the petitioner, said that she had filed an application for early hearing of her main petition as the matter is pending since 2017. The petitioner had claimed that to pursue her dreams, she had worked for 13 months in Sutherland Global Services in the airline sector and even at Air India's customer support, both domestic and international, at Chennai. Born in Tamil Nadu in 1989, she said she graduated in engineering in 2010. She underwent the gender surgery to turn into a woman in April 2014. — PTI

## UP lifts weekend curbs on markets

**Lucknow:** The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday revoked its order of mandatory closure of markets on Sunday, reverting to the pre-coronavirus lockdown arrangement. According to a statement, chief minister Yogi Adityanath in a review meeting said the markets will now close as per their earlier schedule instead of the weekly closure on Sunday. He said except containment zones, hotels and restaurants should be made operational in all areas and it should be ensured that all safety measures are followed. The chief minister asked officials to take measures for the protection of health workers from the infection. At the meeting, the CM also directed officials to speed up development work at seven cities under the Smart City Project and asked them for regular monitoring. — PTI

## Elephant found dead in TN reserve forest

**Coimbatore, TN:** A male elephant was found dead, with injuries on its trunk near the reserve forest area of Andiparai Shola in Valparai range in the district, forest department sources said on Tuesday. Based on information by some tea estate workers that they noticed an elephant with its trunk injured and bleeding moving to the forest area last night, forest department officials rushed to the spot and recovered the carcass, sources said. The veterinarians carried out autopsy on the 25-year old elephant this morning and concluded that the death could be due to injuries sustained in a fight with other elephants in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR). The carcass was later buried there, they said. This is the third elephant to die in the ATR this year and 20th in the last seven months in Coimbatore Forest division. — PTI

## NCB arrests Rhea for procuring and consuming drugs

■ **Continued from Page 1**  
a black T-shirt with the message: "Roses are red, violets are blue, let's smash the patriarchy, me and you."  
After her arrest she was taken to Sion Hospital for routine medical examination and Covid-19 test.  
Ms Chakraborty's brother, Showik Chakraborty, was arrested by the NCB last week. Two close aides of Sushant - Samuel Miranda and Dipesh Sawant - and a few others have also been arrested by the NCB in connection with the case.  
Public opinion has been sharply divided on Ms Chakraborty, with some Bollywood stars and TV channels running a vicious, relentless campaign against her.

Ms Chakraborty and her family have faced multiple investigations and questioning since Rajput's death on June 14. She dated him in his last few months.  
The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are continuing their investigation in abetment to suicide, cheating and siphoning of funds and money laundering respectively. If they gather clinching evidence against Ms Chakraborty at a later stage, they can formally arrest the actress and seek her custody separately.



Border Roads Organisation DG Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh visits newly constructed 'Atal tunnel' ahead of its inauguration in Manali on Tuesday. The 9km tunnel will connect Lahual and Spiti to rest of Himachal Pradesh. — PTI

## Born in 'mitti and gohar', I'm immune to Covid: Mantri

**RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY**  
BHOPAL, SEPT. 8

Madhya Pradesh women and child welfare minister Imarti Devi has created a flutter when she asserted that she was immune to deadly novel coronavirus, which has claimed lives of over 70,000 people in the country, since she was born in 'mitti and gohar' (soil and cow dung), a colloquial term used to describe village life.

The minister was reacting angrily to the claim by local media in Gwalior that she tested positive for the virus. A video in which she was heard making the bizarre remarks has gone viral in social media.

"I was born in soil and cow dung. There are so many germs there (in soil and cow dung) that coronavirus will not dare to touch me", she was heard saying in Hindi in the video clip. She was speaking to Gwalior media last week.

Ms Devi, a staunch loyalist of senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, has hogged media limelight several times in the past for making such weird remarks.

The minister had earlier stirred a flutter when she said she had no reservation to sweep floors if asked to do so by her leader Mr Scindia.

## No high-speed Net for J&amp;K, 4G in 2 dists till Sept. end

**Jammu, Sept. 8:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday decided against extending the 4G mobile internet facility outside the districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur, citing apprehensions about possible misuse by those indulging in terror activities.

However, it said the high-speed facility which was restored on a trial basis in central Kashmir's Ganderbal and Jammu region's Udhampur on August 16 would continue till this month-end as there has been no report of its misuse in the two districts.

In an order issued this evening, Principal Secretary in the Home

Department Shaleen Kabra said that after a fresh review of the situation, it has been decided that internet speed will remain restricted to 2G in the rest of the 18 districts. The order said that the law enforcement agencies have furnished credible inputs on terror modules making sustained efforts to provoke sentiments of gullible youths and lure them into terrorist organisations and "indicated potential misuse of high-speed data services in disturbing public order".

The agencies have also expressed apprehensions that the high-speed data services can be misused for assisting infiltration attempts by terrorists. The 4G mobile internet

services in Ganderbal and Udhampur would continue till September 30, unless modified earlier, the order said, adding no report of misuse has been received from the two districts.

In the rest of 18 other districts, the internet speed would continue to be restricted to 2G only, it said. The internet services were snapped in Jammu and Kashmir before the Centre's announcement on August 5 last year to scrap J-K's special status and split it into two Union Territories.

However, the 2G internet facility on mobile phones was restored on January 25 this year.

— PTI

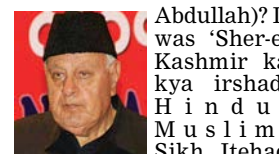
## J&amp;K ex-CM reacts to Ram Madhav's article in 'Greater Kashmir' NC never played politics over religion: Farooq

**YUSUF JAMEEL**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 8

A day after Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national general secretary Ram Madhav accused Farooq Abdullah and Jammu and Kashmir's other regional mainstream leaders of "trying to inject a dangerous Islamist discourse into the state politics", the latter on Tuesday hit back saying that it were the saffron party and its ideological parent Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which are playing communal politics and that the same will result into their extermination.

"If anybody is playing communal politics, it is the BJP and RSS. We never did it and they are playing it and this will drown them," Mr. Abdullah said while speaking to reporters here after offering fateha prayers at the grave of his father and legendary Kashmiri leader Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah commemorating his 38th death anniversary.

He asserted that his National Conference (NC) party never played politics over religion. "NC never played politics over religion. That is our history. What was the motto of Sher-e-Kashmir (Sheikh



Farooq Abdullah (what is the command of Lion of Kashmir?)

The unity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs", he said. He added that the reason behind the Sheikh's becoming instrumental in changing the name of J&K Muslim Conference to National Conference way back in 1938 was because he knew people from all faiths were part of the

## Maharashtra Houses witness ruckus Privilege motions moved against Kangana, Arnab

**BHAGWAN PARAB**  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 8

Maharashtra Legislative Assembly on Tuesday witnessed ruckus over a breach of privilege motion moved by Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik against Republic TV's editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami, who has been accused of using derogatory language against chief minister Uddhav Thackeray and NCP president Sharad Pawar.

A privilege motion was also moved in the Legislative Council against Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut over her remarks comparing Mumbai to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Moving the privilege motion in Vidhan Sabha, Mr Sarnaik said that Mr Goswami has been making disrespectful remarks against ministers, MPs and MLAs on his channel. He has also made "false allegations without any evidence" in connection with the Sushant Singh

## Rhea sent to judicial custody till Sept. 22

**Mumbai, Sept. 8:** A court here on Tuesday remanded Rhea Chakraborty, arrested in a drugs case related to actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death, in judicial custody till September 22 while rejecting her bail plea. She was produced by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) before an additional chief judicial magistrate through video-conference after her arrest. The NCB claimed that

Rajput death case, he added. The BJP members opposed the privilege motion, with the leader of opposition Devendra Fadnis accusing the ruling coalition of stifling the voice of dissent in the media. The protests by opposition members resulted in the house proceedings getting

she was "active member" of a drugs syndicate and procured drugs for Rajput, her boyfriend. The court rejected her bail plea and sent her in judicial custody till September 22 after the NCB said it did not want her custody as it has already questioned her for three days.

Her lawyer Satish Maneshinde said they will approach sessions court for bail. — PTI

## BMC notice to Ranaut for 'illegal construction'

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 8

A day after inspecting her office space, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Tuesday issued a stop work notice to Kangana Ranaut claiming that several illegal alterations have been carried out in her office. The Bollywood actress has been given 24 hours to respond on whether she had any approvals for the works.

The BMC issued a notice under section 354/A of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act on her 'Manikarnika Films' office at Pali Hill area of Bandra. The three-page notice, which was pasted on the office gate, mentions that there are several alterations like a 'toilet being converted into office cabin,' 'unauthorised kitchen in the store room' and 'new toilets being constructed alongside staircase.'

The civic body has asked the actress to produce documentary evidence proving authorisation of these works within 24 hours.

Ms Ranaut has said that the notice was meant to stop leakage work in the office. "Because of the criticism that @mybmc received from my friends on social media, they didn't come with a bulldozer today instead stuck a notice to stop leakage work that is going on in the office," she tweeted.

## 3 arrested for hoisting 'Pak flag' in J&amp;K town

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR, SEPT. 8

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Tuesday claimed arresting three over ground workers of Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) on charge of hoisting Pakistan's national flag in a township of northern Bandipore district of the Union Territory (UT). It also claimed recovering a hand-grenade and other incriminating material from the trio.

A statement issued by the police here said that they registered an FIR and took up investigations after receiving information that some "anti-national elements" at the behest of local active LeT militants have hoisted Pakistani flag at the main marketplace in Hajin township of Bandipore "in order to create fear psychosis and incite anti-national feelings among the common people of the area". "During the course of investigation, officers learnt about the involvement of three individuals involved in the commission of crime. They have been arrested and identified as Mujeeb Shamas, Tanveer Ahmad Mir and Imtiyaz Ahmad Sheikh- all residents of Mir Mohalla Hajin," the statement said.

## Stay on AGP chief's re-election as injunction order violated

**MANOJ ANAND**  
GUWAHATI, SEPT. 8

In what may be called a major setback for regional Asom Gana Parishad, an important constituent of ruling BJP led alliance, the civil court of Guwahati on Tuesday put a stay on re-election of its president Atul Bora while declaring the central committee meeting of the party in violation of the injunction order of the court on August 26 a day before the meeting.

The order also stated that all the resolutions passed in the meeting, including the re-election of Atul Bora as the party president, shouldn't be given effect.



Atul Bora

In the judgement, the court said that the party decided to go ahead with the meeting despite receiving the stay order via WhatsApp on August 26. It added that the meeting violates clause 26 of the constitution of the AGP and the notification issued by the state government through the

State Disaster Management Department.

The court has also issued summons to the violators which includes president Atul Bora, vice-president Keshab Mahanta and Phani Bhushan Choudhury.

The re-election of Mr Bora, also the state's agriculture minister, was seen as an attempt to isolate former two-time chief minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta at a time when the regional party born after the Assam Accord of 1985 has been battling with a factional divide among the top leadership over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

## Despite opposition, flyover named after Savarkar

**Bengaluru, Sept. 8:** Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yediyurappa on Tuesday inaugurated a flyover in the city after freedom fighter and Hindutva ideologue Veer Savarkar, despite opposition from the Congress and JD(S) to naming it after him.

The 400 metre long flyover, constructed at a cost of ₹34 crore by city civic body Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, is on the Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan Road at Yelahanka.

Speaking after inaugurating the flyover, Mr Yediyurappa

Savarkar sacrificed his entire life for the freedom of India. It was apt to name the flyover after Savarkar, a "great patriot", the chief minister said, as he noted that his government was giving priority for the all-round development of all cities in the state, including Bengaluru.

The flyover was earlier scheduled to be inaugurated on May 28 on Savarkar's birthday. However, the government had postponed it at the last minute, citing Covid-19 related restrictions in place.



Veer Savarkar

Both Congress and JD(S) flayed the move to name the flyover after Savarkar. Alleging that the BJP government in Karnataka did not show any interest

regarding the Sangolli Rayanna (18th century warrior and freedom fighter) statue in Belagavi district until there was a public movement for it, the state Congress in a tweet said, "It was shameful and an act of treason to name the flyover after Yelahanka after Savarkar, who was accused of being involved in Gandhi's killing."

JD(S) too, pointing at issues that had cropped up against installing the Sangolli Rayanna statue at Belagavi, said that in such a situation, it was against the move to name a public flyover after Savarkar,

who does not have any connection with Karnataka.

Accusing the BJP government of adopting an "anti-state policy" from the day it came to power, JD(S) said the move to name the flyover after Savarkar too was an extended part of this policy and demanded to know why it had not got it named after any esteemed personality in the state.

JD(S) youth wing had planned a protest against the naming of the flyover, but were not given permission by police and it leaders were detained. — PTI

## Preacher gangraped in Jharkhand ashram

**Godda (Jharkhand), Sept. 8:** A woman preacher was allegedly gangraped at an ashram in Jharkhand's Godda district on Tuesday, police said. A group of men scaled the wall of the ashram around 2.30 am, entered it and held the ascetics and preachers at gunpoint.

There were four women preachers and a sadhu present in the ashram, located in Ranidih in Muffasil police station area. They locked the others in a room and took turns in raping the young

preacher who was staying in the ashram since February, said the police.

The woman has been sent for medical examination and a team has been formed to investigate the matter, police said. Some people have been detained for questioning but the main accused is absconding.

"The woman, who is in her early 30s, is in a state of trauma but we have assured her that we will soon arrest those behind the incident," SP Y.S. Ramesh said. — PTI



## THE ASIAN AGE

9 SEPTEMBER 2020

### KCR's land revenue law may well be momentous

If bureaucrats and officials don't find ways to scuttle the intent and objectives of the sudden, disruptive land legislation Telangana chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao sprung on the state, it has built in within its scope ability to reform and impact and set a benchmark so momentous that it would be chronicled someday as one of India's most important legislations. The legislation is momentous, epic, but the asterisk (with a conditions apply warning) is rather crucial — if the bureaucracy, higher and lower, don't succeed in sabotaging Mr Rao's dream, as they are often wont to do.

As most Indians know, land revenue is one of the most brazenly corrupt functions of all governments and administrations: nowhere in our national democracy is Article 14 followed to its finality — land registrations don't discriminate against any Indian based on gender, region, religion, caste or economic strata — everyone pays a bribe while buying or selling a land. Almost no one's land is safe either. No criminal or political goon in any area can grab or illegally occupy anyone else's land to make a claim based on the proviso of "possession" without the connivance of officials of the land department.

**Will Mr Rao's political determination and foresight be able to withstand the pressures of not just the displaced VROs, but an entire powerful corrupt ecosystem — land mafia, politicians, local goons, officials, touts and 'dispute settlement' lords?**

Records of ownership and transfer are fraught with such complex conditionality and local variances, if one wishes to truly experience a slice of the medieval ages, one can try to buy, sell or seek a migration of purpose of land.

Chandrashekar Rao wishes to change all that, starting with abolishing and removing the village revenue officer (VROs). In an announcement on Monday that was styled to draw parallels with Narendra Modi's "surgical strike" swiftness, Mr Rao decided to order all VROs to hand over all land documents to tahsildars, who would henceforth likely register all agriculture land while sub-registrars will handle non-agriculture land. Mutations will be hassle-free with a single website, named Dharani, will handle all land records and transfers.

In the past, in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, late chief minister N.T. Rama Rao tried to revolutionise land administration and abolished the Patwari system, which earned him huge political goodwill, but the deeply entrenched Patels/Patwaris of Telangana region managed to embed themselves back into the system with a new nomenclature — VROs.

India's current land system was largely conceptualised and designed by Sher Shah Suri, which Mughal emperor Akbar modified and named the mansabdar system, which, with a few changes, lasted the British era and thrived with very few amendments in Independent India.

Can Telangana set a new benchmark in high quality transformation of a vexatious branch of administration and enable our experiencing a basic economic right in a manner befitting the 21st century? Will Mr Rao's political determination and foresight be able to withstand the pressures of not just the displaced VROs, but an entire powerful corrupt ecosystem — land mafia, politicians, local goons, officials, touts and "dispute settlement" lords?

Will Mr Rao deliver a reform that will make history hail him as a great reformer or will he succumb before forces within his own party and government to hijack it remains to be seen. But for once, there is hope.

### Come clean on economy

The galloping number of coronavirus infections, the disastrous performance of the economy and the worrying developments on the border call for a national consensus so that India can take them on effectively. And a lasting consensus can be built only on facts. The onus is on the government to feed the people with them.

Unfortunately, the government seems to have little plan to brief the people about the tough challenges the nation faces. The spite with which the ruling party replies to the legitimate questions posed to it is both unheard of and uncalled for. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, MP, has been asking the government on how it plans to mend the economy, which, he says, tanked because of the wrong policies of the government, including demonetisation and what he calls the faulty implementation of GST. The government can very well explain to him, and the nation, how those measures helped the economy. Instead, they have resorted to ad hominem attacks on Mr Gandhi. When told that the new tax regime systematically killed the small scale sector, the BJP's response was that Mr Gandhi had to apologise to the Supreme Court in the past for "one of his lies". This is unacceptable.

The nation is witnessing a strange economic phenomenon where the people find it difficult to make ends meet; it's day-to-day subsistence for them, while a handful of corporate honchos go on accumulating wealth. The loss of more than two crore jobs during the pandemic is sure to exacerbate the situation. It's not just Mr Gandhi who has expressed disappointment at the way the government responds to the crisis; eminent economists such as Dr Raghuram Rajan have demanded course correction. The BJP and the ruling dispensation cannot go on evading the tough questions; shooting the messenger does not kill the message.

#### THE ASIAN AGE

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Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



### Civil servants under watch for corruption

Transparency and weeding out corruption is a big theme with the Modi sarkar, and it has doggedly pursued this goal despite push-back from the babus. Last year, the government endorsed lists of dozens of officers of the IRS and IT services accused of corruption, sexual harassment and other charges.

The campaign continues. Now, as part of weeding out inefficient and corrupt babus, the Modi sarkar has again reiterated that Central ministries and departments must constantly update the list of officers who have completed 30 years of service. Besides, the register of officers with "doubtful integrity" will be regularly reviewed and updated to help identify babus who can be prematurely retired from service. Sources say that the department of personnel and training (DoPT) issued a letter to this effect on August 28.

Apparently, the names of such officers will be forwarded to the

respective review committees on a routine basis. Cases about the IAS, IPS, IFS and Railway cadre babus will be considered by the respective secretary of DoPT, ministry of home affairs, ministry of external affairs and Central Railway Board, respectively.

Will corrupt babus get the message?

**CBDT CHIEF GETS EXTENSION**  
The chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Pramod Chandra Mody, got his term extended by six months ending February 28, 2021. A retired 1982-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, Mr Mody was slated to retire on August 31. His predecessor Sushil Chandra (now Election Commissioner) too got an extension in May 2017, which was considered a rare exception at that time. Now with Mr Mody's continued tenure, it seems to have become a norm.

The virtually last-minute announcement has finally ended

the hectic speculation in babu circles about the government's plans. Since the beginning of August, the Board has been led by two retired IRS officers, Mr Mody and member Sushil Kumar Gupta. According to sources, there was a keen tussle between the two seniormost babus for the top slot. Finally, it appears that the government decided to go with a tried and tested hand than opt for a new face.

Mr Mody's extension also puts paid to the hopes of Seema Khorana Patra and Prabhash Shankar who were next in line in seniority to have a go at the top post.

**RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL?**  
Shah Faesal's brush with politics in Jammu & Kashmir turned out to be short-lived. The erstwhile IAS topper had made headlines last year when he announced he was quitting the civil service to protest the situation in Kashmir. He founded a political party Jammu & Kashmir People's

Movement (JKPM). Now, more than a year later, he has left his own party and indicated that he might return to the service.

According to sources, the government has not accepted his resignation of January 2019, pending investigation into some of his posts on social media. Apparently, before quitting politics Mr Faesal contacted top officials in the home ministry, and if we believe the rumours, even national security advisor Ajit Doval, before announcing his decision.

Those in the know say that since the government has not accepted his resignation, the door is open for his re-entry into the IAS. However, he will have to withdraw his resignation first.

The website of the department of personnel and training (DoPT) still shows Mr Faesal as a serving officer, even though he plunged into politics for a year and a half. Since his resignation has not been processed, Mr Faesal can still withdraw his resignation. But

more likely the final say in this matter may be a political one than an administrative decision.

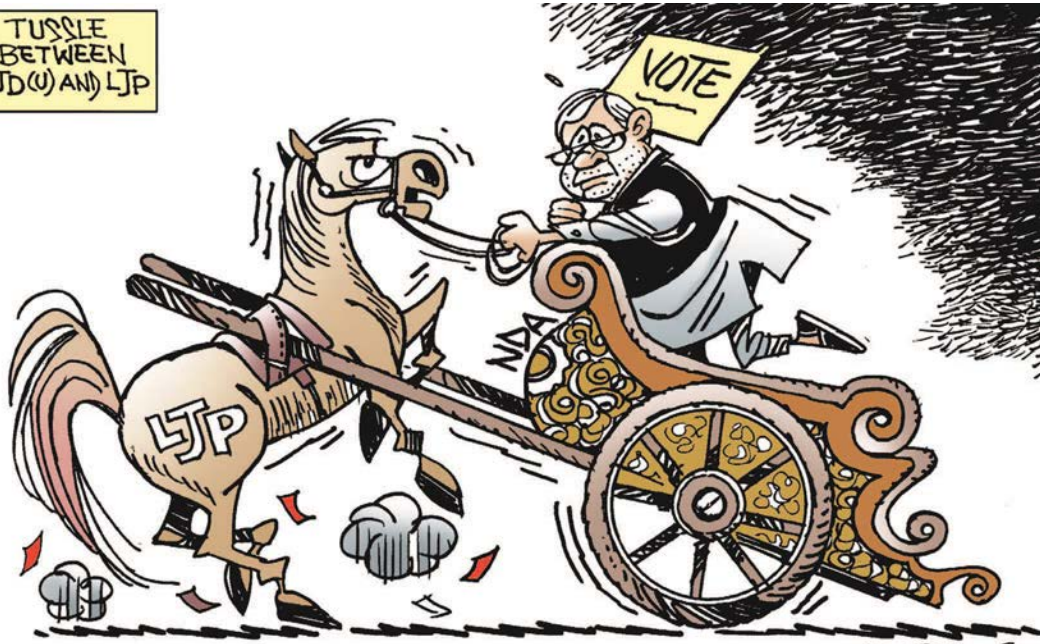
**BABUS MUST BE 'KARMAYOGIS'**  
The Modi sarkar has now added "Karmayogi" to the government's expanding lexicon of buzzwords. The Union Cabinet has given its approval to "Mission Karmayogi", a skill-building programme for civil servants. It has been touted as the "biggest human resource development reform in the government".

According to C. Chandramouli, secretary, Department of Personnel and Training, babus will have to be "imaginative and progressive, energetic and enabling, transparent and tech enabled, and constructive and creative" to face modern challenges. But, all that it sounds like is a fancier word for good old "training".

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@Twitter.com](#). Let's multiply the effect.

TUSSELE  
BETWEEN  
JD (U) AND LJP

Subhani



## Understand the politics behind China tensions



N.V. Subramanian

Politics governs relations between all countries. Military power and diplomacy subsume within politics and cannot be a substitute for politics. This understanding is completely missing in India's negotiation of the ongoing border crisis with China in Ladakh. In contrast, every Chinese action is mediated by politics.

Why have the Chinese suddenly shown a hard side towards India? Unless China's political objectives which led to the border action are clearly understood, it will be of little help to apply purely military and diplomatic solutions to it. Politics has to be met with politics, which this writer has been reiterating from the first days of the Galwan Valley clash.

Before Galwan, there was no history of comparable violence for decades. Both sides patrolled to their respective perceptions of the Line of Actual Control, the de facto border between India and China. Transgressions, tensions and rival claims were handled peacefully by the two armies and by the two nations' diplomats. China always restored the status quo.

Why are the Chinese so adamant about holding on to new territories now? There's a definite trust deficit with the current political leadership. The Army remains the same. The diplomatic institutions have not changed. Only political attitudes, ideologies and the consequent thrusts have changed. Indian politics has changed. The Chinese are responding to that change.

The Chinese have responded to a similar political change even earlier. In the late 1990s, they hardened their stance towards the Atal Behari Vajpayee government for having justified India's

1998 nuclear tests on the grounds of the threat posed by China. Pakistan and China have been extra close ever since, although Vajpayee had tried to undo the damage with China. Vajpayee's Lahore initiative was also aimed at weakening the China-Pakistan nexus. He did not fancy a two-front war.

The past six years have been a process of unlearning Vajpayee's lessons. Pakistan-bashing brings handsome electoral dividends. It was why Prime Minister Narendra Modi was re-elected with a bigger majority in 2019. Then on August 5 the same year, the Lok Sabha saw unfettered revanchism about wresting Aksai Chin from China. The same day, the Chinese protested against the change in Ladakh's status to Union territory, but were completely ignored. They kept on protesting.

The deadly Galwan incident and the preceding tense days took the establishment and "strategists" by surprise. They had forgotten the Chinese protests. Galwan was thought to be a local incident, neither cleared by the Central Military Commission nor the higher authorities in Beijing, which admits of complete ignorance about the inner workings of China.

China is a highly political nation. Every organ and institution of the State, including the powerful military, subsumes within politics, which is solely represented by the Chinese Communist Party and its (current) leader Xi Jinping. Every decision that China takes is political. The Galwan incident was political, although the instrument was military.

The most worrisome aspect of tensions is the zero political trust between India and China. This was not the case before May 2014. Tensions have geographies like bodily diseases. The ten-

sions currently are located in eastern Ladakh. Over-analysing the location and ignoring or underplaying the politics is perilous. Suppose the tension shifts to the eastern sector. Will the emphasis shift to the new location, neglecting politics once again? Will eastern Ladakh be forgotten in the panic about a new area of tension?

Sadly, China does not trust the current leadership in New Delhi. After India's self-admitted "pre-emptive action" in eastern Ladakh in August-end, the conflict risks have risen. China has withdrawn peace guarantees. To the Line of Control (with Pakistan) is joined the entire Line of Actual Control in military tensions. Vajpayee's strenuous efforts to prevent a two-front crisis by building independent relations with both Pakistan and China have now been completely undone.

Since India has an elected government whose character surfaces China's worst instincts, politics has no chance unless New Delhi is willing to try. India has to hold a frank political dialogue with China to understand the root cause of tensions. A resolution will not come from military-to-military talks and narrow diplomacy or armed posturing. Frank political discussions may concern India's perceived drift towards the United States against Beijing; the August 5, 2019 action and the statement on Aksai Chin in the Lok Sabha; India's counter action in Doklam, in the disputed Bhutan-China region, and so on.

The political idea is to turn the clock back to the pre-May 2014 period, when relations were even with China. A two-front

conflict is always a nightmare. A shattered economy, record unemployment, a drifting neighbourhood, peaking Covid-19, the world's disinterest in Sino-Indian troubles, the growing internal divisiveness, and much wrong elsewhere makes accommodative and assuaging politics imperative over military machismo and sterile diplomacy.

Understandably, India does not trust China any longer. But before May 2014, the same adversary was trusted to the extent that the LAC was considered peaceful, compared to the LOC. What changed? A nationalist government came to power in India entrenched in revanchist ideology.

It is also true that Xi Jinping in 2018 was confirmed China's President for life. He is only second to Mao Zedong to get an interminable tenure. Xi shuns Deng Xiaoping's policy of rise by stealth. He is determined to consolidate China's leading position in the world and gather up recalcitrant territories.

At the same time, Xi's hard line has been exacerbated by the boorishness of US President Donald Trump, who has accelerated America's decline. He is the Boris Yeltsin to Mikhail Gorbachev-Barack Obama. Should Joe Biden be elected in November and he sensibly normalises relations with China, India shouldn't be left stranded with no doors open with Beijing for rapprochement.

Dependence on a professional military and career diplomats can only take a nation state so far. States are not built around such people but constituted by politics mediated by citizens. Vajpayee knew that well.

Two courses are open now. There is Vajpayee's way of securing India by politics, which is remarkably Bismarckian. The other way is defiantly blundering along with an adversary most unsuitable for any kind of experimentation.

The writer is an analyst and journalist based in New Delhi

#### LETTERS

#### POLL GIMMICK ONLY

The BJP dirty tricks department is at it again. First, they let the administration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands remove the names of 400 freedom fighters, mostly of Bengali origin and/or having Communist leanings or affiliations, from plaques at Cellular Jail during renovations. Now their stooges are tweeting a newspaper report about the mishap and seeking the Prime Minister's intervention. All so that the BJP can pose as a saviour of history and heritage ahead of the West Bengal elections. What a farce.

Priyanka Mathur  
New Delhi

#### DUTY RELIEF PLEASE

THE SUPREME COURT'S dismissal of a public interest litigation seeking deregulation of petrol and diesel prices and to pass on the benefits to the public owing to a slump in international crude oil rates since April is disappointing since the government is taking money out of people's hands by imposing excise duties on the prices of fuel on an almost daily basis. But what can one say. As a columnist reported on these very pages, the judiciary has lately become more executive than the executive. The people are desperate for relief from their ever-increasing burden of woes.

Sankar Paul  
Chakdaha, West Bengal

#### AMBITIOUS KANGANA

WHY ARE VETERAN actors Shahrulkh Khan and Aamir Khan not being given security even as their families fear for their lives? They are frequently told by political leaders to go Pakistan. But if Kangana Ranaut makes a statement that it is not safe to stay in the city of Mumbai as it has putatively become Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, it gets her "Y" category security with commandos from the central government. This is nothing but hypocrisy and discrimination. It also brings up the question, has Ms Ranaut developed political ambitions?

Bhagwan Thadani  
Mumbai

Every Monday the best letter of the week wins ₹500. Email: [letters.asianage@gmail.com](mailto:letters.asianage@gmail.com).



## IN BRIEF

**B'desh blast toll rises to 27**

**Dhaka:** The death toll from a near-simultaneous explosion of six air conditioners in a mosque on the outskirts of Bangladesh's capital Dhaka rose to 27, with one more victim succumbing to his injuries, according to a media report.

A 30-year-old man died on Monday while undergoing treatment at the Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka, the bdnews24.com reported. Another 10 people were battling for their lives at the hospital, it said on Monday. A gas leak in an underground pipeline caused the six air conditioners to explode almost simultaneously during Friday evening prayers on September 4 at the Baitul Salat mosque in the central district of Narayanganj.

**Bruce Williamson dies of Covid**

**Los Angeles:** Bruce Williamson, the former lead singer of the legendary vocal group *The Temptations*, has died at the age of 49 after a battle with Coronavirus. The singer passed away on Sunday at Mountain View Hospital in Las Vegas, his business manager, Anta Ealy, confirmed to *USA Today*. Williamson was diagnosed with Covid-19 in late August, weeks after having his gallbladder removed, Ealy added. Williamson's son Bruce Alan Williamson Jr took to pen an emotional tribute on Facebook. "There's no words in the world that can express how I feel right now. I love you Daddy. Thank you for being awesome, thank you for being loving, thank you for being Who You Are. I pray to God and we will meet again," he wrote on Monday. Original Temptation Otis Williams also remembered Williamson as "one of our brothers". "Once you are a Temptation, you are always a Temptation," he said.

**TikTok to remove suicide video**

**London:** TikTok says it's working to remove videos of a man apparently taking his own life and banning users that keep trying to spread the clips on the popular social media platform. It's the latest example of the ongoing struggle by big tech companies to police their platforms for harmful content amid increasing pressure from regulators. The video was originally livestreamed on Facebook before being circulated on other platforms including TikTok, the company said. It didn't not give more details about the video but news reports say it has been circulating on TikTok since Sunday and shows a man shooting himself with a gun. Our systems, together with our moderation teams, have been detecting and blocking these clips for violating our policies against content that displays, praises, glorifies, or promotes suicide," TikTok said in a statement. — *AP*

**PAK MINE BLAST DEATH TOLL AT 19**

**Peshawar, Sept. 8:** At least 19 people have been killed and dozens were battling for their lives after six units of the famed marble mines in Pakistan's Ziarat Ghar mountain collapsed, causing large boulders to fall on them, according to media reports on Tuesday.

The mines collapsed on Monday night, instantly killing 12 miners, the *Geo News* reported. The death toll rose after seven more succumbed to injuries at the District Mohmand Hospital. Majority of the deceased include labourers and few others who had gathered at the foothill in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Safi town near the Afghanistan border, about 85 km from provincial capital Peshawar. Mohmand District Police Officer Mohmand Tariq Habib told *Geo News* that 15 to 20 people are still buried under the rubble.

He said the rescue operations were hit due to darkness on Monday night and that heavy machinery had been mobilised on Tuesday for rescue operations. Deputy Commissioner Iftikhar Alam said the death toll is expected to rise, according to the daily. Around 45 labourers were busy in excavation operations when the mine collapsed, the *Dawn* newspaper reported.

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said nine people have been rescued, it reported.

Rescue Officer Bilal Faizi said most of the injured were



Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko (left) speaks during his interview with a group of Russian journalists in Minsk, Belarus, on Tuesday. — *AP/PTI*

**Belarus Oppn activist resists push to leave country, nabbed on border**

**Kyiv (Ukraine), Sept. 8:** A leading opposition activist in Belarus was held on the border Tuesday after she resisted authorities' attempt to force her to leave the country. Maria Kolesnikova, a member of the Coordination Council created by the opposition to facilitate talks with longtime leader President Alexander Lukashenko on a transition of power, was detained Monday in the capital, Minsk, along with two other council members.

Early Tuesday, they were driven to the Ukrainian border, where the authorities told them to cross into Ukraine. Kolesnikova refused, and remained on the Belarusian side of the border in the custody of the Belarusian authorities.

Two other council members, Ivan Kravtsov and Anton Rodnenkov, crossed into Ukraine.

The authorities have applied similar tactics to other opposition figures, seeking to end a month of demonstrations against the re-election of Lukashenko in a vote the protesters see as rigged, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the main opposition challenger to Lukashenko, left for Lithuania a day after the August 9 vote, under pressure from the authorities.

On Saturday, a top associate of Tsikhanouskaya, Olga Kovalkova, moved to Poland after the authorities threatened to keep her



Maria Kolesnikova

in jail for a long time if she refused to leave the country. Belarusian prosecutors have opened a criminal probe against members of the Coordination Council that opposition activists set up after the election to try to negotiate a transition of power.

Several council members were arrested and some others called for questioning. Last week, Kolesnikova announced the creation of a new party, Together. She said the move will help overcome the current crisis, but the party founders' call for constitutional changes has stunned some other opposition council members, who argued that it could divert attention from the main goal of getting Lukashenko to step down.

Cheng — who conducted interviews with international CEOs for *CGTN's* Global Business and BizTalk shows — has not been seen in public since being held, although Australian diplomats in Beijing were able to speak to her on August 27.

"As long as foreign journalists obey the law... they have no reason to worry," foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said.

Cheng is the second high-profile Australian citizen to be detained in Beijing after writer Yang Hengjun was arrested in January 2019 on suspicion of espionage. Earlier this year, Australia warned its citizens they faced the risk of arbitrary detention if they travelled to China. — *AFP*

**Trump supporters rally where far-right group member was shot**

**Oregon (US), Sept. 8:** Hundreds of people gathered in a small town south of Portland for a pro-President Donald Trump vehicle rally — just over a week after member of a far-right group was fatally shot after a Trump caravan went through Oregon's largest city.

Later, pro-Trump supporters and counter-protesters clashed at Oregon's Capitol. Vehicles waving flags for Trump, the QAnon conspiracy theory and in support of police gathered about noon on Monday at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

The rally's organisers said they would drive to toward the state capital, Salem, and most left the caravan before that. A smaller group of members of the right-wing group the Proud Boys went on to Salem, where a crowd of several dozen pro-Trump supporters had gathered.

At one point Monday afternoon, the right-wing crowd rushed a smaller

**Harris will never be Prez: Trump**

**Washington, Sept. 8:** US President Donald Trump has slammed the "rhetoric" against the coronavirus vaccine by Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and running mate Senator Kamala Harris, who he said would "never" be the president.

Trump was apparently responding to a *CNN* interview by Harris on Sunday, in which the vice-presidential nominee said she would not trust the president unless there was a credible source of information that talks

about the vaccine's efficacy and reliability. "She (Harris) is talking about disparaging a vaccine so that people don't think the achievement was a great achievement," Trump said at a Labour Day press conference at the White House on Monday.

"I don't want the achievement for myself. I want something (that's) going to make people better; that people aren't going to get sick with," he said. "That includes therapeutics, where we're doing equally as well." — *PTI*

group of Black Lives Matters counter-demonstrators, firing paint-gun pellets at them. There were skirmishes, and the Black Lives Matter group dispersed shortly after local police arrived on the

scene. Organisers of the earlier vehicle rally said they did not plan to enter Multnomah County, where Portland is located. Oregon City is about 32 kilometres south of Portland. — *AP*

**Stop interrupting witnesses, Assange told**

**London, Sept. 8:** A British judge told WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange on Tuesday that his extradition hearing will proceed without him if he continues to speak from the dock and interrupt witnesses.

Vanessa Baraitser briefly adjourned the hearing at London's Central Criminal Court after Assange

interrupted defence witness Clive Stafford Smith, who was giving evidence.

Assange's outburst couldn't be heard by journalists following proceedings by video link.

Assange is fighting an attempt by American prosecutors to extradite him to the US to stand trial on spying charges.

US prosecutors have

indicted the 49-year-old Australian on 18 espionage and computer misuse charges over WikiLeaks' publication of secret US military documents a decade ago.

The charges carry a maximum sentence of 175 years in prison. Assange's lawyers say the prosecution is a politically motivated abuse of power that

**LABOUR DAY: DON, JOE SPAR OVER ECONOMY**

**Harrisburg, Sept. 8:** Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and President Donald Trump spent Monday diminishing each other's credentials on the economy and understanding of the American worker as the presidential campaign entered its final, post-Labour Day stretch.

While workers live by an "American code", Biden said Trump "lives by a code of lies, greed and selfishness" as he met with labour leaders in Harrisburg. Trump, meanwhile, tried to put the halting economic recovery under the best light in a White House press conference where he said Biden and his mate, Kamala Harris, would "destroy this country and would destroy this economy". — *AP*

will stifle media freedom and put journalists at risk around the world.

Addressing Assange, the judge said: "You will hear things, no doubt many things, you disagree with during these proceedings." "If you interrupt proceedings it is open to me to proceed in your absence," she added. — *AP*

**China says Oz TV anchor detained**

**Beijing, Sept. 8:** China said Tuesday that it had detained a high-profile Australian journalist working for its state media on "national security grounds". Cheng Lei's detention was a new blow to deteriorating relations between the two countries that have seen China warn its citizens of travelling to Australia and vice versa.

In the first comments on *CGTN* anchor Cheng Lei, held since August 14, foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said authorities took "compulsory measures" against her on suspicion "of criminal activity endangering China's national security".

"The case is still in the process of investigation in accordance with the law," Zhao said, adding that her "legal rights and interests are all receiving full legal protection". He did not give further details of the allegations against her.

Cheng — who conducted interviews with international CEOs for *CGTN's* Global Business and BizTalk shows — has not been seen in public since being held, although Australian diplomats in Beijing were able to speak to her on August 27.

"As long as foreign journalists obey the law... they have no reason to worry," foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said.

Cheng is the second high-profile Australian citizen to be detained in Beijing after writer Yang Hengjun was arrested in January 2019 on suspicion of espionage. Earlier this year, Australia warned its citizens they faced the risk of arbitrary detention if they travelled to China. — *AFP*

**Last 2 Oz journalists flown out of China amid diplomatic standoff**

**Melbourne, Sept. 8:** Two journalists from Australia working in China have been evacuated after they were questioned by Chinese police and were forced to seek refuge in Australian diplomatic missions in the communist nation amidst a diplomatic standoff between Canberra and Beijing.

Bill Birtles, the *ABC's* correspondent based in

**CHINA DETAINS 23 IN CRACKDOWN ON INNER MONGOLIA PROTESTS**

**Taipei, Sept. 8:** Police in China's Inner Mongolia region have detained at least 23 people following protests last week against a new policy that replaces Mongolian-language textbooks with Chinese ones in classrooms. The push to use the new textbooks, which started in other ethnic minority regions such as Xinjiang and Tibet in 2017, has prompted demonstrations and school boycotts by ethnic Mongolians in at least five cities and counties in Inner Mongolia.

The 23 detentions were across eight banners, the regional word for counties, according to an *Associated Press* tally of nine local police reports over the past several days. The reasons range from "organising and collecting signatures for a petition" to "picking quarrels and stirring up trouble". Others were for "flagrantly insulting a deceased former leader of the country" and "sharing videos in a WeChat group to obstruct the implementation of the national textbooks policy". WeChat is a popular messaging app in China. The local government is also exerting pressure in other ways.

Authorities in Zhenglan banner announced that they had suspended two members of the ruling Communist Party without pay for failing to carry out the policy. Police in Chifeng city said Monday they handed over Communist Party members, including two elementary school teachers, to a local party disciplinary committee for investigation. — *AP*

**THE AUSTRALIAN**

Government has provided consular support to two Australian journalists in China to assist their return to Australia. Those Australians have now arrived in Australia. Our Embassy in Beijing and Consulate-General in Shanghai engaged with Chinese Government authorities to ensure their wellbeing and return to Australia,

MARISA PAYNE,  
*Oz foreign minister*

Beijing, and Mike Smith, the *Australian Financial Review's* (AFR) correspondent based in Shanghai, boarded a flight to Sydney on Monday night after they were questioned separately by China's Ministry of State security, the report said. They landed in Sydney on Tuesday.

With the two journalists moving out of China, Australia now has no accredited reporter left in the country for the first time since the mid-1970s. Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne in a

statement on Tuesday said consular officials had provided support to the journalists. "The Australian Government has provided consular support to two Australian journalists in China to assist their return to Australia. Those Australians have now arrived in Australia. Our Embassy in Beijing and Consulate-General in Shanghai engaged with Chinese Government authorities to ensure their wellbeing and return to Australia," she said.

Seven uniformed officers simultaneously visited the homes of Smith in Shanghai and Birtles in Beijing on Thursday morning. Both journalists were told they were persons of interest in an investigation into Cheng who was detained last month, the *AFR* reported.

According to *ABC*, the reporters were told they were banned from leaving the country and needed to organise a time to be questioned over a "national security case". Birtles spent four days sheltering in Australia's Embassy in Beijing, while Smith took refuge in Shanghai consulate. — *PTI*

**Pak sessions next week on FATF bills****UN DECRIES ATTACKS ON JOURNOS IN PAK**

**Geneva, Sept. 8:** The United Nation voiced alarm Tuesday at growing attacks on journalists and activists in Pakistan, often amid cries of blasphemy, urging Islamabad to protect those facing threats and probe any violence.

The UN rights office said it was growing increasingly concerned at numerous instances of incitement to violence, both online and off, particularly against women and minority journalists and activists, as well as physical attacks.

It pointed to the case of journalist Shaheena Shaheen, who was shot dead last Saturday by unidentified men in Balochistan's Kech district.

— *AFP*

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— *AFP*

**NAVALNY CASE: UN HR OFFICE SEEKS PROBE**

**Geneva, Sept. 8:** The office of the UN human rights chief is calling on the Russian government to carry out or cooperate with an independent investigation of the reported poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, welcomed the emergence of Navalny from a coma in a Berlin hospital, said office spokesman Rupert Colville. "There was a very serious crime committed on Russian soil," he said. "There appears to be no doubt this exotic and highly deadly substance — Novichok — was used, and clearly there must be a proper investigation." — *AP*

**INDIA, ISRAEL, U.S. WORKING ON 5G TECH**

**Washington, Sept. 8:** India, Israel and the US have earnestly begun trilateral cooperation on digital leadership and innovation, a top American official has said, asserting that it is right that the three countries play a key role in delivering the next generation 5G technology in a way that is "open, interoperable, reliable and secure". The 5G collaboration is the first step and just the tip of the iceberg, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Deputy Administrator, Bonnie Glick, told *PTI* after the US-India-Israel forum on strategic, tech and development/water cooperation discussion last week. — *PTI*

**MONEY | MATTERS****Amazon founder Jeff Bezos tops table while President Trump is ranked 339th****7 Indo-Americans in Forbes' rich list in US**

**New York, Sept. 8:** Seven Indian-Americans have figured in *Forbes'* list of richest Americans, topped by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for the third year in a row. The 2020 *Forbes* list of 400 Richest People in America has been topped by Bezos, 56 who has a net worth of \$179 billion and has occupied the spot of the richest person in the US for the third year in a row. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Cofounder Bill Gates is ranked second on the list with a net worth of \$111 billion.

The richest people in the US saw their wealth swell despite the Coronavirus pandemic's devastated impact on the economy. "Pandemic be damned: America's 400 richest are worth a record \$3.2 trillion, up \$240 billion from a year ago, aided by a stock market that has defied the virus...Even in these trying times mega-fortunes are still being minted," *Forbes* said.

The list has seven Indian-Americans — cybersecurity firm ZScaler CEO Jay Chaudhry, Founder and

Chairman of Symphony Technology Group Ramesh Wadhvani, cofounder and CEO of online home goods retailer Wayfair Niraj Shah, Silicon Valley venture capital firm Khosla Ventures founder Vinod Khosla, Managing Partner of Sherpa Ventures Kavitar Ram Shiram, Airline veteran Rakesh Gangwal and Workday CEO and Cofounder Anel Bhursi. Rounding out the top five on the list are Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg on the third spot with a net worth of

\$85 billion, Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett, ranked 4th and with a net worth of \$73.5 billion and chairman, chief technology officer and co-founder of software giant Oracle Larry Ellison, ranked 5th with a net worth of \$72 billion.

President Donald Trump is ranked 339th on the list with a net worth of \$2.5 billion. Chaudhry, 61 is ranked 85th on the list with a net worth of \$6.9 billion. Wadhvani, 73 has been ranked 238th on the list and has a net worth of

\$3.4 billion. His Symphony Technology Group brings in \$2.5 billion in annual revenues and Wadhvani combined nine of his companies that were AI-focused into a new group called SymphonyAI in 2017.

On the 299th spot is Shah, 46, who has a net worth of \$2.8 billion. Khosla, 65 is ranked 353rd with a net worth of \$2.4 billion. Khosla cofounded computer hardware firm Sun Microsystems in 1982 and spent 18 years at venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers

before launching his own fund. On the 359th spot is Shiram, 63, who has a net worth of \$2.3 billion.

Gangwal, 67 is ranked 359th on the list and has a net worth of \$2.3 billion. On the 359th spot is Bhursi with a net worth of \$2.3 billion. Bhursi is CEO of business software firm Workday, which he cofounded with Dave Duffield, the founder of PeopleSoft. Bhursi started his career in the early 1990s at business software firm PeopleSoft, where he rose to become vice chairman. — *PTI*



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,365.35	-0.14
Nifty 50	11,317.35	-0.33
S&P 500*	3,361.59	-1.91
Dollar (₹)	73.59	-0.32
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.58	0.41
Euro (₹)	86.97	-0.11
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,989.122	0.23
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	40.14	-1.87
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.056	0.063
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.667	0.056

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

Over 42 cr poor given ₹68,820 cr under PMGKY

The finance ministry said more than 42 crore people have received Rs 68,820-crore assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. As per the latest data, Rs 17,891 crore has gone towards payment of first instalment of PM-Kisan. Under the scheme, 8.94 crore beneficiaries got Rs 2,000 in their accounts. Also, Rs 30,925 crore was credited to 20.6 crore women Jan Dhan account-holders in 3 instalments of Rs 500 each.

Railways generate over 8L man-days under Garib Kalyan



The Railways have generated more than 8 lakh man-days of work in six states under a scheme launched in June this year, the ministry said. The Garib Kalyan Roigar Abhiyaan was launched with an initial funding of Rs 50,000 crore. The Railways are executing various works under it, including construction of approach roads for level crossings, development and cleaning of silted waterways, trenches and drains, etc.

Japans economy shrinks 28% in second quarter

Japan's economy shrank at a record rate in the April-June quarter, worse than initially estimated. The Cabinet Office said Japan's seasonally adjusted real GDP contracted at an annualised rate of 28.1 per cent, worse than the 27.8 per cent figure given last month. Other data showed cash earnings improving somewhat, and consumer spending and other business activity is expected to rebound.

Samsung to create 5G infra for Verizon

Samsung Electronics Co will develop 5G network infrastructure for Verizon Communications under a \$6.65 billion deal. The contract runs through 2025, according to a Samsung corporate filing. Samsung and Verizon have worked together before. In 2018, Samsung technology was behind a 5G home service that Verizon offered to customers in some US states. China's Huawei Technologies wasn't in the running for the contract.

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■ Pain may persist for power, infra firms Small gains for large sectors from recast

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, SEPT. 8

The guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India based on K.V. Kamath committee recommendations may help bail out borrowers in real estate, traders, hotels/restaurants sectors, but resolving stress in lumpy power and infrastructure sectors through this mechanism would be a challenge without economic revival, say analysts.

The Kamath committee, which suggested restructuring of Covid-stressed corporate loans across 26 sectors, identified five key ratios with different limits across sectors to be used as the threshold in implementing a resolution plan. According to the panel, sectors affected by Covid-19 account for Rs 38 lakh crore of banking sector debt, forming 37 per cent of the total banking system debt.

A one-time restructuring, including loan moratorium extensions, for stressed companies and individuals could delay or help moderate the bad loan (NPA) pain in the near to medium-term for the banking sector.

Anand Dama, banking analyst at Emkay Global, said, "We believe that the current corporate one-time restructuring framework for only standard cases with maximum tenor extension of two years in identified stressed sectors... (due to) limited time period, upfront heavy provisioning requirement,



stringent financial thresholds for eligibility and supervisory mechanism is far better than corporate debt restructuring which was extensively used to suppress NPAs and had a success rate of as low as 15 per cent. We believe that the restructuring mechanism may help the stressed borrowers mainly in real estate, traders, hotels/restaurants, etc., but resolving stress in lumpy power/infra sector through this mechanism will be challenging without economic revival and sectors specific packages/initiatives by the government."

Niranjan Hiranandani, president, ASSOCHAM, said, "No doubt, the threshold for five ratios that banks need to monitor while putting a resolution plan for the stressed borrower will bring transparency and efficiency, but the whole gamut depends on the recovery path for each of the sectors." However, the two years' time frame to achieve the threshold for all the ratios may not be sufficient for highly stressed companies," he said.

"Among banks, the total exposure toward the key troubled sectors forms 15-31 per cent of the total fund-based exposure. Overall, we believe this is a prudent attempt by the expert," said Alpesh Mehta, analyst at Motilal Oswal.

The RBI on Monday has announced a resolution framework for accounts adversely impacted by Covid-19. The K.V. Kamath panel has identified 26 sectors that have been impacted by Covid-19 with varying severity—mild, moderate, and severe. It also suggested financial parameters based on leverage, liquidity, and the debt serviceability of the company and thus identified five key ratios in considering a resolution plan—(a) total outside liability / adjusted tangible network (b) total debt/Ebitda (c) current ratio (d) debt service coverage ratio, and (e) average debt service coverage ratio.

The borrower's resolution plan would be prepared based on pre-Covid-19 performance, and the Covid-19 impact on 1HFY21 financials would be used to project future cash flows.

INDIA'S HIRING OUTLOOK BLEAKEST IN 15 YEARS: SURVEY

New Delhi, Sept. 8: India is witnessing the weakest hiring sentiment in 15 years with just 3 per cent companies planning to add staff in the next three months, a survey of over 800 employers said on Tuesday.

According to the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, that covered 813 firms across India, Indian employers report cautious hiring plans for the final quarter of 2020.

As per the survey, 7 per cent of employers anticipate an increase in payrolls, 3 per cent forecast a decrease and 54 per cent expect no change. Once the data is adjusted to allow for seasonal variation, the outlook stands at 3 per cent, it said.

"Hiring sentiment is the weakest since the survey began 15 years ago, remaining relatively stable when compared with the previous quarter, but declining by 16 percentage points in comparison with this time one year ago," the survey said.

The strongest hiring pace is recorded in the small-sized organisations followed by the medium-sized and large-sized firms. From a region perspective, north and east regions indicate a more positive outlook compared to the west and south, the survey said.

"Post the 'right sizing' exercise aligning themselves to the current market demands, organisations are now looking at improving productivity, new forms of employee engagement, getting furloughed employees back and implementation of technology," said Sandeep Gulati, group MD of ManpowerGroup India.

The survey said nearly 44 per cent of employers reported that they may return to pre-Covid-19 hiring within the next nine months whereas 42 per cent are unsure about returning back to normalcy from the hiring perspective.

About 42 per cent companies suggest they plan to bring them back furloughed employees with reduced hours. —PTI

Fitch, Sachs cut FY21 India growth estimates

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, SEPT. 8

Sensing deeper trouble for India's economy, global rating agencies Fitch Ratings and Goldman Sachs on Tuesday projected the country's annual GDP to contract by 10.5 per cent to 14.8 per cent, significantly below their earlier forecast.

While Fitch revised down its gross domestic product estimate for India to -10.5 per cent for this fiscal, sharply from its earlier projection of -5 per cent, Goldman Sachs went a step ahead and forecast a 14.8 per cent contraction in India's economic growth, revising down its earlier estimate of 11.8 per cent contraction.

Fitch said the imposition of sporadic shutdowns has disrupted economic activities across the country.

"India imposed one of the most stringent lockdowns worldwide in 2Q20 (April-June) and domestic demand fell massively. Limited fiscal support, fragilities in the financial system, and a continued rise in virus cases hamper a rapid normalisation in activity," Fitch said.

"All the indicators, be it mobility or consumption, are pointing towards a 'much weaker' economic recovery," said Sunil Kumar Sinha, principal economist, Fitch Group, adding, "We have slashed our GDP forecast for this fiscal year to (-) 10.5 per cent, a huge revision of (-) 5pp compared to the June Global Economic Outlook (GEO)." A host of indicators across the majority of GEO economies point to a faster sequential increase in GDP in 3Q20 to date than we were previously anticipating," it said.

Goldman Sachs analysts believe the economy will contract 13.7 per cent for the September 2020 quarter and 9.8 per cent for the December 2020 quarter.

"Our estimates imply that real GDP falls by 11.1 per cent in 2020, and by 14.8 per cent in FY21," they said.

The revised projections come within days of government data showing that GDP shrank by a steep 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21. Economists said the growth numbers for Q1 could be revised lower later after data from the informal sector is accounted for.

PUBG set to return sans Tencent

New Delhi, Sept. 8: PUBG Corporation, the unit of a South Korean company behind Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG), will no longer give Tencent Games the rights to publish its popular mobile game in India, it said in a blog.

The company's announcement came a week after India banned the game along with 117 other Chinese-origin apps.

"Moving forward, PUBG Corporation will take on all publishing responsibilities within the country," the company said, adding that it was exploring ways to provide gaming experience to Indian users in the future.

It was not immediately clear if the move would spur Indian authorities to revoke their ban.

Tencent, which ran the franchise in India, confirmed that PUBG Corp would take on the responsibilities of publishing the mobile game in India.

"Our existing cooperation with PUBG Corporation in global markets other than India is not affected," Tencent said in a statement.

The ban on PUBG in India, the game's biggest market by users, has shocked and angered gamers.

Seizing the opportunity, an Indian firm and a Bollywood actor are together planning to launch a locally made tactical mobile game by the end of October. —Reuters

StanChart fined ₹100 cr for Fema violation in TMB deal

SUVASHREE GHOSH & ANTO ANTONY SEPT. 8

India's anti-money laundering agency fined Standard Chartered Plc Rs 100 crore (\$13.6 million) for breaking foreign exchange rules when it worked on the takeover of a local bank, marking one of the country's biggest penalties imposed on an overseas lender.

An eight-year probe found that Standard Chartered violated the so-called Foreign Exchange Management Act when it worked with a group of investors to buy a stake in Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd in 2007, according to an August order from India's enforcement agency that was seen by Bloomberg.

"Senior officials at Standard Chartered saw an investment in TMB shares as an opportunity that might ripen into an eventually larger ownership for the bank," Sushil Kumar, the enforcement agency's special director, said in the order.



A representative for the British lender confirmed receipt of the order, adding that the bank was evaluating it and so unable to comment further.

Standard Chartered -- India's largest foreign bank by branches--also acted as a custodian for shares on the deal, according to the order. Tamilnad Mercantile was fined almost Rs 17 crore for similar charges, the order said.

A spokesman at Tamilnad Mercantile declined to comment, while the Enforcement Directorate didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

The case dates back to about 13 years ago when Tamilnad Mercantile transferred 46,862 shares to overseas investors, including GHI Ltd, Swiss Re Investors, FI Investments and Cuna Group, without seeking permission from the Reserve Bank of India, according to the order. Some of those shares were then transferred to Sub-Continental Equities Ltd, an affiliate of StanChart in April 2008, without the central bank's permission, it said.

The transfers were done through escrow accounts with StanChart, which acted as a transaction agent and a lender to one of the investors on the deal, the order said.

"Standard Chartered through its affiliate Subcontinental was a proposed and eventually an actual investor in TMB shares to be purchased through the escrow agreement arrangements," Kumar said.

—Bloomberg

Govt to sell 15-20% stake in IRCTC

New Delhi, Sept. 8: The government plans to sell about 15-20 per cent stake in IRCTC via offer for sale (OFS) and would like to complete the transaction in minimum number of tranches.

Last month, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (Dipam) had invited bids from merchant bankers by

September 10 for managing the sale in Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corp (IRCTC).

However, it did not disclose the quantum of stake on offer in the Request for Proposal.

Following this, a pre-bid meeting was held on September 4 with potential bidders. Dipam has now posted

its response to the queries raised by potential bidders on its website.

To a query on intended stake dilution, it said, "The indicative percentage is 15 per cent to 20 per cent. The exact details will be shared with the selected merchant bankers." The government currently holds 87.40 per cent stake in IRCTC. —PTI

Kochhar sent to ED custody till Sept. 19

SHAHAB ANSARI MUMBAI, SEPT. 8

The special court under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act on Tuesday remanded Deepak Kochhar, husband of former ICICI bank CEO Chanda Kochhar, to the Enforcement Directorate's custody till September 19. The Kochhar's custodial interrogation is necessary in the money laundering case registered against him, observed the court. Judge Milind V. Kurtadikar

also rejected Kochhar's request for allowing home food in the ED custody.

Additional solicitor general (ASG) Anil Singh appeared before the court via video conferencing on behalf of the ED, seeking Kochhar's custody. He said Kochhar is not cooperating in the money laundering investigation, relating to a Rs 300-crore loan given to Videocon International Electronics Ltd (VIEL) in 2009.

According to the prosecution,

ICICI Bank sanctioned this loan while Kochhar's wife (Chanda Kochhar) was the chairperson of the sanctioning committee.

The probe agency has claimed that in this case the Kochhars received bribe instantly. The remand application of the ED read that the next day of receiving the loan amount on September 8, 2009, VIEL transferred Rs 64 crore to the NuPower Renewables Ltd (NRL), which is managed, owned and controlled by Deepak Kochhar.

RIL unveils details of O2C biz spinoff plan

New Delhi, Sept. 8: Reliance Industries Ltd's new oil-to-chemical business unit will hold its oil refinery and petrochemical assets and retail fuel business but not upstream oil and gas producing fields such as KG-D6 and textiles business, the firm said, detailing hiving-off plans.

RIL has started work on hiving off the oil-to-chemical (O2C) business into a separate unit for a possible stake sale to companies such as Saudi Aramco.

Reliance O2C Ltd will house oil refining and petrochemical plants and

manufacturing assets, bulk and wholesale fuel marketing, and RIL's 51 per cent interest in retail fuel joint venture with BP of the UK, according to the Scheme of Arrangement.

The O2C unit would also house RIL's Singapore and the UK-based oil trading subsidiaries and marketing subsidiary, Reliance Industries Uruguay Petroquimica SA.

It would also house Reliance Ethane Pipeline Ltd that operates a pipeline between Dahej in Gujarat and Nagothane in Maharashtra as well as 74.9 per cent stake that RIL

holds in the joint venture with Sibur.

RIL's very large ethane carriers, gas pipelines such as one that transports coal-bed methane from its CBM blocks, overseas oil and gas asset holding company Reliance Industries (Middle East) DMCC, and domestic exploration and production assets would not form part of the O2C unit, it said.

Also, RIL's textiles business as operated out of the Naroda site, Baroda township and land, including cricket stadium, Jamnagar power assets, and Sikka Ports and Terminals

Ltd would also not be part of the O2C unit.

RIL values the O2C business at \$75 billion and has been in talks with Saudi Aramco for sale of a 20 per cent interest.

"The nature of risk and returns involved in the O2C business are distinct from those of the other businesses of RIL and the O2C business attracts a distinct set of investors and strategic partners," the company said.

RIL said it has been exploring various opportunities to bring in strategic/other investors in the O2C business. —PTI

Mutual fund NFOs play on diversification theme

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, SEPT. 8

Diversification is the theme playing out in the mutual fund industry to attract old and new investors in uncertain times.

Multi-asset funds or global equity exposure is the current buzz in the industry.

Recent new fund offerings by Axis Mutual Fund (Axis Global Equity Alpha Fund of Fund), Nippon India MF (Nippon India Multi-Asset Fund), SBI Mutual Fund (SBI Magnum Children's Benefit Fund ) and Mirae Asset Mutual Fund (Mirae Asset Equity Allocator Fund of Fund) offer diversification, breaking new grounds in terms of the asset allocation-mix offered in a single mutual fund, compared to the past NFOs.

This is happening at a time when retail investors have started booking profit in equity mutual funds and seeking to play safe in a volatile market conditions as even debt funds are not considered safe for capital protection these days.

"As you don't know what will happen tomorrow to one asset class, asset allocation has become very important as the proverb goes 'do not put all your eggs in one basket,'" said Ashwin Patni, head-products and alternatives, Axis Asset Management Company.

Allocation to global equities can improve the risk-return profile of Indian investors because of diversification benefits, according to Axis Mutual Fund. India has around 5,000



companies listed on the stock exchange but accounts for only about 3 per cent share of world's market capitalisation. Axis Global Equity Alpha Fund of Fund will invest in Schroders Global Equity Alpha Fund to provide geographical diversity to Indian investors looking to have exposure in global stocks

listed in the US and other developed markets.

Nippon India Multi-Asset Fund is investing across five asset classes—domestic equity (50 per cent), international equity (20 per cent), commodities (15 per cent) and fixed income (15 per cent).

Diversification within the same asset as well helps in portfolio diversi-

fication and hedge against inflation/geopolitical risks, according to Nippon India Mutual Fund.

SBI Magnum Children's Benefit Fund will invest in equity & equity-related instruments, including equity ETFs with a minimum of 65 per cent going up to 100 per cent, debt, including debt ETFs and money market instruments up to a maximum of 35 per cent, in REITs & InvITs up to 10 per cent, and up to 20 per cent in Gold ETFs.

Mirae Asset Equity Allocator Fund of Fund will invest in Nifty-50 ETF, Nifty Next 50 ETF, and Midcap150 ETFs, providing investors some protection from current market volatility as the exposure would be quite diverse to large and mid cap stocks.

VACCINE-MAKERS PLEDGE NOT TO RUSH TO MARKET

NAOMI KRESGE SEPT. 8

Drugmakers racing to produce Covid-19 vaccines pledged to avoid shortcuts on science as they face pressure to rush a shot to market. In a public letter, the companies agreed to submit the vaccines for clearance only when they're shown to be safe and effective in large clinical studies. The CEOs of nine frontrunners for a coronavirus inoculation signed the pledge: AstraZeneca, BioNTech, GlaxoSmithKline, J&J, Merck & Co, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer and Sanofi.

"In the interest of public health, we pledge to always make the safety and well-being of vaccinated individuals our top priority," they wrote. —Bloomberg



## SHORT TAKES

## Coach Poonia is Covid positive

**New Delhi:** Dronacharya awardee athletics coach and former international hammer thrower Virender Poonia has tested positive for Covid-19 and has been admitted to a hospital in Jaipur. The 47-year-old Virender is the husband of Olympian discus thrower and sitting Rajasthan MLA Krishna Poonia. He is now admitted to the Railway Hospital in Jaipur. He, however, said he is doing "fine".

"Last week I had body pain and sore throat and so I went for Covid-19 testing and it turned out to be positive. The result came on Saturday," Virender said. "Today is the fourth day (after testing positive) and I am alright. There is still body pain and sore throat but I am hoping to get better."

Virender, a Railways employee, won a bronze in hammer throw in the Asian Junior Championships in 1992 and finished fourth in the 1998 Asian Senior Championships. He was Krishna's coach when she won the discus throw gold medal in the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games. He received the Dronacharya Award in 2012. — PTI

## Ailing Ali asked to stop training

**New Delhi:** Promising India defender Anwar Ali has been asked to stop training as his latest medical reports are being sent to the Asian Football Confederation, months after being diagnosed with a congenital heart condition, which has put a question mark on his career.

One of the impressive performers of the 2017 U-17 World Cup at home, Anwar underwent blood tests, a CT scan and an MRI at a top private hospital in Kolkata last week, the reports of which had been sent to the All India Football Federation's medical committee.

"His reports have been sent to the AFC and till a final decision is taken, he has been asked to stop practice. A decision on his future in football should come by this weekend," I-League chief executive officer Sunando Dhar said. The centre-back's career has been left hanging in the balance ever since he was diagnosed with a congenital heart condition last year. — PTI

## Italy edge Dutch, Norway win big

**Paris:** Nicolo Barella extended Italy's two-year unbeaten run as he scored the winner in Monday's 1-0 victory away to the Netherlands in the Nations League while Erling Haaland netted twice for Norway in a 5-1 thrashing of Northern Ireland.

Roberto Mancini's Italy saw their record 11-match winning streak end with last week's draw against Bosnia and Herzegovina but got the best of the Netherlands in Amsterdam courtesy of Inter Milan midfielder Barella's header in first-half stoppage time. "It was a great performance by the entire team, we played with personality. We earned a great result and we are all happy, especially with the performance," said winger Lorenzo Insigne. "We could have scored more goals and killed the game but we still earned the three points. That is what counts most." — AFP

## Clippers out-gun Nuggets, in lead

**Miami:** Paul George scored 32 points and the Los Angeles Clippers turned up the heat defensively on Monday in a 113-107 win over the Denver Nuggets for a 2-1 lead in the NBA Western Conference semifinals. Kawhi Leonard added 23 points, 14 rebounds and six assists for the Clippers, coming up big on both ends of the floor as Los Angeles powered to the finish in the see-saw battle. Denver, blown out in game one but coming off a convincing game-two victory, led 78-68 midway through a third quarter. It was tied up at 101-101 with less than five minutes remaining and the Clippers closed it out with a 12-6 scoring run.

Meanwhile, there was no suspense in the Boston Celtics' 111-89 blowout win over the Toronto Raptors. — AFP

## Elise in wonderland

## Mertens sends 2nd seed Kenin packing, Serena advances

**New York, Sept. 8:** Serena Williams battled into the quarter-finals of the US Open on Monday as top men's seeds Dominic Thiem and Daniil Medvedev sailed through to the last eight at Flushing Meadows.

After Williams kept her bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam singles title alive, second seed Sofia Kenin was sent crashing out in the last 16 by Belgium's Elise Mertens.

Kenin, the highest seeded player left in the tournament and winner of the 2020 Australian Open, was bundled out of the last 16 6-3, 6-3, in 1hr 14 mins by Mertens.

Mertens, the 16th seed, will now play Victoria Azarenka of Belarus in the quarter-finals.

Kenin, who had not lost a game in her first three

rounds, never got her service game together against Mertens.

The 21-year-old Moscow-born player won only 56 percent of first serve points compared to 75 percent for Mertens.

Unseeded Azarenka came from a set down to oust 20th seed Karolina Muchova 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 in 2hr 30min.

Earlier, Williams had to summon up every last ounce of strength to depose 15th seed Maria Sakkari in three hard-fought sets.

The 38-year-old American needed almost two and a half hours to dislodge her 25-year-old Greek opponent 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3 inside an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York.

The American will play Tsvetana Pironkova for a place in the semi-finals

## BOPANNA-SHAPOVALOV OUSTED FROM US OPEN

**New York, Sept. 8:** The Indian challenge came to an end at the US Open with the quarterfinal loss of Rohan Bopanna and his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov in the men's doubles event here.

Bopanna and Shapovalov lost 5-7, 5-7 to Dutch Jean-Julien Rojer and Romania's Horea Tecau in the last-eight match which lasted one hour and 26 minutes on Monday.

Bopanna and Shapovalov lost their serve once in each set and could not convert the only break chance that came their way in the second set.

It was Bopanna's best performance at a Slam since he made the quarterfinals at both the US Open and the French Open in 2018. — PTI

after the Bulgarian ousted France's Alize Cornet in another draining three-setter.

**'ABSOLUTELY UNREAL'**

Pironkova, playing her first tournament in three

years after a lengthy break in which she gave birth to her son, prevailed 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3 at the Louis Armstrong Stadium.

"It's absolutely unreal, I really can't believe it,"

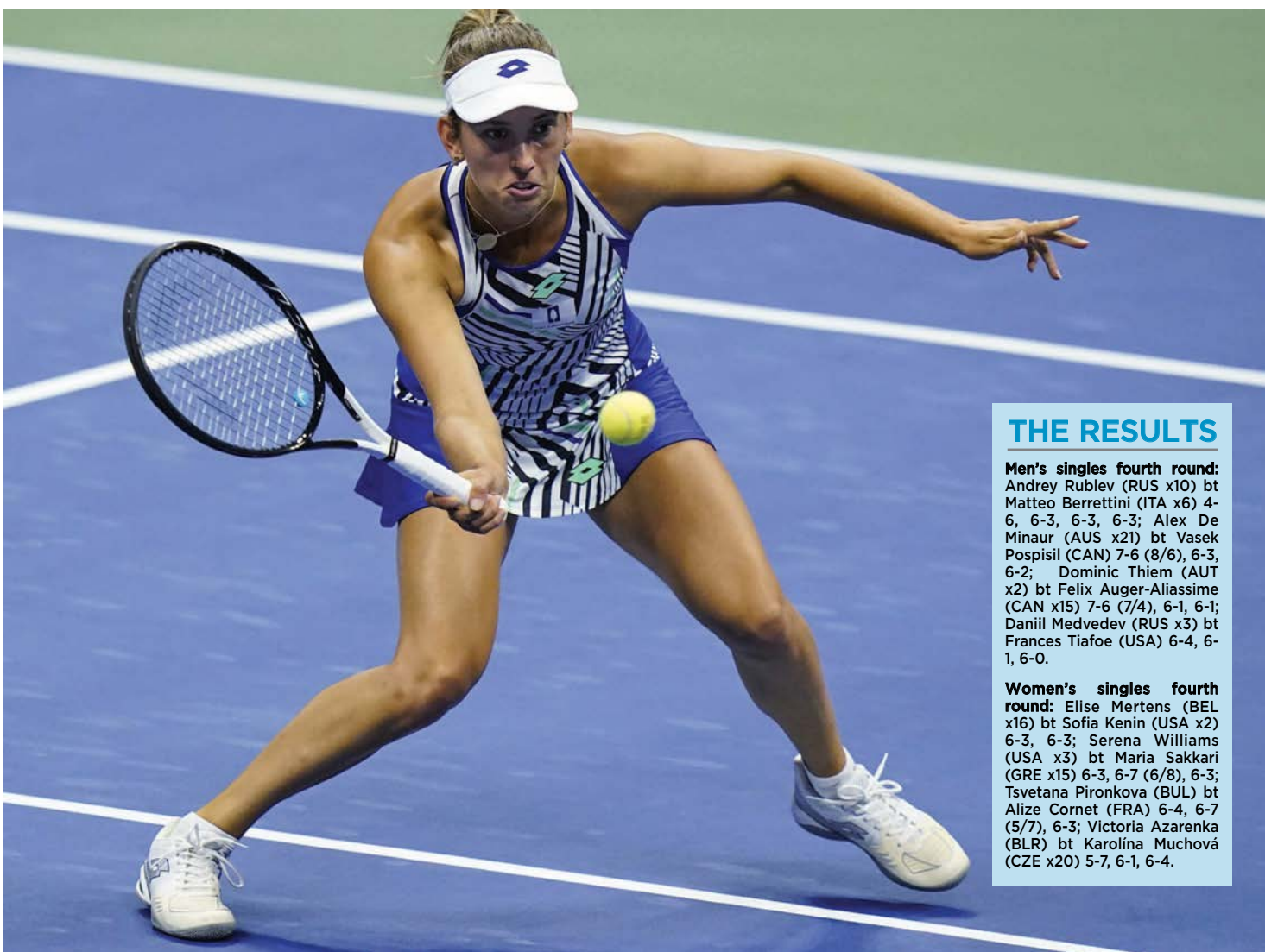
said Pironkova, whose last tournament appearance before this year's US Open was the 2017 Wimbledon championships when she exited in the second round.

In the men's draw, second-seeded Thiem raced into the round of eight with a three-set demolition of Canadian rising star Felix Auger-Aliassime.

Thiem dismantled the 20-year-old 15th seed 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 6-1 in 2hr 7min.

He will play Australia's 21st seed Alex de Minaur for a spot in the semi-finals after the Australian breezed past unseeded Canadian Vasek Pospisil 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 6-2, in 2hr 17 min.

Third seed Medvedev blew away unseeded American France Tiafoe 6-4, 6-1, 6-0 in only 1hr 38 min. — AFP



Elise Mertens of Belgium plays a shot en route to her 6-3, 6-3 win over Sofia Kenin of the United States in their US Open women's singles fourth round match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on Monday. — AP

## THE RESULTS

**Men's singles fourth round:** Andrey Rublev (RUS x10) bt Matteo Berrettini (ITA x6) 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3; Alex De Minaur (AUS x21) bt Vasek Pospisil (CAN) 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 6-2; Dominic Thiem (AUT x2) bt Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN x15) 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 6-1; Daniil Medvedev (RUS x3) bt Frances Tiafoe (USA) 6-4, 6-1, 6-0.

**Women's singles fourth round:** Elise Mertens (BEL x16) bt Sofia Kenin (USA x2) 6-3, 6-3; Serena Williams (USA x3) bt Maria Sakkari (GRE x15) 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3; Tsvetana Pironkova (BUL) bt Alize Cornet (FRA) 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3; Victoria Azarenka (BLR) bt Karolina Muchova (CZE x20) 5-7, 6-1, 6-4.

## Roland Garros to allow spectators

**Paris, Sept. 8:** Spectators will be allowed at the French Open this month despite the growing number of coronavirus cases in the country, organizers said.

Organizers unveiled the health protocols for the clay-court grand slam, which will take place at Roland Garros in western Paris from September 27 after being postponed from its May start due to the pandemic.

"Since the international circuit restarted, Roland Garros will be the first tournament with the privilege of hosting an audience," French Tennis

Federation president Bernard Giudicelli said on Monday.

In accordance with the latest government guidelines capping attendance to 5,000 people in regions such as Paris, the federation has scaled down its plans.

The federation wanted to welcome 50% to 60% of capacity, the equivalent of about 20,000 fans per day. Instead, Roland Garros will be divided into three zones based on the three main courts, with 5,000 people each for the Philippe Chatrier and Suzanne Lenglen courts. — AP

## No Barty at French Open

**Sydney, Sept. 8:** World number one Ashleigh Barty announced Tuesday she will not defend her French Open crown, citing the coronavirus fears that also prompted her and several other top players to withdraw from the US Open.

The Australian, who claimed her maiden Grand Slam at Roland Garros in 2019, said it was a "difficult" decision but the health of her family and team came first.

"Last year's French Open was the most special tournament of my career so this is not a decision I have made lightly," she said on social media.

"There are two reasons



Ashleigh Barty

for my decision — the first is the health risks that still exist with Covid.

"The second is my preparation, which has not been ideal without my coach being able to train with me due to the state border closures in Australia."

Barty is based in

Brisbane while her coach, Craig Tytzer, is in Melbourne and unable to travel as the city battles a significant second-wave virus outbreak.

She announced in late July that she would sit out the US Open, currently underway in New York, with defending men's champion Rafael Nadal and world number two Simona Halep among those who also opted out because of the pandemic.

At the time, Barty was still monitoring the situation with the French Open, which is due to start on September 27, but said Tuesday her withdrawal was the latest development in "a challenging year for everyone". — AFP

## MANKADING | IN IPL

## Ponting speaks in Ashwin's support

**Dubai, Sept. 8:** Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting says he is on the "same page" as off-spinner R. Ashwin regarding running out non-strikers for backing up too far before a ball is delivered.

Ashwin, who was in the spotlight last IPL after dismissing Jos Buttler during a Kings XI Punjab versus Rajasthan Royals encounter, did something that his current IPL coach didn't endorse.

However, Ashwin and Ponting have had an open discussion here over the mode of dismissal and by the former Australian captain's own admission, they have reached a common ground.

"He (Ashwin) made me get on a podcast with him when I first arrived here to have a good open chat about it," Ponting told 'Cricket.com.au'.

"I think we're both on the same page. He feels he did everything in the rules and laws of the game and he's absolutely right," Ponting said.

In fact, Ponting found logic in Ashwin's rationale.

"He's saying, 'What if it's the last ball of the IPL, what if I'm bowling and the batting teams needs two runs to win and the non-striker is charging halfway down the wicket? What do you expect me to do?'"

● **Ashwin and Ponting have had an open discussion over the mode of dismissal and by the former Australian captain's own admission, they have reached a common ground.**

"There's an argument there as well, but as I said to him, I would expect that he would hold on to the ball and not Mankad and tell the batsman to stay in his crease next time and see if he's good enough to try and close the game out for us."

The batting great, however, made it clear that there is no place for "cheating" which is the case when non-strikers tend to back up too far.

"It shouldn't get to that stage anyway, batsmen shouldn't be cheating. That's what batsmen are doing, batsmen are actually cheating by trying to steal a yard or two here or there. It's something that needs to be addressed."

Ponting reiterated the need for a run penalty for offenders.

"I think something has to happen with the laws of the game to make sure batsmen can't cheat and there certainly shouldn't be the ..... rule the way it is," he said. — PTI

## 150-160 is handy, says RCB coach

**Dubai, Sept. 8:** A score of 150 to 160 will be a competitive one in Dubai or Abu Dhabi track, reckons RCB coach Mike Hesson, who is happy to have identified his team's designated death bowlers, an area that has let them down during earlier Indian Premier League seasons.

The length of side boundaries are bigger in grounds like Abu Dhabi and that will bring down the average team total.

"Here 150-160 will be good scores in some grounds and it will be different. Chinnaswamy (in Bengaluru) is a great batting wicket, smaller boundaries and scores (team totals) are (on) higher (side)," Hesson told RCB's YouTube channel.

He said that on certain

grounds, spinners will come in handy, especially when the surface is a bit skiddy.

"On certain grounds yes. It depends, like Abu Dhabi, seamers had played a big role there and probably (the pitch) doesn't (offer) spin as much as the other two grounds (Dubai and Sharjah). It does skid. We need the ability to adjust to conditions on the day as well," Hesson said.

Bowling at the death in grounds like Abu Dhabi will be completely different from Chinnaswamy. "Bowling at the death in Abu Dhabi will be quite different from bowling at Chinnaswamy. The lengths you bowl and we have identified our death bowlers," Hesson said. — PTI

## YUVRAJ EYES A STINT IN BIG BASH LEAGUE

**Melbourne, Sept. 8:** Flamboyant Indian batsman Yuvraj Singh, who retired last year, is eyeing a stint in the Big Bash League and Cricket Australia is trying to help him find a team, a media report has said.

No Indian player has ever featured in the BBL as the country's cricket board (BCCI) doesn't allow active players to take part in overseas league.

The 38-year-old Yuvraj had retired from international and domestic cricket last year, clearing the decks to ply his trade in foreign leagues across the globe.

According to a report in *Sydney Morning Herald*, Yuvraj's manager Jason Warne of W Sports & Media has confirmed that Cricket Australia was trying to find a franchise that would be interested in the former Indian all-rounder.

"We're working with CA to try to find him a home," Warne said on Monday.

Yuvraj, the 2011 World Cup player of the tournament, last played for India in 2017. — PTI



Dr Raj Mohan Tella  
Guest Column

In trying times like these, does greatness matter? Does it really elevate us and set the course of our lives or for that matter of brands and businesses on an ascendant? The context is the great Dhoni and the call is to all those brands, which want to build greater affinity with their stakeholders. Unravelling Dhoni may actually lead us to find out what is it that brands can imbibe from his actions and exploits.

I turn to the philosopher Peter Koestenbaum to unbundle the Dhoni magic. Koestenbaum states that there are four ways or dimensions of a leader — vision, reality, ethics and courage in his Leadership Diamond Model.

To begin with visioning, which simply means to think big and new. You would recollect how Dhoni envisioned a young and energetic team way back in 2008, while setting into

motion the gradual phasing out of established seniors. I am not suggesting that a business phase out veterans, but am only drawing the focus to the necessity of a vision for the enterprise. When businesses have a vision or a well-articulated destination, then everyone and all the energies of a business are focused to achieving that.

Next comes reality, which means responding to facts without illusions. If you are a Dhoni follower, you would recognise the great's cricketing brain, where every decision of his was based on homework, facts and an intuitive capability of marrying all the pointers to conceptualising out of the box

● **Risk and return are linked; we know that from economics. But when you blend it with self-belief then the chances of triumph seem far greater. We saw that in Dhoni.**

moves. To succeed, brands too have to rely on facts; research and understanding of audience needs, map trends, develop customer affinity and blend all of these to trigger those unique marketing/ branding victories.

Then comes ethics — sensitivity and empathy. Which player doesn't vouch for learning from Dhoni? You would have

seen him interacting with the juniors in the team, guiding the bowlers from behind the wicket and leading the way by example.

For brands listening can be core strength. The more they listen to their audiences, the sharper their insights. Customers, influencers, social media advocates, suppliers, vendors, employees and more — giving them an ear and empathising with them only makes a brand and the leadership more sensitive to the existing and emerging needs.

Koestenbaum's last dimension is courage. Greatness is about the ability to act, initiate and risk. You and I know that one innings, which won India,

the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2011 was a play of Dhoni's courage and planning. But in contrast, how many times have you seen a brand take that risk and come across as being courageous amidst marketing challenges. Risk and return are linked; we know that from economics. But when you blend it with self-belief then the chances of triumph seem far greater. We saw that in Dhoni. In today's times, you can see it in some brands and businesses. Especially, in the ones who are successfully raising investments both from India and abroad.

So the next time you think of Dhoni or want to build a great brand, put the four Koestenbaum

dimensions to play. There is a good chance you will embark upon a journey of useful change and repurposing. Begin by asking fundamental questions and what could emerge is the presence of one or two dimensions and not all four of them in your brand. Then the task is cut out. Engineer the missing dimensions into your business environment and thinking. For I believe that every business and brand may have a 'Dhoni' living inside them. You could give it that winning nudge towards greatness.

(Dr Raj Mohan Tella is the founder of Brandlogues, a global brand consulting firm. He can be reached at rajmohan@brandlogues.com)