

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
VISAKHAPATNAM | MONDAY | 5 OCTOBER 2020



NATION | 4
Congress calls for Rhea's release

WORLD | 5
Capitalism failed in pandemic, says Pope

SPORTS | 6
Mumbai ride high on Quinton knock

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WEATHER
Max: 33.0°C
Min: 26.4°C
RH: 91%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: Mist.
Max/Min temp.
33/26 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+74,722)	(+902)
66,22,135	1,02,714
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+1,949)	(+10)
TS: 1,99,276	1,163
(+6,242)	(+40)
AP: 7,19,256	5,981

CASES AROUND THE WORLD
3,52,49,401
DEATHS
10,39,543
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
213
worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula
Tadiya 10.01 am
Star: Bharani till 2.54 pm
Variyam: 4.23 am to 6.11 am
(Tuesday)
Durmuhurtam: 12.28 pm to 1.15 pm; 2.49 pm to 3.36 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
HUIJI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 17, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.50 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 4.45 pm
Maghrib: 6.11 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.43 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.48 PM
MOONRISE TODAY 8.03 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 8.22 AM

COUNTER POINT



Seat-sharing between the parties is complete... now, it's among factions of our own party!

BRIEF

Minister Paswan undergoes surgery

New Delhi: Union minister and Lok Janshakti Party patron Ram Vilas Paswan has undergone a heart surgery, his son Chirag Paswan said on Sunday. Ram Vilas Paswan, 74, who has been in active politics for more than five decades, was hospitalised for the last few weeks. He was operated upon at a private hospital in Delhi. He has long suffered from a heart condition, and family sources expressed confidence that he will soon recover. In a tweet, Chirag Paswan said his father will undergo another operation in a few weeks if needed.

Virtual sim cards new J&K threat

Srinagar: Virtual SIM cards pose a new headache for security agencies fighting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir as their use in the valley has seen an increase among terror groups to connect with their handlers in Pakistan, officials said here. The penetration of this new technology was found in 2019 when a request was sent to the US to seek details from a service provider of "virtual SIMs" used by suicide bomber of JeM terror group involved in the Pulwama attack that left 40 CRPF personnel dead. A detailed probe by the NIA indicated that over 40 virtual SIM cards were used in the Pulwama attack alone.

War games in peace time



Indian and Bangladesh Naval Warships take part in the 3rd edition of Coordinated Patrol during the Bongosagar-2020, the bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy off the sea from Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

LJP to fight Bihar polls alone

Unhappy with Nitish Kumar being projected as NDA's CM face

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 4

Bihar's upcoming electoral battle kept getting interesting as another "front" joined the battlefield. NDA constituent Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) of Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan, announced it would go solo over "ideological differences" with Janata Dal(United) president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

The BJP, which held its central election committee (CEC) meeting to discuss its candidates after the LJP made its announcement, has already made it clear that Nitish Kumar is NDA's CM face.

The CEC was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, party president J.P. Nadda, Union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nityanand Rai, election in-charge and former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, among others.

The LJP, which had won two Assembly seats out of 43 that it contested in the last elections, made it clear that it has a strong alliance with the BJP at the Centre. Post the polls, LJP MLAs will form government with the BJP in the state, the party said, giving an indication that the LJP chief is hoping to be a "kingmaker" in case JD(U)-BJP is short of the

halfway mark of 122. Paswans are one of the 22 Dalit castes in the state, which account for nearly 16 per cent of the total population. It would be seen whether the LJP will be able to woo the non-Paswan Dalit vote bank, a significant number of whom have been supporting Nitish Kumar.

The LJP has claimed it will contest 143 seats of the total 243. It remains to be seen how many candidates it actually fields, as it may get into "friendly fights" with the BJP in some seats if it sticks to the number. Also, it remains to be seen how the BJP's campaign will face the LJP's candidates where the JD(U) is

also contesting. The BJP leadership has asked its cadre to seek votes for the NDA candidates and not just the BJP's. The first phase of polling will take place on October 28 and the JD(U) and the BJP are yet to announce their seat sharing formula. Both had contested the polls in 2015 separately; the JD(U) was out of the NDA and had contested with the RJD and the Congress. Speculation is rife that JD(U) could contest a couple of seats more than the BJP as it will have to accommodate the Hindustan Avam Morcha (HAM) of former chief minister Jiten Ram Manjhi from its quota.

EC MAKES POSTAL VOTE EASIER FOR ELDERS, DISABLED

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 4

The Election Commission of India has issued new instructions that make securing postal ballots more convenient for people with disabilities and those above 80 years of age.

As per new instructions, a booth level officer (BLO) will visit the houses of the electors and deliver the 12-D form. In case the elector goes for postal ballot, the BLO will collect the filled-in form within five days of the notification and deposit it with the returning officer (RO). Thereafter, the RO will deploy a polling team who will deliver and collect the postal ballots on a pre-informed date and deposit it with the returning officer. The process of voting will be videographed to ensure transparency.

These instructions have been issued based on the feedback the poll panel received from civil society and media during the visit of the EC team to poll-bound Bihar last week. The EC said these fresh instructions would be applicable to all elections and byelections, including the bypolls announced last week to 56 Assembly and one Lok Sabha seat.

● **A BOOTH level officer (BLO)** will visit the houses of electors and deliver the 12-D form. If the elector picks postal ballot, the BLO will collect the filled-in form within five days of the notification

15 gold coins unearthed in excavations at Srisailem

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, OCT. 4

Excavation works underway at Ghanta Matam in Srisailem for the past few months on Sunday resulted in unearthing gold coins and a ring.

Earlier, silver coins, copper plates and a Dhyan Mandiram were among the findings.

Srisailem Brhamaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy temple Executive Officer, KS Rama Rao said that the gold coins were found "intact" in a copper container at a water spring. The container has been exposed to the flowing

waters and withstood the ravages of time, he said.

The gold coins, numbering fifteen, were found inside the container besides some silver coins. The gold coins seem to have been minted between 1860 and 1910. One coin has insignia of Edward VII of Great Britain.

Ashok Reddy, a coins historian, said that the 1902-1910 Edward VII gold full sovereign weighs 7.98g of .917 purity gold, is 22.05 mm in diameter, and 1.56 mm thick. "On the obverse side we see a portrait of King Edward VII facing right (Queen Victoria was facing left), and around

him the inscriptions "EDWARDVS VII D: G: BRITT: OMN: REX F: D: IND: IMP", he said.

"On the reverse we found Pistrucci's all-time classic design of St. George killing the dragon, suggested by the artist himself as a suitable motif to celebrate Britain's victory over Napoleon's army in the battle of Waterloo. The date of issue is also inscribed on the reverse side," he added.

Rama Rao said "it was a blessing of Lord Shiva to have his mysteries revealed in the historic Srisailem Kshetram.

CRIME | RECORD Telangana sees decline in cases as per NCRB data

AP 2nd to Maha in trafficking

MD ILYAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 4

Human trafficking has seen a surge in the two Telugu states with Andhra Pradesh being the second most affected while Telangana state stands seventh. The highest number of human trafficking cases has been reported from Maharashtra.

According to data provided by the National Crime Records Bureau, 245 cases of human trafficking were reported in 2019 in Andhra Pradesh against 240 in 2018 and 218 the year before. There has been a gradual decline in Telangana state which reported 137 cases in 2019 and 242 in 2018 and 329 in 2017.

According to the report, a

majority of the victims were forced into the flesh trade, followed by domestic maids forced to work as bonded labourers.

Research by various organisations on human trafficking revealed that there is a huge demand for minor girls in brothels. Abject poverty is forcing parents to send their minor daughters to work as housemaids. Recently, the Guntur police freed eight minor girls from bonded labour. They were brought from north Andhra by agents.

The International Day of No Prostitution is observed on October 5. The day aims at increasing awareness about prostitution. Several NGOs working against human traf-

ficking have been urging the government to initiate measures to restrain human trafficking by strict implementation of laws. Prof K.K. Mukherjee, former head of department of social work, Delhi University, said that besides trafficking-related prostitution, several social classes and tribal communities take up prostitution as their primary source of income.

HELP and Vimukthi organizations, which campaign for the rights of children and for the prevention of second generation prostitution, have called for the need to have measures to end human trafficking and prostitution.

HELP secretary N. Ram Mohan said 10.8 per cent of

secretary of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration to attend the meeting to be convened by Union minister of state for home affairs G. Kishan Reddy at 11 am on October 7.

Besides, a similar invitation has been sent to the president of GJM, the Darjeeling-based political party which spearheaded fierce Gorkhaland movement both before and after the Trinamul came to power in the state in 2011. Bimal Gurung, who founded the GJM, was its president for many years. He, however, went underground with cases against him after violence rocked Darjeeling leading to a prolonged shutdown in 2017. In November of that year, Mr Gurung was suspended by his rival camp in the party led by Binoy Tamang, while taking control of the outfit.

■ **Page 4: Gurung camp builds rapport with BJP**

● SOURCES SAID in the 42nd meeting of the Council on October 5, Opposition-ruled states would object to the Centre's borrowing options and demand alternative mechanism for funding GST compensation deficit.

● THEY FEEL that the constitutional liability of compensating states lies with the Union government.

● THE CENTRE in August gave states two options to the states to borrow money from RBI

₹97,000 crore is on account of GST implementation and rest ₹1.38 lakh crore is the impact of Covid-19 on states' revenues.

The Centre in August gave two options to the states to borrow either ₹97,000 crore from a special window facilitated by the RBI or ₹2.35 lakh crore from market and has also proposed extending the compensation cess levied on luxury, demerit and sin goods beyond 2022 to repay the borrowing.

Chief Ministers of six

non-BJP ruled states — West Bengal, Kerala, Delhi, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu — have written to the Centre opposing the options which require states to borrow to meet shortfall. While these states want the Centre to borrow to meet the shortfall, the Centre has argued that the revenue accruing from GST compensation cess goes to the states and the Centre cannot borrow on the security of the tax it does not own. Under the GST structure, taxes are levied under 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent slabs. On top of the highest tax slab, a cess is levied on luxury, sin and demerit goods and the proceeds from the same are used to compensate states for any revenue loss. Attorney General of India K.K. Venugopal had given his legal view on the compensation cess issue where he has opined that there is no obligation on the Centre under the GST laws to compensate for the loss of revenue. He had opined that the GST Council has to find ways to meet any revenue shortfall arising out of GST implementation. — PTI

Centre calls meet on Gorkhaland, angers Trinamul

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, OCT. 4

Barely eight months before the Assembly election in West Bengal, the Centre has invited the Mamata Banerjee government to a meeting on "Gorkhaland" with Gorkha Janmukti Morcha in New Delhi this week, leaving the Trinamul Congress fuming and the BJP smiling.

The Modi government's move comes close on the heels of BJP MP of Darjeeling Raju Bista's statement in the last session in Parliament where he raised the demand of the people of the hills for "Gorkhaland" as a "permanent solution" and mentioned the BJP's electoral promise in 2019 Lok Sabha polls to fulfil it.

Recently, the ministry of home affairs in a letter to the state government requested state home secretary, Darjeeling district magistrate and principal

DRONAMRAJU SRINIVAS DIES OF CORONAVIRUS

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 4

Veteran political leader and former chairman of Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Regional Development Authority, Dronamraju Srinivas, succumbed to Covid-19 at a corporate hospital on Sunday. He was 59 and is survived by his wife, a son and daughter.

Family members said Srinivas contracted the virus 20 days ago and was quarantined at home. He was hospitalised after his lungs were infected. His condition started worsening and he was put on a ventilator. Rajya Sabha member V Vijaysai Reddy and local minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao were monitoring his health daily. Treatment bills were paid by the CMO, on the advice of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who was also enquiring about his health.

■ **Page 3: Leaders hail gentleman politician**

FARM BILLS OUT ON CONGRESS RETURN: RAHUL

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI OCT. 4

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi lashed out at the Central government over the passage of Farm Bills in the recently concluded Monsoon Session of Parliament. He said that his party will scrap the three farm laws and throw them in the waste paper basket when it comes to power at the Centre. Mr Gandhi's statement comes in the backdrop of the launch of the "Kheti Bachao Yatra" in Punjab with CM Captain Amarinder Singh on Sunday. Flagger off a three day tractor rally against the farm bills, Mr Gandhi said, "Their (the BJP's) only aim is to destroy MSP and food procurement."

SHORT TAKES

LESS THAN 50% CANDIDATES TURN UP FOR PRELIMS

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, OCT. 4

The turnout for the preliminary exams for the Civil Services conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) at 14 centres across Tirupati was less than 50 per cent. The exam was held in two sessions — from 9.30 am to 11.30 am and from 2.30 pm to 4.30 p.m.

According to officials, of 6,790 candidates, only 3,234 turned up for the first paper in the morning and the attendance percentage was only 47.63 per cent. The number of candidates taking the examination dropped further to 3,207 for the afternoon exam and the attendance percentage recorded was 47.23 per cent.

DHARMA REDDY TAKES FULL ADDL CHARGE OF EO

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, OCT. 4

The additional EO of TTD A.V. Dharma Reddy on Sunday took charge as TTD executive officer (full additional charge) in place of Anil Kumar Singhal who has been transferred and posted as principal secretary of Medical, health and family welfare.

The transfer of charge took place at the Ranganayakula mandapam in Tirumala temple and later both Dharma Reddy and Singhal had Srivari darshan together. Later TTD JEO P. Basanth Kumar, administered the oath of office on Dharma Reddy as EO FAC inside the temple.

Vedic pandits offered Vedasirvachanam to the departing EO and the new EO FAC and Dharma Reddy offered theertha prasadam to the outgoing EO Singhal. CVSO Gopinath Jatti, Srivari temple DyEO P. Harindranath and other officials were also present.

CONG SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN ON FARM LAWS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, OCT. 4

The AP Congress Committee working president, Dr N.S. Tulsireddy, started a signature campaign against central Farm laws and meters to electric pump sets in Andhra Pradesh. He started collecting signatures on Sunday in Vempalle, Kadapa district. He said the BJP-led Central government and the state government were adopting anti-farmer policies.

He said the Contract Farming Act, Agricultural Market Act and Emergency Commodities Act by the Central Government would be detrimental to farmers and consumers. He said they were favourable to big business organisations like Reliance. He said that the signatures will be collected against to these Acts, till the end of October and will be presented to the President on November 14, Nehru's birthday.

COPS REGISTER CASE FOR SELLING DARSHAN TICKETS

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 4

Tirumala police registered a case against three persons for allegedly selling darshan tickets of Tirumala temple in the black market and extorting huge amounts from devotees. Acting on the complaint registered by the TTD vigilance and security wing, the police had launched a man hunt to nab the three middle-men involved in the sale of darshan tickets.

Confirming the development with *Deccan Chronicle*, Tirumala II town CI Chandrasekhara Reddy said that they had received a complaint from the TTD vigilance wing on Saturday against three persons who misused recommendation letters of political and official fraternity and obtained darshan tickets, which they sold to the devotees for huge amounts.

"As per the complaint, the middle-men had misused the recommendation letters of an MLA and a senior official from TTD. In the first case, the middle-men had obtained three darshan tickets by misusing the letter of an MLA. He sold the tickets to devotees for ₹12,000," the CI said.

In the second case, another middle-men had misused the recommendation letter of an MLC and obtained six tickets.



Huge numbers of job aspirants come out of examination centre after writing UPSC preliminary test at Dr L. Bullayya College in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. — K. MURALIKRISHNA

Move to reopen schools runs into opposition in AP

One child may expose all others to the risk of contracting virus

VADREVVU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, OCT. 4

The state government's proposal to reopen schools in November has met with stiff opposition from parents who fear that it will not only cause huge financial loss to them, but also expose their children to a serious health hazard.

The experience in the United States of America and other countries clearly shows that reopening of schools is not advisable, argue several parents. It is not realistic to expect that children, especially in primary schools, will maintain distance, and one child may expose all others to the risk of contracting the virus. Further, the parents will have to shell down fees and they will also have to bear hospital expenses, if the child is infected with the virus.

In one school at Vizianagaram district, more than 20 schoolchildren were infected and thousands of students tested positive in the US, after schools were reopened.

Noted pulmonologist Dr D. Seshagiri Rao said that unless an effective vaccine is developed, it is not advisable to reopen schools. If the government wants to go ahead, masks should be provided to stu-

● In one school at Vizianagaram district, more than 20 schoolchildren were infected and thousands of students tested positive in the US, after schools were reopened.

dents and only a limited number of students should be allowed in each class, although the risk factor would be quite high. Some parents formed the 'Kakinada School Parents' group to oppose moves for reopening schools.

"The government says the consent of parents before sending their children to school is compulsory. Who will take responsibility if a student contracts the virus," said founder of the group, A.P.J. Vinu.

He urged Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy not to give permission for reopening of schools in the given circumstances. Another parent K. Ramachandra Rao said that contrary to claims being made by the government, the number of cases is increasing. He said that despite large cases being reported, the government was not declaring such vulnerable areas as containment zones.

demanding that Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy break his silence on the benami transactions in the SEZ land acquisition.

Mr Ramakrishnudu asked as to why the CM was not taking steps to help the farmers if he did not have any links to the benami transactions.

He claimed that there was severe opposition among the locals to the setting up of bulk drug industry in Kakinada. He expressed fear that many fishermen would lose their livelihood because of the pollution from the drug industry.

YSRC JOINING NDA MAY BE DISCUSSED

FROM PAGE 1

The Union Finance Ministry has allowed the state government to obtain additional borrowing capacity for the successful implementation of the PDS and EoB reforms.

Meanwhile, there are speculations that he would discuss the issue of YSRC joining the NDA government at the Centre. Jagan could also seek some favours, including a CBI inquiry into

Amaravati land scam and AP Fibernet scam.

During his earlier visit, he was asked for concrete proofs and evidence to order a CBI probe, which the State government submitted subsequently. He is expected to reiterate his demand for a CBI probe.

The CM will reach Pulivendula by 11.30 am on Monday to attend a religious memorial programme for his father-in-law E.C. Gangi Reddy.

RTE activist urges CM not to reopen schools

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 4

Well-known right to education activist Narava Prakasa Rao has urged Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to reconsider his government's decision to reopen schools from November 2.

In a letter to the chief minister and the education minister, Prakasa Rao said the decision appeared to be hasty and could expose children and teachers to the deadly Coronavirus.

To highlight alarming Covid-17 situation, he mentioned two incidents

wherein 15 students under the age of seven in Batladu village of Stenapalli mandal in Guntur district were infected while attending tuition classes and 27 tested positive in Gantayada mandal in Vizianagaram district.

He said as far as Covid-19 control measures were concerned, the government could somehow manage in state-run schools, but hundreds of private and corporate institutions would be beyond its reach.

He said sanitation and cleanliness of bathrooms in schools would also be a big task for the govern-

ment to protect children from the virus.

He also sought action against private schools for conducting classes and private tuitions.

The rider that students can attend schools with written consent of parents indicated the lack of seriousness on part of the government about the safety of children, Rao said in his letter.

Stating that the safety and protection of children's health should be the prime concern and priority of the government, he cautioned that a small mistake could result in disaster.

MAJOR CONCERNS

- It will cause huge financial loss to the parents
- Expose their children to a serious health hazard
- Reopening is not advisable, argue several parents
- It is not realistic to expect social distancing
- Thousands of students tested positive in the US
- Sanitation and cleanliness of bathrooms in schools would also be a big task for the government to protect children from the virus

Chilling out



Members of a family enjoy in Pushkar ghat and take selfie in the banks of river Krishna in Vijayawada on Sunday. — C. NARAYANA RAO

Prakasam district SWAT completes one year

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 4

Prakasam district's SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) team, first-of-its-kind in the country modeled on National Security Guard (NSG) and Organisation for Counter-Terrorist Operations (OCTOPUS), formed to counter terrorism, completed one year of its existence.

Speaking on the last day of two-day SWAT raising day celebrations on Sunday, superintendent of police (SP) Siddharth Kaushal, the brain behind the team, said that the team was formed in the district after consultations with Army experts and NSG commandos. "Swat has been trained and deployed within the predominantly rural district for urban warfare and high-risk operations," the

SP said.

Referring to the arrests of suspected ISIS members in neighbouring Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and alleged masterminds of the serial bomb blasts in Hyderabad, by the NIA, the SP said "Earlier, we had SWAT teams only in metro cities like Mumbai and Delhi. As AP is witnessing communal tensions and due to the threat perception, we need to be fully vigilant to meet any

'Naidu is belittling village volunteers'

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 4

YSR Congress MLA Jogi Ramesh alleged that opposition leader N. Chandrababu Naidu ran away to Hyderabad and was making false statements against the government and belittling village volunteers to prove his existence.

He said that the volunteer system was a big hit and got accolades from Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. "The people are happy over getting all services at their doorstep and expressed their gratitude by clapping in response to the call given by Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy. But the leader of

TD is unable to digest the success and launched a vicious campaign," the MLA claimed.

Addressing a press meet here on Sunday, Mr Ramesh said Mr Jagan had spent ₹70,000 crore on welfare schemes. Mr Naidu lost his relevance and was trying to be in the limelight by resorting to untruths through Zoom and Twitter, he remarked.

The MLA faulted former MP Sabbam Hari for 'abusing' GVMC officials in Visakhapatnam who had gone to demolish the 'unauthorised' structures built by him. He stated that it was ridiculous that Hari should threaten leaders like Vijay Sai Reddy.

British-era bridge collapses into canal

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 4

A bridge built during the British times to link two villages - Kandrakota and Turpupakalu in Peddapuram mandal of East Godavari District, collapsed in the early hours of Sunday.

Because of the recent floods in Yeleru Reservoir, the bridge had suffered huge damage. As a result, officials stopped traffic over the bridge but

allowed only cycles to ply. The bridge, however, collapsed early on Sunday morning and fell into the canal.

According to locals, the bridge was built in 1932 with the initiative of Ganta Ramaswamy and Joka Venkataraju for connecting the two villages.

Panchayat Raj deputy executive engineer Bhas-kara Ramesh said that using NABARD funds, there is a proposal to construct a new bridge.



The bridge linking Kandrakota and Turpupakalu collapsed on Sunday. — DC

Traders in Agency sell low-quality items

VADREVVU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, OCT. 4

The food poisoning incident in East Godavari revealed the availability of cheap and low-quality food items, including groceries and others in agency areas.

People in the agency areas are forced to buy these items because of their low income and non-availability of quality foodstuffs at affordable prices. The main villages and shandy markets have small kiosks selling low-quality food items.

"The Guthi Koya community are mostly illiterate and financially backward and they can't afford to buy branded food items," said VR Puram sub-inspector B. Venkatesh.

Social activists suggested that the government open special stores in

agencies for provision of quality food at reasonable prices. "There are some Girijan Cooperative stores in some of the areas. The government should extend those stores or set up special stores to sell essential commodities, including food items, to the tribal people at subsidised rates," said Rights Watch (Andhra Pradesh) president Balu Akkisa.

The people of Chinturu suffering from swollen legs due to adulterated food items. Cheap edible oil leads to health problems among the tribal people.

Akkisa said that there were more products, available in the agency area, which are procured by the tribal people and the government should take steps to provide reasonably priced food items to them.

KADAPA DISTRICT DESAM GENERAL SECRETARY ARRESTED IN LAND CASE

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, OCT. 4

TD Kadapa district general secretary Balisetty Hariprasad was arrested by Rajampet police on Sunday for allegedly involving in a land dispute.

The police asked him to come to police station to discuss land dispute

dated back to 2003. When he reached the DSP office at Rajampet, the police arrested him.

Hariprasad said that the case is pending in High Court. He questioned the police on his arrest. He said police arrested him for questioning the fail- ures of the state government. District TD leaders condemned the arrest.

emergencies. With SWAT, we can effectively counter any terrorist attack in the future without relying on anyone else."

Since the formation of the SWAT, the commandos were given special training in management and use of new weapons, room interventions and counter-ambush, etc. The commandos were also given training in Kravmaga, a type of martial arts, and defence techniques.

As part of the completion of one year of SWAT formation, the SP tested the commandos' prowess. The top cop also conducted revision classes on the handling and use of new weapons.

AR DSP K. Raghavendra, SB-I inspector V. Suryanarayana, CC inspector R. Rambabu, SWAT RI Srikant Nayak, RI J. Hari Babu, IT core SI Nayab Rasool, RSI Mohan Kumar and SWAT staff took part.

OTHER STORIES

Five arrested for hundi thefts

Kakinada: Indrapalem police arrested five youngsters, M. Kodandam, 22, K. Durga Prasad 19, V. Satish alias Pichukagadu 20, T. Naveen Kasi, 20 and an 18-year-old juvenile from Kakinada, on charges of stealing cash and other articles from hundis in four temples in Amalapuram town and Allavaram. They also stole bikes parked outside the temples under Indrapalem police station limits. DSP (Crimes) Bhima Rao said that they recovered ₹78,950 including ₹13,950 hundi cash and seized two bikes. He appreciated the efforts of Sub-Inspector K. Nagarajuna Raju, ASI Suribabu and other personnel for nabbing the five. Indrapalem police registered a case.

Prema Samajam under endowments

Visakhapatnam: The state Endowments Department took over the control of Prema Samajam located in Dabagardens in Visakhapatnam city on Sunday. K. Sirishas has been appointed as the executive officer of the Samajam. The well known social organisation of national repute, Prema Samajam has been serving orphans, destitute and leprosy patients. The Samajam was founded in 1930 by M. Satyanarayana and registered in 1941. Keeping in view large extents of land and property donated by philanthropists, a district committee formed by the collector suggested take over.

Rao elected AP bar council executive

Tirupati: Tirupati-based senior advocate Galla Sudarshan Rao has been elected as a member of the AP state Bar Council. The chairman of the AP state bar council Ganta Rama Rao said in a statement released on Sunday that Sudarshan Rao was chosen as a member at the online session of the council executive meeting held today at Amaravati. Mr Sudarshan Rao has been practising as an advocate since 1994. He functioned as public prosecutor of the family court from 2007-2010 during which he was in-charge public prosecutor for court no. 4 and 6. Mr Rao also held the post of president of the Tirupati bar association from 2014-15.

Sundarakanda pathanam begins

Tirupati: The fifth phase of Akhanda Sundarakanda pathanam has commenced on a grand note with scores of Veda pandits rendered shlokas from different Sargas at Nada Neerajanam platform in Tirumala on Sunday. On the occasion, 174 Shlokas from 15 to 19 Sargas were recited by 200 Vedic pundits and scholars hailing from different Vedic institutions of TTD and also from National vedic university and Rastriya Sanskrit vidya peetham. The event commenced at 7 am and lasted for over two hours. At the beginning of the programme veteran, Annamacharya Project artist Dr G. Balakrishna Prasad and Bullemma troupe presented Shri Rama bhajana while in the end Dr K. Vandana of SV college of music and dance presented Anjaneya bhajana penned by RSVP VC Muralidhara Sharma. Meanwhile, the Principal of Dharmagiri Veda Vignana Peetham K.S.S. Avadhani, Vedic scholars Pavana Kumara Sharma and K. Ramayacharyulu recited 174 Shlokas from 15 to 19 chapters of Sundarakanda.

Officials urged to finish road works

Kadapa: Government Chief Whip Srikanth Reddy directed the Panchayati Raj Engineering officials to complete the construction of rural roads as soon as possible. On Sunday, he had a meeting with Panchayati Raj DEs Gopal Reddy and Keshav at his office to review the status of various development structures in Rayachoti constituency. Village secretariats, Rythu Bharosa Kendrams (RBK), village health clinics, road constructions and other development works were inquired into. He said the construction of 39 cement roads under the Externally Aided Projects (EAP) grant of ₹32 crore was progressing slowly and should be speeded up. Srikanth Reddy directed to take steps to complete the construction of BT roads sanctioned with ₹10 crore from the employment guarantee fund as soon as possible. Later on he reviewed house sites layouts with the housing officers. He suggested that steps be taken to pay the bills expeditiously to the contractors who have undertaken the layout structures.

East Godavari crosses 1L mark in Covid-19 cases

Recovery rate in Andhra Pradesh increases to 91.61 per cent

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 4

The decrease in Corona positive cases continued on Sunday in AP with the total number of cases during the last 24 hours dropping to 6,242 from an earlier average of 10,000 cases per day. Godavari districts are at the top in number of Covid-19 positive cases, with East Godavari crossing the one-lakh mark and West Godavari being at the second place with total 70,133 positive cases on Sunday.

In all, 7,084 patients have been discharged after getting cured, increasing the recovery rate in the past 24 hours, providing a ray of hope that the spread of Coronavirus is being contained.

The total number of positive cases in the state reached 7,19,256 on Sunday. The number of recoveries is 6,58,875, while there are 54,400 active cases and total 5,981 deaths due to Covid-19.

East Godavari district on Sunday registered 826 positive cases and crossed the one-lakh mark, recording total 1,00,785 positive cases. Both East and West Godavari districts account for 24 percent of state's infection tally. East Godavari itself accounts for 14 percent of cases.

The recovery rate continues to increase with percentage of recovery reaching 91.61, the state-wide total recoveries being 6,58,875.

As many as 40 new Corona deaths have been registered in the past 24 hours. The highest number of six deaths have been registered in Krishna district, followed by five each in Anantapur and Chittoor, four each in East Godavari, Guntur and Nellore, three each in Prakasam and Visakhapatnam, two each in Srikakulam and West Godavari, and one each in Vizianagaram and Kurnool districts.

As many as 72,811 Corona tests have been conducted in the past 24 hours, with 6,242 of them turning out to be positive.

AP has tested a total of 60,94,206 samples for Covid-19 till date and is in top place in the country in number of Coronavirus tests conducted.

As many as 7,084 patients have recovered from Corona in the past 24 hours and have been discharged from various hospitals in the state.

The single day highest number of 863 Corona positive cases has been registered in Chittoor district in the past 24 hours, increasing the total to 65,361 in which 6,310 are



A health worker is conducting swab test physically-challenged girl in Covid-19 pandemic at IGMCI Stadium in Vijayawada on Sunday.

—DC

Covid expert cautions people to be ever vigilant

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 4

The gradual decline in Covid-19 positive cases in the last few days is giving relief to the state administration and medical fraternity. Around, 60,000-65,000 tests are being conducted on an average in a day.

Covid Command Control Special Officer Dr C Prabhakara Reddy said that though the numbers are reducing, one should continue to take precautionary measures to contain the spread of virus.

Dr Prabhakar Reddy said that if this trend continues for some more days, there is optimism that the situation will be under control by the end

of this month. He stated that deaths have reduced by almost 50 per cent. He called upon youngsters to be particularly cautious in this regard and feel the responsibility to contain corona by following Covid-19 protocol.

He said that positive cases are coming down while there is an increase in tests and contact tracing.

Dr Prabhakar Reddy further said that Hyderabad-headquartered Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) had identified that the virus is recurrent and even those who have recovered have to be on alert.

Dr Prabhakar Reddy further said that Hyderabad-headquartered Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) had identified that the virus is recurrent and even those who have recovered have to be on alert.

He said that earlier districts like Krishna Kurnool and Guntur were reporting more number of positive cases.

However, in recent times, except East and West Godavari districts, the other districts are reporting less than 500 positive cases on an average every day.

Visakhapatnam district, increasing the total positive cases to 51,049 in which 3,237 are active cases.

In Vizianagaram district, 221 new cases have been registered in the past 24 hours, taking the total positive cases to 36,123 in which 2,435 are active cases. 220 new cases have been registered in Kurnool district, increasing the total positive cases to 57,072 in which 1,815 are active cases.

The least number of 192 new Corona positive cases in the past 24 hours have been registered in Srikakulam district, increasing the total positive cases to 40,509 in which 3,120 are active cases.

Girl claims she stabbed man who tried to rape her

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, OCT. 4

A minor girl from a remote village under Peddakurappalli panchayat in Ramasamudram mandal of Chittoor district has told police that she survived a rape attempt, thanks to a sickle she had with her.

Circle inspector Madhusudhan Reddy said the girl informed police that she and her sister were grazing sheep in the nearby forest area when a person they identified as Shankar, 45, grabbed her from behind, dragged her into bushes and tried to rape her.

● **THE GIRL** informed police that she and her sister were grazing sheep in the nearby forest area when a person they identified as Shankar, 45, grabbed her from behind, dragged her into bushes and tried to rape her.

“The girl claimed that she then hit the man with the sickle that she was carrying to cut grass, after which he let her go. She then went and complained to her parents in the village. Parents there-

after lodged a complaint with Ramasamudram police, who have registered a case,” the inspector said.

However, the accused rapist has also registered a case against the minor girl and her family members for attacking and inflicting severe injuries on him.

“Accused Shankar claims that the minor girl's family and he have a long-pending dispute over farmlands in their village. We are thoroughly investigating the matter to verify the facts,” CI Madhusudhan Reddy said, adding that they are awaiting medical reports to proceed further into the case.

Some localities in Kurnool city getting contaminated water

DC CORRESPONDENT KURNOOL, OCT. 4

With drinking water pipelines getting mixed up damaged drain pipes, some colonies of Kurnool city are getting contaminated water since the past few days.

The problem is acute in Lakshmi Nagar and Bilal Masjid areas. Officials of the municipality's engineering department say they are trying to fix the issue.

Adding to the problem is sewage water overflowing onto the roads in the city, mostly due to monsoon rains. This problem is an annual feature.

V. Venkateswarlu, a resident of Lakshmi Nagar, said in Ward 24 opposite the Bilal Masjid, municipal water being supplied is contaminated. It is emitting a foul smell. “We are unable to use the water for cooking. If we use bore water, the fluoride content in it is very high. Despite several reminders, municipal authorities have not yet fixed the problem,” Venkateswarlu com-



● **DESPITE SEVERAL** reminders, municipal authorities have not yet fixed the problem

plained. He said the civic body should at least deploy water tankers to supply drinking water in the area.

When contacted, Kurnool MLA Hafeez Khan said he has got in touch with officials concerned to fix the issue on a priority basis.

Kurnool Municipal Corporation commissioner D. K. Balaji could not be contacted as he is down with Coronavirus.

Fake VPT website cheats many unemployed youth

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 4

Cyber crooks have posted a recruitment notification on a fake website of Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT) and cheated numerous unemployed youth. It is not yet known how many aspirants applied for the posts, though the application fee for trainee engineers was ₹1,200.

The official website of VPT is www.vizagport.com, whereas cyber criminals put out the employment notification on the website www.visakhapatnamport.com. The notification announced that recruitment is being conducted for posts of trainee engineers and diploma trainee posts.

The fake website mentioned that educational qualifications for trainee engineers must B.Tech (Fresher) in mechanical, electrical, electronics,

● **Officials of the VPT** got to know of the fake website on Saturday night when they received phone calls from some people inquiring about the recruitment.

● **VPT joint director K. Rajendra Kumar** clarified the port trust has not issued any recruitment notification.

metallurgy, instrumentation, civil or chemical engineering. The basic salary was advertised as ₹80,000. The education qualification for diploma trainee posts was a diploma in polytechnic. Fraudsters asked candidates to fill the application online and pay an application fee of ₹1,200

for trainee engineer posts and ₹1,000 for diploma trainee posts through the UPI payment mode.

Officials of the VPT got to know of the fake website on Saturday night when they received phone calls from some people inquiring about the recruitment.

VPT joint director K. Rajendra Kumar clarified the port trust has not issued any recruitment notification. Unknown persons have created the fake website only to cheat the gullible in the form of application fee.

VPT has lodged a formal complaint with police seeking investigation into the incident.

An official of Cybercrimes police station in Vizag said they will examine the complaint and ascertain the number of victims before taking action against the accused.

Leaders hail gentleman politician

From page 1

On Sunday, moments after minister Srinivasa Rao instructed the medical officers at the corporate hospital, Srinivas died at 3.30 pm.

Dronamraju Srinivas was born on February 1, 1961. He served as the district youth Congress secretary from 1987-89 and later became the vice-president of the District

Congress Committee and served in that position till 2000.

He served as the president of DCC from 2001 till he was elected as MLA in the by-elections held in 2006 after the death of his father Dronamraju Satyanarayana. He was re-elected in 2009.

He joined YSR Congress on the eve of general elections last year but lost to sitting Telugu Desam

MLA Vasupalle Ganesh Kumar.

However, Jagan Mohan Reddy, who has immense respect for the family, made him chairman of VMRDA for a period of one year which ended last month.

Leaders, irrespective of political affiliations, consoled his death. Many called him a 'gentleman politician' of Andhra Pradesh.



Dronamraju Srinivas

HIGHWAY | ROBBERY

CCTV footages showed gang breaking the door locks of the container 2 of Kanjarbhat gang held, 913 phones recovered

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 4

Guntur urban police on Sunday arrested two persons belonging to the notorious Kanjarbhat gang in a Madhya Pradesh village and seized 913 cell phones, ₹4.5 lakh cash, cutters and a vehicle.

The arrested are Ravi Janjhan and Sharukh Khan.

Seven more members of the gang are still at large. The gang had stolen 960 mobile phones from a container lorry.

Guntur urban SP R.N. Ammi Reddy, addressing a press meet at Guntur, said that the gang had robbed mobile phones

from a moving container near Kaza toll gate on Vijayawada-Chennai National Highway-16 on September 16. The police found the involvement of notorious Kanjarbhat gang in the robbery during their investigation and sent a team to Madhya Pradesh for further inquiry. The team arrested the duo and seized the booty from Dewas village.

The container carrying 13,760 mobile phones from Raising Star Mobile India Private Limited in Sri City of Vedayapalem in Nellore district was on its way to deliver the cargo to Gionee Technologies India Private Limited in Kolkata.

The nine-member Kanjarbhat gang trailed the vehicle and entered into the container by opening the back door with cutters while it was speeding down the NH-16 towards Kolkata.

Another vehicle driver who saw the gang at work alerted the driver of mobile phones-laden container. The driver immediately stopped by the road-side near Kaza, tried to resist the gang's robbery attempt. But they threatened him at knife point and left the spot with 960 mobile phones.

The SP said that two special teams headed by Guntur South DSP M. Kamalakhar Rao and Nallapadu circle inspec-



tor K Veeraswami were formed to crack the case. The police first checked the CCTV footages on the NH-16 and found the gang following the container and breaking the back

door locks with huge cutters while on the move.

The SP said that after stealing the mobiles the members of the gang, experts in driving at top speed, swiftly returned to

their village.

He said that the police team camped for 15 days in Madhya Pradesh and came to know about the gang's involvement in similar robberies.

Guntur urban SP R.N. Ammi Reddy addressing media on busting the mobile carrying container robbery case at Guntur district police office Guntur city on Sunday.

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SHORT TAKES

BJD MLA PRADEEP MAHARATHY DIES OF CORONAVIRUS

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 4

Former minister and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MLA from Pipili Pradeep Maharathy passed away on Saturday night. He was 65 and is survived by his wife, son and daughter. On September 14, the BJD leader had tested positive for Covid-19 and was undergoing treatment ever since.

Born on July 4, 1955, Maharathy was one of the towering non-Congress leaders in Odisha. Considered a close confidante of former chief minister Biju Patnaik, Maharathy began his career from student politics. He was elected as secretary, Morning College, Puri, and latter as president of SCS College, Puri. In the 1975 Emergency, he was arrested under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA).

Known for his good sense of humour, the leader always projected him as a farmer. He always chose to raise the voice of common people both in and outside the state Assembly.

BJP MP WARNS OF 'GUERRILLA' STYLE RALLY IN WB

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, OCT. 4

In what may trigger controversy, BJP MP of Barrackpore Arjun Singh has threatened the Mamata Banerjee government of a "guerrilla" style rally by the saffron party which will "shake" the state secretariat Nabanna in Howrah on October 8. He also warned the Trinamul Congress that "no obstacles" would be accepted by the BJP workers in its mission.

To corner the TMC ahead of the Assembly elections in the state, the BJP Yuva Morcha has called the '*Nabanna Chalo Abhijan*' on seven issues — corruption in the SSC/TET recruitments, fair recruitment process, jobs to the unemployed, increase in age limit to appear for the examination, making the Public Service Commission free of corruption, bribery for jobs and jobs instead of allowance to the unemployed. The state secretariat houses the Chief Minister's office alongwith those of several Cabinet ministers and top bureaucrats.

RHEA SHOULD BE RELEASED, SAYS ADHIR

Kolkata, Oct. 4: A day after a panel of doctors at AIIMS in Delhi ruled out murder as the cause of Sushant Singh Rajput's death, leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, Adhir Choudhury, on Sunday demanded that the actor's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty be released forthwith without further harassment.

Choudhury, who had said in the past that Chakraborty was being "falsely implicated" following her arrest in connection with a drug probe linked to Rajput's death, claimed on Twitter that she was a victim of a "political conspiracy".

"Now the BJP propaganda machinery may accuse the forensic team of AIIMS who has nullified the allegation that Rhea Chakraborty conspired to kill Sushant Singh Rajput," the state Congress chief tweeted.

"We are all pained by the expiry of Sushant ji but he cannot be honoured by falsely implicating a lady as an accused, I have earlier said that Rhea Chakraborty was an innocent lady, she should be released without further harassment to her, she has been the victim of Political conspiracy (sic)," he added.

Farmers burn paddy stubble



A farmer burns paddy stubble at a farm on the outskirts of Amritsar on Sunday. The pollution and smokey haze around the adjoining states of Punjab and Haryana, especially New Delhi has been linked with stubble burning and is said to be a contributing factor for increasing air pollution.

— PTI

ISI may take advantage of Punjab farmer strike: Intel

Reports suggest that Pak agency is trying to take advantage of farmers stir

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 4

Central intelligence and security agencies are closely monitoring the situation in Punjab as they feel Pakistan's intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is desperate to take advantage of the ongoing farmers' agitation in the state and wants to open a new front in Punjab after Kashmir.

The situation in Punjab remains tense as farmers are protesting against the recent farm Bills

cleared by the Centre.

Intelligence sources claimed that they were in constant touch with the state authorities to monitor the situation as reports suggest that ISI would use the agitation to revive militancy in the state. Similar attempts were also made in recent months when weapons were dropped close to the border using drones from Pakistan for subversive elements in Punjab.

Following this, security was increased considerably along the Indo-Pak

● **INTELLIGENCE SOURCES** claim that they were in constant touch with the state authorities to monitor the situation as reports suggest that ISI would use the agitation to revive militancy in the state.

border both by the BSF and the Punjab Police. Killing some religious and political leaders in the last few months was also seen as a desperate attempt to revive militancy in Punjab.

But now the intelligence and security agencies are extremely skeptical that in view of the ongoing agitation, the security situation might be compromised.

"In the past we have seen that ISI always tries to take advantage of such a situation. They made attempts in Kashmir Valley also following the abrogation of Article 370 but our security agencies did not let them succeed. Even in Punjab we will ensure that attempts by ISI to reactivate terror activi-

ties will fail completely," a senior security official said.

Following close coordination between Central and state security agencies, patrolling and surveillance in some sensitive areas, particularly along the border, have been increased substantially. As a preventive measure, the intelligence units in all districts have been activated in order to ensure that no untoward incidents take place in the wake of the agitation by farmers in Punjab.

GURUNG CAMP BUILDS RAPPORT WITH BJP

From page 1

Mr Tamang was in the good books of the TMC for his pro-government stand.

Meanwhile, Mr Gurung and his camp built rapport with the BJP. His lieutenant, Roshan Giri, informed that their representative would attend the meeting. It is, however, not clear whether anyone from the state government or GTA would attend the meeting.

State tourism minister Goutam Deb alleged, "BJP is conspiring to divide Bengal. We will not allow this. We will foil this." Rejecting his claim, state BJP general secretary Savantan Basu made it clear that the saffron party is against the division of the state but it wants a "permanent solution" to the issue.

● **STATE TOURISM minister Goutam Deb** alleges that the BJP is conspiring to divide Bengal and says that they will not allow this and will foil the attempt.

Plans to vaccinate 25 crore people by July 2021: Minister

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, OCT. 4

Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Sunday said the government plans to vaccinate about 25 crore people against the Coronavirus by July next year.

He said priority would be given to health workers engaged in Covid-19 management in getting inoculated and asserted the Centre would ensure fair and equitable distribution of vaccines, once they are ready. The health ministry has asked states to submit a list of priority groups by October end, particularly the health workers, who will receive vaccine shots.

The Centre estimates to receive 40-50 crore doses of the vaccine.

During an interaction on social media platforms, Dr

Vardhan said vaccine procurement would be done centrally with each consignment tracked real-time until delivery to ensure it reaches those who need it the most and there is no black-marketing. The list of frontline health workers will include both government as well as private-sector doctors, nurses, paramedics, sanitary staff, ASHA workers, surveillance officers and many other occupational categories who are involved in tracing, testing and treatment of patients.

"The Centre is also working on plans for building capacities in human resources, training, supervision and others on a massive scale and roughly estimates to receive and utilise 40-50 crore doses covering approximately 20-25 crore people by July 2021. All this is under various stages of finalisation," he said.

India, China to hold 7th round of talks on Oct. 12

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 4

India and China will hold the seventh round of Corps Commanders-level talks on October 12 to discuss measures to disengage their armies at the line of actual control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh where both countries are engaged in 150 days of military stand-off.

The talks are being held when some high peaks at Ladakh have already seen some initial snowfall and winter has started to set in. Both sides are prepared to keep their armies at these high altitude mountains during winters when tempera-

tures dip to below zero degrees and bone-chilling wind make survival extremely difficult.

This will be the last meeting under 14 Corps Commander Lt Gen Harinder Singh, who is to take charge as Commandant of the Indian Military Academy (IMA) later this month after completing his one-year tenure.

Lt Gen PGK Menon, who will be the new 14 Corps Commander, will also take part in the Oct. 12 meeting. Representative from the ministry of external affairs, joint secretary (East Asia) Naveen Srivastava is also expected to attend the meeting.

Shooter Shreyasi Singh joins BJP

New Delhi, Oct. 4: Commonwealth Games gold medallist shooter Shreyasi Singh, whose father Digvijay Singh was a seasoned socialist leader from Bihar, joined the Bharatiya Janata Party on Sunday and may fight the state Assembly elections.

She joined the BJP at the party headquarters here in the presence of its general secretaries Bhupender Yadav, who is in charge of its Bihar affairs, and Arun Singh.

She later met party president J.P. Nadda. The 29-year-old Arjuna Awardee, who won a gold medal in the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, is likely to be fielded by the BJP in the Assembly polls.

Her father was elected to

Lok Sabha several times from Banka and had also served as a member of Rajya Sabha. His wife Putul Singh also represented Banka as an independent in Lok Sabha following his death in 2010.

She later joined the BJP but was expelled from the saffron party during the Lok Sabha polls last year after she filed her nomination as an independent from Banka as the seat was allocated to the JD(U).

A Union minister in the Chandra Shekhar and Atal Bihari Vajpayee governments, Digvijay Singh was with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for a few years before they fell out and he snapped his political association with him.

— PTI

GET WELL SOON: SHIV SENA TO KANGANA

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, OCT. 4

Following the AIIMS report confirming Sushant Singh Rajput's death as a suicide, Shiv Sena has taken potshots at actress Kangana Ranaut asking her to get mentally better for coming up with vile conspiracy and culture theories. Without naming her, the party said those abused Mumbai police and cast aspersions on their credibility should apologise to them unconditionally.

"After the AIIMS report, shouldn't all those who were gunning for Mumbai Police, abusing them, casting aspersions on their credibility offer them an unconditional apology? All those who came up with their vile conspiracy & culture theories should really try to get mentally better soon," tweeted Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi on Sunday.

The AIIMS forensic panel has ruled out a murder claim in the Sushant Singh death case, dismissing the theories of poisoning and strangling.

100% ELECTRIFIED RAIL TRANSPORT SYSTEM BY 2023

Kolkata, Oct. 4: The Railways has embarked on a massive electrification drive and by 2023, the country will have the world's largest 100 per cent clean energy-driven rail transport system, Union minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

The railway minister also said that work is underway to set up an infrastructure for generating 20,000 megawatt of renewable energy, which will provide power for running the entire network. "By 2023, the Indian Railways will be the world's largest 100 per cent electrified rail transport system," Goyal said at the inauguration of an underground station of the city's East-West Metro corridor.

He contended that "no other part of the world, not even the most-developed country", has launched such an ambitious project. The entire world is watching India's massive thrust towards environment-friendly modes of transport, he said adding that the project is a crucial part of the Union government's initiatives to build a green nation. Asserting that the country is marching ahead in the direction of self-reliance, he said that the railways has become almost 98 per cent indigenous equipment procurer.

— PTI

HATHRAS | CASE | Pehalvan's son blames victim's family, claims they keep 'changing their stand'

Meeting at ex-BJP MLA's house defends accused

Lucknow/Hathras, Oct. 4: Scores of people held a meeting on Sunday outside the house of a former BJP MLA in Hathras where they defended the accused in the alleged gangrape of a Dalit woman who later died, and demanded registration of an FIR against her family members.

Heavy police force was deployed in the vicinity of the residence of former BJP MLA Rajvir Singh Pehalvan, located around 8-9 kilometres from the vic-

tim's village. One of the organisers of the meeting and Pehalvan's son Manveer Singh denied that the gathering comprised members from the upper castes and said they were from "different sections of society". "We welcome the CBI inquiry ordered by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. We have faith in the investigation," Singh said while claiming that the victim's family members were "changing their stand". "The entire

scenario has been created to blame the government. The accused persons are in favour of any type of inquiry. But the victims are changing their stand every now and then. They do not want a narco test or a CBI probe. Now they want other kinds of inquiries," he claimed.

He said an FIR should be registered by police against the complainants in the case. "Our demand is that a case should be filed against those people who had filed

the case in the first instance," he said.

The 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped by four upper caste men in Hathras on September 14. She died on September 29 at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital. Singh also said various legal options were being explored to defend the accused in the case. He asserted that the arrest of some of the accused persons from their homes was proof of their innocence.

— PTI

AZAD CHIEF SEEKS Y-PLUS SECURITY FOR VICTIM'S FAMILY MEMBERS

Hathras, Oct. 4: Bhim Army chief Chandrasekhhar Azad on Sunday visited the family of Hathras gangrape and murder victim and demanded government to allocate Y-plus security cover to them.

He also demanded that the government order an investigation into case

under the supervision of a retired Supreme Court judge.

Speaking to ANI, he said, "I demand Y security for the family or I'll take them to my house as they aren't safe here. We want an inquiry to be done under the supervision of a retired Supreme Court judge."

— Agencies

IN BRIEF

Shooting: Police officer killed

Myrtle Beach (US): A South Carolina police chief announced early Sunday the death of an officer following a shooting in Myrtle Beach. Officer Jacob Hancher was killed while responding to a call for service late Saturday, Myrtle Beach Chief Amy Prock said at a news conference. It's unclear what led up to the shooting, but witnesses told *The Sun News* they heard several shots around 10 p.m. Police had said on social media that an officer involved shooting had occurred around that time. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division has been called in to investigate, news outlets reported. Hancher was a community service officer for four years and had been a police officer for less than a year, Prock said.

3 blow up ATM in restaurant

Philadelphia: Three men blew up an ATM in a Chinese take-out restaurant in Philadelphia while the establishment was still open but were unable to get any cash, police said. The men entered the Golden Chinese/American takeout restaurant in northwest Philadelphia shortly after 9 pm Friday and ordered food, police said. They then placed some kind of explosive device which damaged the ATM and the window and knocked items off shelves behind the counter, police said. The three went back into the establishment but were unable to remove the cash box that was still inside the damaged ATM, police said. The three then fled, one on a bicycle and the other two on foot. Police were searching for suspects and no arrests were immediately reported.

New Caledonia votes to be free

Noumea (New Caledonia): Voters in New Caledonia turned out in large numbers on Sunday to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from France and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century. Sunday's independence referendum is part of a three-decade decolonisation effort aimed at settling tensions on the archipelago between native Kanaks seeking independence and residents willing to remain in France. More than 180,000 voters were invited to answer the question: "Do you want New Caledonia to gain full sovereignty and become independent?" "Today is not a day like any other. Everyone woke up with the will to express oneself (through the vote). This is a historic day," Robert Wayaridri, 60, said. In Noumea, the capital, large lines of people waited to vote under the hot sun, sometimes for hours. Almost 80% of voters had already casted their ballots one hour before poll stations closed, according to the French ministry of the Overseas.

XI FOR CLOSER TIES WITH BANGLADESH

Beijing, Oct. 4: Chinese President Xi Jinping said he stands ready with Bangladesh leaders to better align the two countries' strategies and jointly promote the construction of his multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to take the strategic partnership of the two countries to new heights. Xi made the remarks in an exchange of congratulatory messages with his Bangladesh counterpart, Mohammad Abdul Hamid, on the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the bilateral diplomatic ties. Xi hailed the steady and long-term friendship saying he is ready to work with Hamid to better align development strategies with Bangladesh, step up cooperation under the framework of the BRI and push forward the China-Bangladesh strategic, cooperative partnership to a new level, official media reported. With over \$26 billion Chinese investments and \$38 billion funding commitments, Bangladesh is one of the largest recipients of China's infrastructure project. China has also offered zero-tariff treatment to 97 per cent of Bangladesh's exports by adding 5,161 more items to the existing list of 3,095 duty-free products. The BRI seeks to build rail, maritime and road links from Asia to Europe and Africa in a revival of ancient Silk Road trading routes.

Trump's condition was far worse than made public

Starting to feel good, says Don

Washington, Oct. 4: US President Donald Trump's condition on Friday after testing positive for the Coronavirus was far worse than was publicly acknowledged, White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said late Saturday.

"He's made unbelievable improvements from yesterday morning, when I know a number of us, the doctor and I, were very concerned," Meadows told *Fox News* in an interview. "I can tell you this the biggest thing we see is with no fever now, and with him doing really well with his oxygen saturation levels," he adds. "Yesterday morning we were really concerned by that. He had a fever, and his oxygen level had dropped rapidly. Yet in typical style, this president was up and walking around."

Meadows said there was never a risk Trump would have to hand over power to US Vice President Mike Pence, after a day of conflicting reports and confusion over the American leader's actual fitness.

His comments echoed remarks by White House doctor Sean Conley, who

Washington, Oct. 4: President Donald Trump, who was admitted to a military hospital for treatment of Covid-19, said he has started to "feel much better" and thanked the American people and global leaders for their support. "I came here. Wasn't feeling so well. I feel much better now. We're working hard to get me all the way back. I have to be back because we still have to Make America Great Again," Trump said in a video message from the military hospital in a suburb of Washington on Saturday. However, White House physician Sean

Conley has said the president is "not yet out of the woods". "While not yet out of the woods, the team remains cautiously optimistic," Dr Conley said, adding that the plan for Sunday is to continue observation in between doses of Remdesivir, closely monitoring his clinical status while fully supporting his conduct of presidential duties.

Conley, in a memorandum, said the President had received Regeron's antibody cocktail on October 2. "President Trump continues to do well, having made substantial progress since diagnosis," Conley said. — *PTI*

said Trump had "made substantial progress since diagnosis, and remained 'fever-free and off supplemental oxygen.'" Conley was evasive when asked earlier whether the Presi-

dent had received supplementary oxygen at any point since falling ill, only confirming that he hadn't received any at the hospital or on Thursday — the day of his test. — *AFP*

PREZ DIAGNOSIS: U.S. VULNERABLE TO CORONAVIRUS

St Charles (US), Oct. 4: President Donald Trump's startling Covid-19 diagnosis serves as a cruel reminder of the pervasive spread of the Coronavirus and shows how tenuous of a grip the nation has on the crisis, health experts said. With US infections rising for several weeks, Trump became one of the tens of thousands of Americans who test positive each day. He went through a "very concerning" period Friday and the next 48 hours "will be critical" in his care, White House chief of staff Mark Meadows said Saturday.

That differed dramatically from the rosy assessment by Trump's staff and doctors, who took pains not to reveal the president had received supplemental oxygen at the White House before he went to a military hospital. Some of Trump's advisers and allies also have tested positive. — *AP*



Azeri protesters tear and burn an Armenia national flag as they take part in a demonstration in Istanbul on Sunday in support of Azerbaijan in the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. — *AFP*

COURT TO HEAR NAWAZ SPEECH BAN APPEAL

Islamabad, Oct. 4: A Pakistani court will on Monday hear a petition seeking a ban on airing speeches of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on television channels, days after the top PML-N leader made blistering remarks from London targeting the country's powerful Army.

A citizen, Amir Aziz, filed the petition in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) and made 70-year-old Sharif, his brother Shehbaz Sharif, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) chairman and others as respondents, the *Express Tribune* reported.

IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah fixed October 5 as the date for hearing the petition, the paper said. — *PTI*

Azerbaijan's No. 2 city hit in fighting with Armenia

Baku (Azerbaijan), Oct. 4: The fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces continued on Sunday over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, with Azerbaijan's second-largest city coming under attack.

Azerbaijani officials said Sunday that Armenian forces attacked Ganja, the country's second largest city. Hikmet Hajiyev, an aide to the Azerbaijani president, tweeted a video depicting damaged buildings, and called it the result of "Armenia's massive missile attacks against dense residential areas" in Ganja. It wasn't immediately possible to verify the authenticity of the video. Hajiyev said in another tweet that attacks on Ganja and other areas in Azerbaijan were launched "from territory of

Armenia." Armenia's Defence Ministry said that "no fire of any kind is being opened from the territory of Armenia in Azerbaijan's direction."

But Nagorno-Karabakh's leader, Arayik Harutyunyan, confirmed on Facebook he ordered "rocket attacks to neutralize military objects" in Ganja. His spokesman, Vahram Poghosyan, said the territory's army destroyed a military airport in Ganja, a claim Azerbaijani officials denied. The attack on the city killed one civilian and left four others wounded, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry tweeted. Harutyunyan said he ordered his forces to stop the attacks on Ganja to avoid civilian casualties. Nagorno-Karabakh's leader added that "proportionate and crushing" strikes targeting the

opponent's forces would continue, if Azerbaijan fails "to draw appropriate lessons." The fighting, which broke out on September 27 and has continued for eight straight days, is the biggest escalation in years in the decades-long dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. The region lies within Azerbaijan, but is controlled by local ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia. Both sides said the hostilities have spread beyond the break-away territory and accused each other of attacking areas outside Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ganja, with a population of more than 330,000, is located roughly 100 kilometres (about 60 miles) north of Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh's capital. — *AP*

Bumpy situation till X-mas: Boris

UK records over 10K Covid cases in a day for the first time since mass testing began

London, Oct. 4: Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Sunday warned of a "bumpy" ride at least through to Christmas in December, as the UK recorded more than 10,000 Coronavirus cases in a day for the first time since mass testing for the deadly virus was put in place.

According to official figures, there were 12,872 new cases on Saturday, while a further 49 people have died within 28 days of testing positive for Covid-19. However, the government said a technical issue meant some cases from earlier in the week were not recorded at the time so these were included in Saturday's data. In his interview, the UK PM tried to strike a note of optimism over progress in beating the virus and said he believed over the "next few weeks and months" the "scientific equation will change, whether that is vaccines or testing". "I've got to tell you in all candour it's going to continue to be bumpy through to Christmas, it may even be bumpy beyond," Johnson told the BBC.

"This could be a very tough winter for all of us — we've got to face that fact," he said. While insisting his government was working "flat out" to fight the pandemic, Johnson said he took "full responsibility for everything that has happened since the pandemic began", admitting the National Health Service (NHS) led Test and Trace system was "not perfect". But he said scientific advisers had told him that by spring in March/April 2021 "things will be radically different and we will be in a different world".

Johnson said he understood people's "frustration" at differing rules and restrictions for different parts of the country but stressed that localised lockdowns was the right way to go and wait to see if the R number — of the rate at which the infection is transmitted — comes down as a result. "I'm a freedom-loving Tory. I don't want to have to impose measures like this, are you crazy? This is the last thing we want to do. But I also have to save life. And that's our priority," he said. "And as Prime Minister I couldn't take a course that could expose us to tens of thousands more deaths in very short order...we've got to continue to bear down on this virus, whilst protecting the economy. That's the balance we've got to strike," he added.

The interview this week coincides with his Conservative Party's annual conference, being conducted virtually for the first time due to coronavirus restrictions on mass gatherings. The Tories have created a 3D virtual conference with a computer-generated auditorium, foyer and fringe meeting rooms. However, the system has not been smooth-sailing as the virtual platform crashed during a session with UK Cabinet Office minister Michael Gove. — *PTI*

Market capitalism has failed: Pope

Rome, Oct. 4: Pope Francis says the Coronavirus pandemic has proven that the "magic theories" of market capitalism have failed and that the world needs a new type of politics that promotes dialogue and solidarity and rejects war at all costs. Francis on Sunday laid out his vision for a post-Covid world by uniting the core elements of his social teachings into a new encyclical, "Fratelli Tutti" (Brothers All), which was released on the feast day of his namesake, the peace-loving St. Francis of Assisi.

The document draws its inspiration from the teachings of St. Francis and the Pope's previous preaching on the injustices of the global economy and its destruction of the planet and pairs them with his call for greater



Pope Francis

human solidarity to address today's problems. In the encyclical, Francis rejected even the Catholic Church's own doctrine justifying war as a means of legitimate defense, saying it had been too broadly applied over the centuries and was no longer viable. "It is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a 'just war,'" Francis wrote. — *AP*

Israel environment minister tests +ve

Jerusalem, Oct. 4: A member of Israel's Cabinet has tested positive for the Coronavirus as the country remains under lockdown while battling a second wave of infection.

Gila Gamliel, Israel's environmental protection minister and a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party, announced on Twitter Sunday that she had tested positive. She was the fourth minister in Israel's government to test positive for Covid-19 since March. "I feel good and

hope to recover quickly with God's help," she wrote on social media.

The Israeli government imposed a nationwide lockdown on September 18 ahead of the Jewish High Holidays in an effort to rein in a runaway outbreak of the Coronavirus. The country has one of the highest daily infection rates per capita in the world. According to Health Ministry figures, Israel has recorded over 264,000 cases and almost 1,700 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic. — *AP*

annual conference, being conducted virtually for the first time due to coronavirus restrictions on mass gatherings. The Tories have created a 3D virtual conference with a computer-generated auditorium, foyer and fringe meeting rooms. However, the system has not been smooth-sailing as the virtual platform crashed during a session with UK Cabinet Office minister Michael Gove. — *PTI*

Russia reports 10,400 new daily cases

Moscow, Oct. 4: Coronavirus infections in Russia hit a new record on Sunday, with the government reporting over 10,000 new confirmed cases for the first time since mid-May. The 10,499 new cases

reported on Sunday bring the country's total to over 1.2 million. Russia currently has the fourth largest caseload in the world and has so far reported over 21,000 deaths. The Russian authorities insist there are no plans to impose a second lockdown in the country that has lifted most of the virus-related restrictions imposed in the spring.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday another lockdown is currently not being discussed in the government. At the same time in Moscow, which reported over 3,000 new cases on Sunday in the biggest surge in months, officials have recommended the elderly to self-isolate at home. — *AP*

Rahman PDM head in Pak

Islamabad, Oct. 4: Firbrand cleric-cum-politician Maulana Fazlur Rahman has been unanimously appointed as the chief of the newly-formed Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an anti-government alliance launched by 11 Opposition parties to oust Prime Minister Imran Khan. The decision was taken on Saturday during a virtual meeting of the Opposition parties attended by Pakistan Muslim League-

Nawaz (PML-N) supremo and three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Balochistan National Party chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal among other senior politicians.

According to PDM's steering committee convener Ahsan Iqbal, Sharif proposed 67-year-old Rahman's name as the alliance president and it was endorsed by PPP chair-

man Bilawal and others, the *Dawn* newspaper reported. Sharif had initially proposed that Rahman should be appointed as the president on a permanent basis, but the idea was opposed by Bilawal and Awami National Party (ANP) leader Amir Haider Hoti, who suggested that the office should be given on a rotational basis to leaders of the constituent parties, the paper reported, citing sources. — *PTI*

CURBS | LIFTED

Muslims from outside the Kingdom could be allowed to perform pilgrimage from Nov. 1

Pilgrims return to Mecca as Saudi eases virus restrictions

Riyadh, Oct. 4: A very small, limited number of people donning the white terrycloth garment symbolic of the Muslim pilgrimage circled Islam's holiest site in Mecca on Sunday after Saudi Arabia lifted Coronavirus restrictions that had been in place for months.

The kingdom had taken the rare step of suspending the smaller "umrah" pilgrimage that draws millions year-round from across the world in early March as the Coronavirus morphed into a global pan-

demic and prompted countries to impose lockdowns and curfews to slow down transmission. But as nations begin to ease those restrictions, the Saudi government on Sunday started allowing a maximum of 6,000 pilgrims a day to enter the sprawling Grand Mosque in Mecca.

Only Saudi citizens and residents will be permitted to enter the mosque during this first phase of reopening, and each person has up to three hours to complete the pilgrimage. The Grand Mosque,

which is being sterilised and cleaned multiple times a day, houses the cube-shaped Kaaba that observant Muslims pray toward five times a day. Before visitors can enter the mosque to pray or perform the umrah, they have to apply and reserve a specific time and date through an online application to avoid crowding and maintain social distancing. Visitors can also select via the app their means of transportation and meeting points.

State TV showed on Sunday what appeared to be

fewer than 50 people circling the Kaaba at the same time and walking several metres (feet) apart. Typically, the mosque would be packed with worshippers from around the world crowded shoulder-to-shoulder at all times of the day and night. The second phase for loosening restrictions at the Grand Mosque comes into effect on October 18, allowing a maximum of 15,000 pilgrims and 40,000 for prayer from among residents and citizens based on allocated times via the app.

Muslim travellers from outside Saudi Arabia could be allowed to perform the umrah pilgrimage as early as November 1, the Interior Ministry has said. Saudi Arabia recently began easing some restrictions on international flights for the first time since March. The kingdom held a dramatically downsized, symbolic hajj pilgrimage in July due to concerns that it could easily have become a global super-spreader event for the virus.



Muslims pray around the Kaaba on Sunday. — *AP*

SHARJAH SLAM

Quinton takes Mumbai to top

Sharjah: Quinton de Kock was back amongst the runs with a sizzling 39-ball 67 before the bowlers did a commendable job in batsmen friendly Sharjah to power Mumbai Indians to a clinical 34-run win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League here on Sunday.

The swashbuckling duo of Hardik Pandya (28) and Kieron Pollard (25 not out) scored at their usual brisk pace but it was Krunal who propelled MI to 208 for five with 20 runs off a mere four deliveries in the last over. Then, the MI bowlers did just enough to restrict SRH to 174 for seven.

Chasing 209, a formidable target even on the small Sharjah ground, SRH began with Jonny Bairstow sending Trent Boult's third delivery into the stands.

Two fours and a six followed before Boult had the Englishman for a 15-ball 25. David Warner (60 off 44 balls) got into the act with a couple of boundaries off Jasprit Bumrah. Last match hero Priyam Garg failed to replicate his performance but it was the big wicket of Warner, in the 16th over bowled by Pattinson, that almost sealed the game. For MI, there were two wickets apiece for Boult (2/28), Pattinson (2/29) and Bumrah (2/41). — PTI

SCORECARD

Mumbai Indians: R. Sharma c Bairstow b Sandeep Sharma 6, Q de Kock c & b Rashid Khan 67, S. Yadav c Natarajan b Kaul 27, Ishan Kishan c Pandey b Sandeep Sharma 31, H. Pandya b Kaul 28, K. Pollard (not out) 25, K. Pandya (not out) 20. Extras (lb 1, nb 1, w 2) 4. **Total: (for five wickets in 20 overs) 208.**

FoW: 1-6, 2-48, 3-126, 4-147, 5-188. **Bowling:** S. Sharma 4-0-41-2, T. Natarajan 4-0-29-0, S. Kaul 4-0-64-2, A. Samad 2-0-27-0, R. Khan 4-0-22-1, K. Williamson 2-0-24-0.

Sunrisers Hyderabad: D. Warner c Ishan Kishan b Pattinson 60, J. Bairstow c H. Pandya b Boult 25, M. Pandey c Pollard b Pattinson 30, K. Williamson c de Kock b Boult 3, P. Garg c Chahar b KH Pandya 8, Abhishek Sharma b Bumrah 10, A. Samad c Sharma b Bumrah 20, R. Khan (not out) 3, Sandeep Sharma (not out) 0. Extras (lb 5, w 10) 15. **Total: (for seven wickets in 20 overs) 174.**

FoW: 1-34, 2-94, 3-116, 4-130, 5-142, 6-168, 7-172.

Bowling: T. Boult 4-0-28-2, J. Pattinson 4-0-29-2, K. Pandya 4-0-35-1, J. Bumrah 4-0-41-2, K. Pollard 3-0-20-0, R. Chahar 1-0-16-0.

Watto comeback!

Watson roars back to form as Chennai floor Punjab

Dubai, Oct. 4: Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis conjured up commanding unbeaten half-centuries as Chennai Super Kings demolished Kings XI Punjab by 10 wickets to snap their string of losses in the IPL here on Sunday. CSK relished a much-needed victory after three defeats in a row, overhauling a 179-run target with remarkable ease.

Watson (83 not out) and Du Plessis (87 not out) ensured that there was no close finish this time, reducing the match to a 'no-contest' with their authoritative batting.

The seasoned Australian punished the KXIP bowlers with 11 fours and three sixes in his 53-ball unbeaten knock while Du Plessis hit 11 fours and a six from 53 balls to also remain not out.

Except Mohammed Shami, KXIP did not have a bowler who could trouble the opposition batsmen and CSK exploited it to the fullest. CSK moved to sixth spot from bottom with this confidence-boosting win.

Skipper KL Rahul had hit a well-paced 63 to lead Kings XI Punjab to a competitive 178 for four after electing to bat but in the absence of good bowlers it was an onerous task to stop the experienced CSK brigade.

Rahul's risk-free 63 came off 52 balls with the help of seven fours and a six as he shared a 61-run stand with fellow opener Mayank Agarwal (26) and then raised a 58-run partnership with Nicholas Pooran (33 off 17).

CSK, like their rivals, also got to a solid start with openers — Du Plessis and Watson — creaming off 60 runs in the Powerplay overs.

— PTI



Chennai Super Kings opener Shane Watson plays a shot on way to his unbeaten 83 against Kings XI Punjab in an Indian Premier League game in Dubai on Sunday. — BCCI

SHANE WATSON

R	B	6s	4s
83*	53	3	11

SCORECARD

Kings XI Punjab: KL Rahul c Dhoni b Thakur 63, M. Agarwal c Curran b Chawla 26, Mandeep Singh c Rayudu b Jadeja 27, N. Pooran c Jadeja b Thakur 33, G. Maxwell (not out) 11, S. Khan (not out) 14. Extras (lb 1, w 3) 4. **Total: (for four wickets in 20 overs) 178.**

FoW: 1-61, 2-94, 3-152, 4-152. **Bowling:** D. Chahar 3-0-17-0, Curran 3-0-31-0, Thakur 4-0-

39-2, Bravo 4-0-38-0, Ravindra Jadeja 4-0-30-1, Chawla 2-0-22-1.

Chennai Super Kings: Shane Watson (not out) 83, F du Plessis (not out) 87. Extras (w 11) 11. **Total: (for no loss in 17.4 overs) 181.**

Bowling: Sheldon Cottrell 3-0-30-0, Mohammad Shami 3-0-35-0, Harpreet Brar 4-0-41-0, Chris Jordan 3-0-42-0, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-33-0.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	5	3	2	0	6	+1.214
Delhi Capitals	4	3	1	0	6	+0.588
Royal Challengers Bangalore	4	3	1	0	6	-0.954
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	2	2	0	4	-0.121
Rajasthan Royals	4	2	2	0	4	-0.317
Chennai Super Kings	5	2	3	0	4	-0.342
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	2	3	0	4	-0.417
Kings XI Punjab	5	1	4	0	2	+0.178

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

Iga upsets Halep; Nadal in quarters

Paris, Oct. 4: Polish teenager Iga Swiatek shocked top seed and title favourite Simona Halep to reach the Roland Garros last eight on Sunday as 12-time champion Rafael Nadal breezed into the quarterfinals for the 14th time.

Swiatek, just 19 and ranked 54 in the world, triumphed 6-1, 6-2 on the back of 30 winners and not allowing 2018 champion Halep a single break point.

"I am surprised I could do this," admitted Swiatek after ending the 17-match winning streak of Halep, the overwhelming favourite in the absence of 2019 champion Ashleigh Barty and US Open winner Naomi Osaka and following the injury-enforced withdrawal of Serena Williams.

It was a stunning turnaround for the Pole who won just one game against the Romanian at the same stage in Paris last year, swept off court in just 45 minutes.

Swiatek will face Italian qualifier Martina Trevisan for a place in the semi-finals after the 26-year-old, world number 159, registered a 6-4, 6-4 victory over fifth seed Kiki Bertens, a semifinalist in 2016.

Trevisan is the first qualifier to make the last eight since Yaroslava Shvedova in 2012.

Meanwhile in men's singles, Nadal defeated American qualifier Sebastian Korda 6-1, 6-1, 6-2, staying comfortably on course for a 13th French Open title and record-equaling 20th Grand Slam crown. Second seed Nadal racked up his 97th win at the tournament against just two defeats since his



Poland's Iga Swiatek celebrates after defeating Simona Halep of Romania in a fourth round match of the French Open at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris on Sunday. Swiatek won 6-1, 6-2. — AP

title-winning debut in 2005. He goes on to face either German sixth seed Alexander Zverev or Italian teenager Jannik Sinner in what will be his 42nd career appearance in the last eight of a Grand Slam.

"It was a good performance and I am happy with that. But Sebastian will be a great player in the future, it's impressive to see him hit the ball so well," said Nadal. — AFP

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