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KARIMNAGAR | FRIDAY | 30 OCTOBER 2020



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Pak brags about Pulwama attack

Islamabad, Oct. 29: In a boast that is bound to further embarrass Paki-stan and bolster India's repeated assertions of cross-border terrorism, a senior Pakistani minister on Thursday admitted that Pakistan was responsible for the Pulwama terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 that killed 40 CRPF personnel and brought the two countries to the brink of a war.

"Humne Hindustan ko ghus ke maara (We hit India in their home). Our success in Pulwama is a success of this nation under the leadership of Imran Khan. You and us... are all part of that success," Pakistan's science & technology minister Fawad Chau-dhry said in the National Assembly during a debate.

Mr Chaudhry, a close aide of Prime Minister Imran Khan, made the remarks to counter Opposition Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ayaz Sadiq's claim made a day before in a speech in the National Assembly that Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had at an important meeting last year pleaded to release IAF Wing Commander Abhinandan Vart-haman, who was captured on February 27, 2019, after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down.

"India was not planning to attack... They just wanted to kneel before India and send back Abhinandan." Mr Sadiq said that Prime Minister

● **PML-N LEADER**
Ayaz Sadiq said 'legs were shaking and forehead perspiring' at a meeting of Pakistan's top leaders, including Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, wherein foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi pleaded to release IAF Wing commander Abhinandan Varthaman, saying if he was not released, India would attack Pakistan.

Imran Khan had skipped the high-level meeting.

Mr Chaudhry, the then information and broadcasting minister, termed the charges as "inappropriate."

Later in a tweet, he said that in his statement he was referring to "when our planes target combat installations". "We do not show bravery by killing innocents in we condemn terrorism," he added.

In an apparent damage control act, Mr Sadiq too issued a clarification. On Thursday, Mr Sadiq in a video statement said that he was being "misquoted" regarding his statement in the National Assembly. He said that he wanted to say that the decision to release Wg Cdr Varthaman showed "a weakness of the civilian leadership".

Commenting on Sadiq's remarks, Pakistan Army spokesman Major General Babar Iftikhar said that his statement was an attempt to "distort history." — *Agencies*

Army builds its own chat app

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Indian Army has developed a mobile messaging app similar to "WhatsApp" for secure voice, text and video calling.

This app will be used within the Army to keep communications secure and was named "Secure Application for Internet" (SAI).

"The application supports end-to-end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platforms over the Internet. It is quite similar to commercially available messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, GIMS and SAMVAD, and uses end-to-end encryption messaging protocols," the Army said.

It said SAI scores on

security features with local in-house servers and coding which can be tweaked as per requirements.

"The process for filing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), hosting the infrastructure on NIC and working on an iOS platform is currently in progress," it said.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh complimented the Army for developing the app.

The Indian Army has initiated several steps to prevent any attempts at online snooping by the spy agencies of other nations.

Earlier this year the Army asked its officers and jawans to immediately delete their Facebook accounts and barred them from using some 88 other apps.

SEEMA PROJECT NEEDS GREEN NOD, SAYS NGT

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, OCT. 29

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) Southern Zone, on Thursday directed the AP government not to proceed with the proposed Rayalseema lift irrigation project (RLIP) without submitting the detailed project report before the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB).

The Union ministry of Jal Shakti had given this direction as it would impact sharing of Krishna waters between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. TS is opposing the project, saying it is a new one.

■ **Page 2: Irrigation plan requires EC: NGT**

Dharani feature allows urban landowners to 'mask' data

CM inaugurates portal, 20 days needed for non-farm land registrations

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao said that the government needed another 20 days to start registering non-agriculture properties on the Dharani portal, which he launched on Thursday.

The launch has cleared the way for registration of agricultural land. The government had stopped registration of all properties to bring in the new revenue laws and facilitate the introduction of Dharani.

Speaking with select reporters after launching the portal, the Chief Minister said the government would be introducing a security feature on the portal that will allow owners of non-agricultural properties to mask their land details from prying eyes.

"Sometimes, this ele-



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao speaks after inaugurating the Dharani portal in Medchal district on Thursday.

— **DEEPAK DESHPANDE**

ment of secrecy is required for owners of valuable lands who fear that they can be targeted by unscrupulous elements if their details are exhibited. In such cases, the owners can choose the 'hide' option," the Chief Minister explained.

"Utmost caution was needed to safeguard the details of non-agriculture properties, particularly those situated in urban areas as they had multiple stakeholders."

The Chief Minister assured that all the information uploaded to the

TRS WILL WIN DUBBAK: KCR

● **Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Thursday said that the TRS will retain the Dubbak seat in the November 3 byelection during an informal conversation after the launch of the Dharani portal.**

■ **MORE REPORTS ON PG 2**

portal would be secured with the latest technology. Servers would be located in four different areas and the information would be kept under wraps for security reasons.

Replying to a question on the comprehensive land survey, the Chief Minister

said that the government had decided to digitalise data on all the land in the state and also every open plot and piece of land with geo-coordinates.

He explained that a lot of institutions were interested in taking up the survey. The government will soon float tenders and then finalise the date of commencement of the survey.

Stating that their ultimate aim is to provide conclusive title to the people for their properties, Chief Minister Rao said it would happen only after completion of the land survey.

"If legal issues crop up after issuing conclusive titles, the government will have to compensate the title holder in the event of losing the land and also bear the legal expenditure," the Chief Minister explained.

■ **Page 2: Village chosen as tribute to Veera Reddy**

TS DROPS 45% MARKS NORM FOR EAMCET

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

The state government on Thursday removed the minimum requirement of 45 per cent marks in the Intermediate exams for TS Eamcet counselling, in view of the cancelled exams due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

"This order applies only for this year i.e. 2020-2021 as a special case and shall not be made as precedent in future, and shall not be applied from 2021-2022," the order read.

The government had declared all candidates of the Intermediate Public Advanced Supplementary Examinations as passed, without conducting exams and they were awarded minimum marks. Several students who qualified in the TS Eamcet could not get ranks as they failed to meet the eligibility criteria of 45 per cent marks in the Intermediate exams.

THREE KILLED IN KNIFE ATTACK IN FRENCH CHURCH

Nice, France, Oct. 29: A man wielding a knife killed three people praying in a church in the French city of Nice on Thursday.

The assailant, who was shot and wounded by police, was identified as Brahim Aouissou, a 21-year-old Tunisian migrant who arrived in Italy in late September and later travelled to France, sources said.

■ **Report on Page 5**

INDIA CALLS FOR PREDICTABLE U.S. VISA REGIME

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

India sought "increasing predictability in the visa regime" to the US, adding that the "people-to-people relationship is an important foundation of the special ties between the two countries which should be nurtured."

■ **Another report on Pg5**



Former and current MLAs and party activists greet Kalvakuntla Kavitha after she oath as MLC in Hyderabad on Thursday.

— **P. SURENDRA**

Kavitha takes oath as MLC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

TRS leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha on Thursday took oath as a member of the Legislative Council, following her election earlier this month.

Council chairman G. Sukhender Reddy administered the oath in his chambers in the presence of ministers V. Prashanth Reddy, Mahmood Ali, Koppula Eshwar and Satyavathi Rathod, MLAs

● **KAVITHA WAS elected from the Nizamabad local authorities constituency with a record 89 per cent majority.**

and MLCs from the undivided Nizamabad district.

Kavitha was elected from the Nizamabad local authorities constituency with a record 89 per cent majority.

After taking oath, she

said in a post on Twitter, "Took oath as Kamareddy and Nizamabad districts local bodies MLC. I humbly thank my party for the opportunity and the local body representatives who have elected me for this position."

Prior to taking oath, women elected representatives of undivided Nizamabad district welcomed Kavitha with mangala harathi while TRS leaders and others greeted Kavitha on the occasion.

COVID | IMPACT

Three states to work together, create a safe new home for big cats

Kawal gets tigers from Maha, C'garh

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Kawal tiger reserve in the

former undivided Adilabad district is an example of how a protected forest can turn into a home for tigers from other areas that are in search of territories of their own, said N.S. Murali, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)'s inspector-general of forests, southern Region.

Speaking at a coordination meeting with forest and police department officials and others from Telangana state, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh on forest and wildlife protection, and prevention of timber smuggling on Thursday, Murali said tigers were coming to Kawal from the Tadoba-

Andhari landscape in Maharashtra and the Indravati landscape in Chhattisgarh to find new homes.

The half-a-dozen tigers that have made their home in Kawal and other parts of undivided Adilabad district, including Mancherial and Kagaznagar, as well as recent entrants into the undivided Warangal district forests, have all come from these two states.

Murali assured the meeting that the NTCA would allocate more funds to Telangana state for tiger conservation. He said there was a good possibility for development of forests and tiger protection in the state, especially with reports of tiger presence being reported from Mulugu, Bhupalapalli and



Forest department staff on Thursday measure tiger pug marks in Mulugu district.

Peddapalli districts.

R. Shobha, TS Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, told the meeting that it was vital to ensure that balance in nature is

maintained because once the threshold limits are crossed due to human activity, the environment gets affected which ultimately leads to the collapse



Not IPL, they were betting on polls!

SHORT TAKES

Remittances down 9%: WB

Washington: The World Bank on Thursday said remittances to India would fall this year by nine per cent to \$76 billion due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and global economic recession. India followed by China, Mexico, the Philippines, and Egypt continue to be the top five countries in 2020 to receive foreign remittances, the World Bank said in its latest report. As the Covid pandemic and economic crisis continues, the amount of money migrant workers send home is projected to decline 14 per cent by 2021 compared to the pre-Covid levels in 2019, according to the latest estimates published in the World Bank. Remittance flows to low and middle-income countries are projected to fall by 7 per cent to \$508 billion in 2020.

INSIDE

■ **STATE... PAGE 2**
Rainfall completes late withdrawal

SHORT TAKES

RAINFALL
COMPLETES ITS
LATE WITHDRAWALDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

The southwest monsoon, that dumped copious amount of rain on Telangana state, completed its belated withdrawal from the state and the country on Wednesday, the Indian Meteorological Department said on Thursday.

The IMD's Hyderabad office said the last time such a delay was recorded was 10 years ago, when the monsoon withdrew on October 28, 2010. The monsoon had set over the state on June 11. Of the 33 districts, 13 received large excess rainfall amounting to 60 per cent or more of the long period average, (LPA) 13 received excess rainfall amounting to 20-59 per cent of LPA and the other seven received normal rainfall.

● **THE IMD'S Hyderabad office said the last time such a delay was recorded was 10 years ago, when the monsoon withdrew on October 28, 2010.**

APOLLO HOSPS
DEPLOYS AI TO
SPOT STROKEDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Proper diagnosis is important for stroke patients as it is often mistaken for migraine or severe headaches and precious time is lost before treatment is started, said experts at the Apollo Hospitals.

The Apollo Hospitals has partnered with India Medtronic Private Limited to manage suspected stroke patients effectively using artificial intelligence (AI).

With AI, technical training and dedicated centres, an effort is being made to bridge the gap and cater to these patients on time. Ten Apollo Hospitals centres will have the expert stroke management programme.

Preetha Reddy, vice chairperson of the Apollo group, said, "This partnership will help in building and establishing a world class stroke programme with uniform protocols across the group. Trials have shown success in achieving substantially larger clinical benefits through the use of AI. A trial of stroke patients treated from six to 24 hours with use of AI showed better clinical outcomes."

The use of AI will reduce diagnosis time from 60 to two minutes. It will also help in management of patients at odd hours, one of the major reasons for the delayed treatments. It is also expected to reduce hospital stay costs because of early diagnosis and treatment.

SHORTAGE OF
STAFF ADDING TO
NIMS, OGH WOESDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Patient services at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) and Osmania General Hospital (OGH) have been affected due to a 20 per cent shortfall in paramedical staff. These staff members are not reporting for duty fearing Covid-19.

All departments are facing a shortage of staff as those who went to their native places during the lockdown have not returned. Some have applied for leave due to the pandemic and extended the same.

This has led to the existing staff being overburdened with workload.

A senior doctor at NIMS, on condition of anonymity, said, "We have a biometric system. It has not been put to use due to Covid-19. This is being taken advantage of by several employees. There is a shortage of staff and another 20 per cent are signing in the register and going away."

With non-Covid 19 patients approaching government hospitals, the burden on existing staff is very high. With Gandhi Hospital not taking non-Covid 19 patients, the load on Osmania General Hospital continues to be high. A circular was issued in September which asked OGH heads of departments to ensure full attendance. This had to be done as they were facing problems in patient care.

A senior doctor at OGH said, "The shortage continues as some are calling back and saying that they have tested Covid positive and cannot rejoin. It is becoming difficult to contact those who have gone to their villages. We have to wait."

KCR launches Dharani portal

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Thursday said that the one-stop portal Dharani, which was designed to provide transparent and hassle-free land transactions, will emerge as a trend-setter in the country. With the launch of the portal, the way is cleared for registration and mutation of agriculture lands across the state, which was stalled for enacting the New Revenue Act about a month ago.

Rao launched the portal at the tahsildar office in Mudu Chintalapalli village of Medchal-Malkajgiri district.

Addressing the gathering, he said that farmers can complete their land transactions including sale, transfer and mutation, without making the rounds of various offices. The process can be completed at one stroke.

Rao announced that stamp duty will be collected based on the existing land value and there will not be any increase in the land value, as of now. Apart from stamp duty, the farmers have to pay a minimum fee for the mutation.

"The process should not take more than 20 minutes and there would be no human interference and no discretion power at any level," he added. He appealed to the people to make use of the

opportunity to register sada binama (white paper agreements) transactions.

He said so far, the state has received 1.64 lakh applications and since it is the last opportunity, the government is extending the last date by one week from Thursday.

Maintaining that the Dharani portal was an important step towards resolving issues pertaining to lands, he said that a lot of effort went into designing the portal.

He said "I and my officers have been working on this for the past three years. I have held more than 100 meetings to provide a fool-proof mechanism. I also convinced the revenue employees to abolish the village revenue officers system in view of the bad name to the department because of certain mischievousness in the system. They also agreed and Dharani became a reality."

The Chief Minister said details pertaining to 1,45,48,000 acres had been uploaded on the portal and people across the globe can check the details with just a click of the mouse.

The revenue portal will impact the country since both the Centre and other state governments would be under pressure to introduce similar measures.

He said "it is obvious that every new system will have teething problems and we have to overcome them. Sometimes



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao inaugurates one-stop portal Dharani portal for hassle-free land transactions in Hyderabad on Thursday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Village chosen as tribute to Veera Reddy

From page 1

Earlier, at a public meeting, Rao said he had chosen Mudu Chintalapalli village to launch the portal as a tribute to Veera Reddy, a fighter for sepa-

rate Telangana in 1969 who was jailed several times. Before launching the portal, he paid tribute at Veera Reddy's statue.

Hinting at TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu, he said that the then Chief

Minister who always spoke about IT never attempted to extend it to the revenue administration. It is the TRS government that gets the credit for introducing IT in revenue administration.

systems may not work due to technical errors and often the portal will take some time to open."

Asking people not to panic because of small errors, he said that during the trial run the portal had jammed several times in the last three to four days due to heavy traffic as thousands of people from all over were accessing Dharani to understand its features and uniqueness.

He said that with

Dharani around 60 lakh farmers will be able to complete easy registration and mutation. Listing out the efforts undertaken by the state government in the past six years, Rao said

Telangana state had achieved tremendous progress in all sectors, and the Dharani portal was an important step towards resolving issues pertaining to land.

Rao said he always disagreed with people who

described Telangana state as a backward region. He said "no, it is not a backward region. It has the potential to lead the country on all fronts and we have been proving this quite abundantly and across sectors."

He said that the per capita income in the state had more than doubled from ₹63,000 in 2011-12 to ₹2.28 lakh now, which is a clear indication of its progress and prosperity.

Vote BJP, teach KCR a lesson: Bandi

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Thursday alleged that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had built his farm house on over 100 acres of land with money from the Kaleshwaram project commission.

Participating in the Dubbak bypoll campaign at Mirdoddi and Thoguta mandals, Sanjay said that the voters would teach Chandrashekar Rao and his monarchical ruling a strong

● **BANDI SANJAY KUMAR said finance minister T. Harish Rao was trying to save his political skin in the Dubbak byelection. If the TRS loses, Harish Rao would be sacked from the Cabinet, he claimed.**

lesson by voting for the BJP.

Assuring the Mallannasagar project out-tees of the Centre's support in paying the best compensation package a week after the byelection, Sanjay said that if the TRS offered money to vote for them, they should take it and vote

for the BJP. It is the people's money, anyway, he said.

He said finance minister T. Harish Rao was trying to save his political skin in the Dubbak byelection. If the TRS loses, Harish Rao would be sacked from the Cabinet, he claimed.

The state BJP chief urged the people not to believe Harish Rao's promises made during the bypoll campaign.

Stating that he was ready to discuss issue of Centre's funds for the state, Sanjay condemned Harish Rao's comments against the Centre. He said the TRS

government had not issued a single white ration card in their term till today.

Confident that the past Lok Sabha elections result will repeat in Dubbak, Sanjay said that the party youths were working hard for victory.

Sanjay also alleged that Chief Minister Rao was a "passport broker" and had collected crores of rupees in a scam. Alleging that Rao played caste politics for his Cabinet post earlier, Sanjay claimed he was the most corrupt CM in the country which was a matter of shame to Telangana state.



Additional collector B. Chandrasekhar inaugurates a paddy procurement centre in the Nizamabad market yard on Thursday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

End to 'wastage' norm
in paddy procurementNARENDER
PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 29

The Nizamabad district administration has decided to bring a complete change in the paddy procurement policy. The 2 kg paddy cut from a 50 kg bag will be abolished.

District collector C. Narayana Reddy called upon all stakeholders to follow the norms for better paddy procurement in the district.

Rice millers while purchasing paddy from the farmers, cut 2 kg paddy from a 50 kg bag on the pretext of damaged paddy. It is a loss for farmers. This 2 kg cut has boosted the earnings of rice millers for decades in the district.

C. Narayana Reddy has strictly warned millers not to cut paddy during the procurement

● **RICE MILLER'S while purchasing paddy from the farmers, cut 2 kg paddy from a 50 kg bag on the pretext of damaged paddy. It is a loss for farmers. This 2 kg cut has boosted the earnings of rice millers for decades.**

and advised farmers to bring quality paddy for sale.

Paddy that has below 17 per cent moisture and 1 per cent foreign bodies is allowed in paddy. If farmers bring dried paddy, they will get the minimum support price.

Presently, the central government declared ₹1,888 a quintal for A grade variety paddy and ₹1,868 per quintal for the common variety

paddy.

Meanwhile, additional collector B. Chandrasekhar inaugurated a paddy purchasing centre at the Nizamabad agriculture market yard on Thursday.

He said that a token would be issued to farmers when they come to sell their paddy at the purchasing centre.

"We will suggest to the farmers to bring quality paddy to the market yard", he said.

He directed marketing officials to ensure MSP for paddy. Speaking to the *Deccan Chronicle*, merchant association representative M. Shankar said that they are ready to offer remunerative price for paddy. Farmers and rice millers have a mutual understanding in regards to the 2 kg cut from the paddy.

Milad-un-Nabi celebrations
go low-key due to floods, virusATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

The Coronavirus outbreak and recent floods have had a significant impact on Milad-un-Nabi, the birthday celebrations of Prophet Mohammed, on Friday.

Milad-un-Nabi, which is usually held with much religious fervency, will not see many streets, masjids and homes decorated with colourful lights and bunting as was done on previous years.

Most people are focus-

ing on providing relief to rain-affected families. Instead of spending on decoration and holding meetings, most of the people have decided to help the distressed.

Muslim families which used to invite relatives and friends on the occasion, this time will deliver Kheer-Puri via food delivery personnel.

However, areas like Yakutpura, Dabeerpura, Hussaini Alam, Talab-atta, Moghalpura, Shalibanda, Purani Haveli, MS Maqta etc, have been decorated with flags,

lamps and lights, though less has been spent on celebrations.

Many organisations will conduct blood donation camps. Forum for Cultural Upgradation and Social Service and Tanzeem Irshad-ul-Muslimeen is organising two mega blood donation camps at Shahi Masjid, Public Garden, and Idgah Balamrai, Secunderabad. Youths of Golconda and GMK Group will conduct a blood donation camp at Golconda while Chishti Foundation is arranging it at different places.



TPCC chief N. Uttam Kumar Reddy addresses an election meeting at the Congress party office in Dubbak on Thursday. — P. ANIL KUMAR

Uttam questions TRS
on their poll promisesDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

State Congress president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy appealed to the people of Dubbak to vote for the Congress so as to pressure the TRS government to fulfil its 2018 Assembly election promises.

The party chief was speaking at a meeting with women leaders and cadre at the Dubbak party office.

He said Congress candidate Ch Srinivas Reddy, if elected, will question the Chief Minister and the government regarding the

non-implementation of promises.

He said it was only the Congress that was fighting for double bedroom houses for the poor, unemployment allowance, three-acre land for Dalit and for Dubbak development.

Reddy asked why finance minister T. Harish Rao had not offered the schemes and funds to Dubbak during the lifetime of TRS legislator S. Ramalinga Reddy. He alleged that Harish Rao was playing politics to win the bypoll.

TPCC working president

A. Revanth Reddy organised a road show at Bonala and a bike rally from Kazipuri to Mirdoddi mandal. He alleged that minister K.T. Rama Rao did not know about the people and their hard work as he had come from abroad.

He asked Rama Rao to recall his father's political history and said Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao was first with the Congress and then the TD. Former MP V. Hanumantha Rao and other leaders participated in a door to door campaign at Dubbak and surrounding villages.

notice about disciplinary proceedings, the officer replied that he had retired at 5 pm on October 1 evening (as October 2 was a holiday) while the intimation from the government reached him at 6.30 pm and therefore sections and rules do not apply to him anymore, which is baffling," sources said. Originally, due for retirement in November, Singh had sought premature retirement from October 2.

Journo: More than
70% Indians in US
to vote for BidenHARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

Over 70 per cent of Indian Americans favour Joe Biden and the Democrats in the US elections, said Shashank Bengali, South Asia correspondent for Los Angeles Times, in a webinar conducted by the US Consulate General, Hyderabad, in collaboration with American Corner, Hyderabad, on Thursday on the role of Indian Americans in the upcoming US presidential elections.

As has been the trend even in previous US presidential elections, Indian Americans have largely been pro-Democratic party, said Bengali.

"Nearly 77 per cent of Indian Americans had voted for Hillary Clinton even in the previous elections," added Shashank, saying that the community has a major role in deciding the electoral fate of the US.

With Kamala Harris, the Indian-origin Democratic party vice-presidential nominee, US Americans are now opening up more to the idea of India than what has been known to them until now, revealed the discussion on the webinar.

"So far Americans have mostly known more of the North Indian stuff, like masala tikka or bhanga, as representative of the country. However, with Harris

● **WITH KAMALA HARRIS, the Indian-origin Democratic party vice-presidential nominee, US Americans are now opening up more to the idea of India than what has been known to them until now, revealed the discussion on the webinar.**

proudly wearing her Indian heritage, the south of India is also becoming known to US Americans now," said Bengali.

Responding to a question from *Deccan Chronicle* on the role of organisations like 'Hindus for Trump' or participation of Indian Americans in events like 'Howdy Modi', Bengali said that even though such organisations are influential and have a lot of money behind them, they will not make much of a difference to the tilt observed on the ground in the elections.

Dave Moyer, public affairs officer, US Consulate General, Hyderabad, welcomed the gathering, saying, "Such debates define our two countries, our two democracies."

Swarna Sundari, Editor at 10TV, moderated the talks, in which Sriram Karri also spoke.



OTHER STORIES

NEED TO SHIFT MNREGS FUNDS TO FARMING: NAMA

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, OCT. 29

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leader in the Lok Sabha, and District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) chairman Nama Nageswara Rao said, "I will raise the issue of linking MNREGS wage component to farming."

Nageswara Rao chaired a DISHA meeting in Khammam on Thursday. He said, "The Central government is releasing crores of rupees under MNREGS. If the agriculture sector gets some of these funds, the farmers will benefit." He asked the officials to provide work under the job guarantee scheme to the mandals. The officials informed that so far, 59 lakh man-days were provided, against the target of 1.18 crore man-days. The TRS leader said that to achieve the target time is less, and the officials should try to achieve at least 70 per cent target in this financial year.

Referring to the Prime Minister's Gramina Sadak Yojana, he said that officials should send in road proposals at the earliest. The Central government has sanctioned 299 kilometres of roads in the district. For repairs of the national highways in the district ₹109 crores have been allocated. Mr Nama said that the works under the Adarsh Grama Yojana are going on at a slow pace. "Under the scheme, 45 works worth ₹1.69 crores have been sanctioned. Officials should complete the works at the earliest," he said.

TNSF STAGES DHARNA IN FRONT OF COLLECTORATE

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, OCT. 29

Members of the Telugu Nadu Student Federation (TNSF) staged a dharna in front of the collectorate in Karimnagar on Thursday. They demanded that the government establish a medical college and develop the district government main hospital like that of Nizam's Institute Of Medical Sciences (NIMS) present in Hyderabad. Later, they submitted a memorandum to the Additional Collector Shyam Lal Prasad.

TNSF state general secretary, Parlapalli Ravinder said that after the formation of a separate Telangana, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had promised a medical college with all facilities in the district headquarters and modernising of the District Government Main Hospital on the lines of NIMS.

He said, "Even after six years, the CM has not fulfilled the promise made to the Karimnagar people. When Mr Rao had resigned and contested elections using the separate Telangana sentiment, people of Karimnagar had given him a thumping majority proving their loyalty. In return what has Mr Rao done for the people of Karimnagar," he questioned.

He said, "Presently, there are two medical colleges in the district, owned by the same community to which the CM belongs. Fearing that these two medical colleges will face loss with the establishment of a government medical college, the CM is not fulfilling his promise."

Mr Ravinder alleged that even though four ministers have represented erstwhile Karimnagar district, they failed to establish a medical college. If the CM fails to fulfil his promise of establishing a government medical college, then TNSF along with other student unions will lay siege the Pragathi Bhavan, he said.



Above: Women constables participate in a running event held during the sports meet at the Swami Vivekananda mini stadium in Jagtial town on Thursday. **Right:** A police personnel participates in the long jump event.

Spots meet held for cops in Jagtial town

DC CORRESPONDENT
JAGTIAL, OCT. 29

A sports meet was organised at the Swami Vivekananda Mini Stadium in Jagtial town on Thursday.

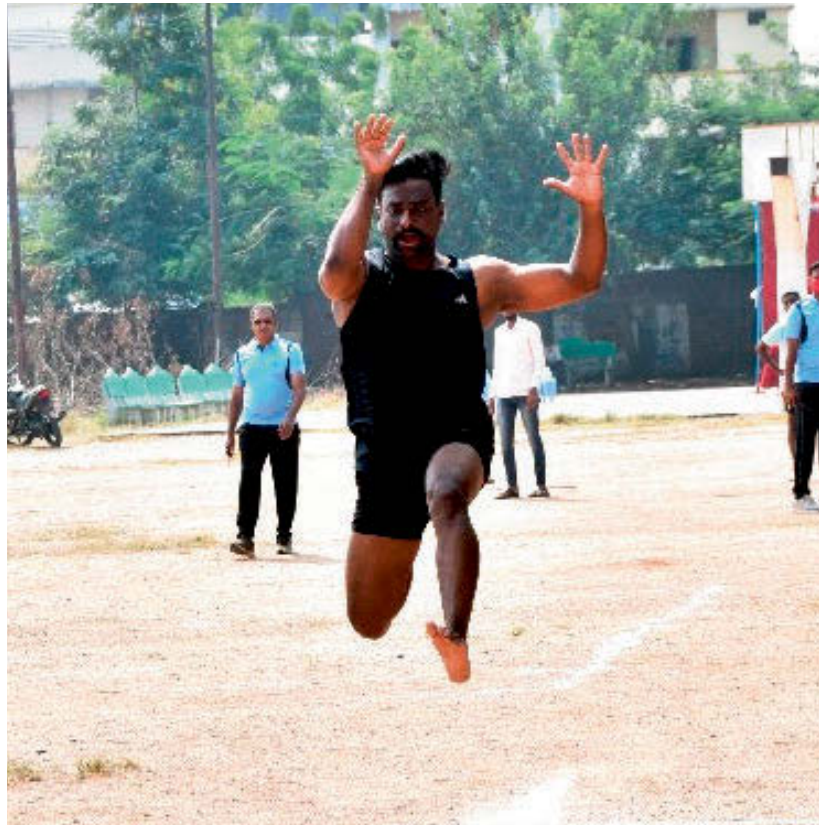
A 3-K run from the Mini Stadium to the new bus stand in Jagtial town took place.

District Superintendent of Police, Sindhu Sharma inaugurated the run. She said, "Sports not only improves friendly nature and fitness levels, but also helps get relief from stress." Following Covid-19 guidelines, the compe-

titions conducted were for long jump, running, shuttle and short put games.

The sports meet was organised for police personnel in memory of late Additional DCP, Dakshina Murthy who died battling the Covid-19.

Police personnel played an important role in tracing primary contacts, ensuring they isolate themselves and helping guest workers to reach their destination, contracted the Coronavirus while fulfilling their duties. Many were able to recover successfully.



Rythu VEDIKA IN KODAKANDLA TO BE INAUGURATED BY CM

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, OCT. 29

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will inaugurate the rythu vedika at Kodakandla in Jangaon district on October 31. He will address the farmers and explain the purpose, why the government has undertaken the construction of farmer platforms, their need and activities. He will also visit the rural nature park near the rythu vedika on the same day.

District, mandal and Rythu Bandhu village committees from erstwhile Warangal district have received invitations to attend the meeting. Ahead of the CM's visit, panchayat raj, rural development and rural water supply minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao inspected the arrangements at the helipad and the meeting venue at Kodakandla on Thursday.

He said, "October 31 is an auspicious day. After inaugurating the rythu vedika, the CM will address 5,000 farmers in the local market premises. There are 2,604 farmer platforms being constructed across the state at a cost of ₹573 crore. The government is setting up one farmer platform for every 5,000 farmers."

CCI begins cotton procurement

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, OCT. 29

The cotton procurement centre at Enumamula Market yard began on Thursday.

State panchayat raj, rural development and rural water supply minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao said, "Centres were set up at 22 notified ginning mills in erstwhile Warangal district. The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has begun procurement from Thursday."

Cotton was grown in an area of 7,58,560 acres in Warangal Urban, Warangal Rural, Mulugu, Mahbubabad, Jangaon and Jayashankar Bhupalpal districts. The cotton yield is estimated to be at 6,25,285 metric tons.

The Enumamula market receives cotton mostly from Warangal Urban District where cotton is grown in an area of 82,842 acres at an estimate of 79,114 metric tons.

Last year the CCI had 18 centres, whereas this year it is purchasing cotton through 28 centres. There are 30 ginning mills available.

Apart from cotton, crops like grain, turmeric, chillies and lentils are bought. Enumamula has a capacity of storing up to 19 lakh metric tons of bags.

"Through the rythu



Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao inaugurates the cotton purchase by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) at the Enumamula Agriculture Market on Thursday.

● **COTTON WAS** grown in an area of 7,58,560 acres in Warangal Urban, Warangal Rural, Mulugu, Mahbubabad, Jangaon and Jayashankar Bhupalpal districts. The cotton yield is estimated to be at 6,25,285 metric tons.

● **THE ENUMAMULA** market receives cotton mostly from Warangal Urban District where cotton is grown in an area of 82,842 acres at an estimate of 79,114 metric tons.

bandhu scheme we are also giving interest free loans to farmers. There are 24 cold storages with in the Warangal market, that have a storage capacity of 24,45,000 bags. Farmers have stockpiled 22,37,765 bags of grain in

these cold storages this year," Mr Errabelli said. The minister suggested the farmers bring cotton to market with CCI quality standards.

"Care should be taken to ensure that the moisture content of the cotton does not exceed 12 per cent. Cotton should be well dried and brought to the market without it getting black. The government will buy the last of the cotton stock from the farmers. Authorities should work in coordination to avoid causing inconvenience to farmers," he said.

Wardhanapet MLA Aroori Ramesh, GWMC mayor Gunda Prakash Rao, market committee chairman Sadanandam, corporators, collector Rajiv Gandhi Hanmanthu, CCI, market officials and farmers also attended the event.

In Khammam, getting ration is a problem

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, OCT. 29

Nearly 1.20 lakh beneficiaries of the public distribution system (PDS) in Khammam district are facing problems due to lack of functioning ration shops nearby.

These beneficiaries are located within the limits of 88 ration shops in Kallur and Khammam divisions. There is a portable distribution system which means that ration card-holders can get their ration from any of the ration shops and beneficiaries are forced to go to faraway places to get their rations.

There are 669 ration shop dealers in the district supplying ration to 11.42 lakh beneficiaries on 4.42 lakh ration cards of different categories. There are no dealers for 88 shops, distributing ration to 1.20 lakh beneficiaries.

There are 512 ration shops in Khammam division and 61 dealer shops have no dealers. As many as 27 ration shops did not have dealers against 157 ration shops in Kallur division.

The beneficiaries of 88 ration shops were asked to get their ration from the nearest available shops for the time being. Carrying

● **NEARLY 1.20 LAKH** beneficiaries of the public distribution system (PDS) in Khammam district are facing problems.

the ration from distant places is a problem. In general, children and senior citizens get the ration from the shops as the adults are away on their daily work.

Under the food security card, each beneficiary is given ten kilos of rice and a five-member family gets 50 kilos of rice. Families who do not have two-wheelers and cycles carry the ration in autos paying ₹50.

Some ration shops do not have dealers for the last two years. The family members of ration shop dealers are not coming forward to run the shop after demise of the dealer. About eleven ration shop dealers were removed on allegations of malpractice. The sarpanches and ZPTCs exposed the problem in various meetings and took the issue to the notice of the higher officials.

District civil supplies officer, N. Rajender, said that they collected a list of vacant ration shops and submitted it to the revenue department to appoint dealers for these shops.

Dharani portal up, land registration at a click

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, OCT. 29

The Dharani portal was inaugurated, in all the mandal revenue offices in Khammam and Kothagudem districts on Thursday.

In Kalluru, Sattupalli MLA Sandra Venkata Veeraiah logged on to the Dharani portal. Minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar, viewed the Dharani portal in Raghunathapalem tehsildar office in Khammam district.

Mr Ajay Kumar said, "A new chapter has begun in regards to land transactions in Telangana from today."

The main feature of the Dharani portal is its transparency.

He said, "The Karnataka government tried to implement the system, but it did not work out."

"With the introduction of the Dharani portal, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar

Rao has displayed his sincerity towards the farmers. From today, the Telangana Land Rights and Pattadakal Passbooks Act-2020 has come into force. In the new act, there are no discretionary powers to the officials."

From November 2, registrations of farmlands will begin in the 570 mandal tehsildar offices in the state. Booking of slots commenced from Thursday.

The minister said, "Trained staff will be working with the new system. Besides registrations, mutations also will be done. In the portal, details of 1.55 crore acre lands are available. The portal also has the details of the survey number and market price of lands."

Registrations of non-farm lands will be done in the sub-registrar offices, making the registration of any property easier.

3 arrested for murder of 20-yr-old in Hyd

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 29

The LB Nagar police arrested three persons for the murder of 20-year-old Mohd Abdul Muqeem, whose partially burnt body with stab wounds was found last week near Sagar crossroads.

Police identified the accused as Mohd Isaq, Mohd Irfan, both 22, and Riyaz Khan, 19. The murder weapon and an autorickshaw used in the offence were seized from their possession.

Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat said the victim and the trio were friends. Muqeem had allegedly flirted with Isaq's

● **MUQEEM** had allegedly flirted with Isaq's wife when she was alone at home and offered to buy her a phone.

wife when she was alone at home and also offered to buy her a phone. Upon learning of this, Isaq gathered the other two and hatched a plan to kill Muqeem. Bhagwat said the trio purchased knives and drank alcohol along with Muqeem on the night of October 21. When Muqeem was inebriated, they held him down and stabbed him before setting his body on fire.

Overman stuck under coal debris, three escape

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
PEDDAPALLI, OCT. 29

In a tragic incident that took place in RG-2 of the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), a heavy layer of coal fell from the rooftop burying an overseer under the coal debris and three workers narrowly escaped in Vakeelpally coal mine in Ramagundam, Peddapalli district on Thursday.

The overseer was identified as R. Naveen Kumar (26). The incident took place before the completion of the first shift work in RG-2 coalmine at 41D/66L at 3.10 pm in the afternoon. The first shift (which

starts at 9 am) workers were about to wind up their work. Kumar, who was supervising the unloading of coal on to the 41R conveyor by LHD-912 at 41D/66L junction, observed some cracks in the layers on the rooftop and alerted the other workers.

Three workers, the MS, LHD operator and cable boy, working at the site also heard the cracking sound of a coal layer in the rooftop and on being cautioned by Kumar, immediately moved out of the mine.

Just as Kumar was about to come out with them, a layer of coal from the rooftop collapsed from a height of three meters and Naveen was right underneath.



Rescue team rushed to the spot to carry out rescue operations in the RG-2 coal mine of the SCCL in Ramagundam of Peddapalli district on Thursday.

Having learnt about the incident, SCCL management rushed to the spot along with the rescue team and started operations to rescue Kumar.

As the layer of the coal which collapsed was a huge one, it is learnt that it may

● **THREE WORKERS**, the MS, LHD operator and cable boy, working at the site also heard the cracking sound of a coal layer in the rooftop and on being cautioned by Kumar, immediately moved out of the mine.

● **JUST AS** Kumar was about to come out with them, a layer of coal from the rooftop collapsed from a height of three meters and Naveen was right underneath.

take several hours to complete the rescue operation.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare
EX-SERVICEMEN CONTRIBUTORY HEALTH SCHEME (ECHS)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

ADVERTISEMENT FOR ECHS EMPANELMENT OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS DESIGNATED BY STATE GOVERNMENT FOR COVID-19 TREATMENT BY LOCAL FORMATION COMMANDERS

- Director Regional Centre Hyderabad, on behalf of the GOC Sub Area, the Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) invites applications for the purpose of ECHS Empanelment from private hospitals/ Nursing homes designated by state Government for COVID-19 treatment and co-morbidities.
- The empanelment of such hospitals with ECHS will be for treatment of COVID-19 cases at rates as notified by MoD. The hospitals which are notified by State Government for treatment of COVID-19 patients and who are willing to get Empanelled with ECHS on temporary basis initially for a period of six months subject to review of the COVID situation by the Competent Authority would be eligible for temporary empanelment irrespective of their QCI/NABH status.
- The empanelment will be only for testing and treatment of COVID-19 and co-morbidities and will be for a maximum period of six months and will be renewed / extended based on COVID-19 situations.
- Interested Hospitals, Nursing Home etc, may submit the completed application forms at the Regional Centre ECHS Hyderabad by 30 Nov. 2020. The application, terms / conditions & requirements of empanelment for ECHS requirements are available at Regional Centre ECHS Hyderabad. Interested to contact on our email ID jdhs@hyderabad@echhs.gov.in & dirchhyderabad@echhs.gov.in (Contact No 040-27797836, 27790506).

IN BRIEF

BJP YOUTH LEADER, TWO WORKERS KILLED

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

A BJP youth leader and two workers were shot and critically wounded by suspected militants in Jammu and Kashmir's southern Kulgam district late Thursday evening. The reports said that all the three succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital.

The police sources said that Fida Hussain Yatoo, district general secretary of the J&K unit of BJP Yuva Morcha, and his associates Umar Ramzan Hajam and Umer Rashid Beigh were targeted by gunmen in Kulgam's Yaripora village. They were quickly evacuated to an emergency trauma hospital along the Srinagar-Jammu highway in Qazigund area. But doctors at the hospital pronounced them dead on arrival.

"All three of them were brought dead," Dr. Asima, Medical Superintendent Qazigund, was quoted as saying by local news agency GNS.

The officials said that senior J&K district police officers and also those of the CRPF have already reached the spot to begin investigations. They also said that a vast area around the scene of the shooting has been cordoned off and a search operation launched to get the assailants dead or alive. A report said that the trio was attending a wedding ceremony in the area when a group of masked gunmen arrived at the scene and forcibly took them along. The report also said the BJP youth leader and his associates were taken to a nearby apple orchard where they were shot at from point blank range.

LABOURER FINDS 7.2 CARAT DIAMOND

Panna (MP), Oct. 29: Fortunes smiled on a labourer after he unearthed 7.2 carat diamond at a mine in Panna district of Madhya Pradesh on Thursday, an official said.

Balbir Singh Yadav extracted the precious stone from a pit at Krishna Kalyanpur mine in Pati Bajaria area of the district, diamond inspector Anupam Singh said.

After unearthing the stone, Balbir rushed to the mine office to deposit it with the authorities.

While the official said the exact value of the diamond will be decided by the authorities, Balbir and his elated wife Laadwati told reporters that they were informed that it would fetch anywhere between ₹35 lakh and ₹40 lakh.

The stone will be auctioned, following which the couple will get the proceeds after deduction of 12.5 per cent royalty, the official added.

Panna, located in the backward region of Bundelkhand, is famous for its diamond mines.

FORMER GUJARAT CM KESHUBHAI PATEL DEAD

Ahmedabad, Oct. 29: Former Gujarat chief minister Keshubhai Patel, who played a pivotal role in strengthening the BJP in the state, died here on Thursday after prolonged illness, family sources said.

Patel (92), who recovered from coronavirus infection recently, was rushed to a hospital in Ahmedabad on Thursday morning following health complications, the sources said.

The BJP veteran was the chief minister in 1995 and again during 1998-2001. Narendra Modi had succeeded him as Gujarat chief minister. The state government has declared a day's state mourning on Thursday, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani told reporters. Keshubhai's last rites will be performed with full state honours, he added.

Hospital authorities said Patel died due to cardiac arrest.

Patel was rushed to the hospital after his pulse and oxygen level dropped on Thursday morning, his son Bharat Patel said. "He recently recovered from coronavirus, but his health kept deteriorating," he added.

The ruling BJP has postponed all its by-poll related programmes, including public rallies, following Patel's death.

Rupani cut short a poll rally at Ghadhada and visited Keshubhai's residence in Gandhinagar, where the body was kept, to pay tributes.

DOCS ADVISED AGAINST ENTERING POLITICS: RAJINI

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR / DC
CHENNAI, OCT. 29

Actor Rajinikanth confirmed on Thursday that he had health issues and that he had been advised by doctors not to involve himself in active politics even as his fans went berserk on Twitter demanding his entry into politics, saying that he was the only hope for Tamil Nadu.

Quoting what was described as a leaked letter of Rajinikanth, some media outlets put out a story that the actor might exit politics without even entering, prompting his fans to trend a Tamil hashtag 'If at all I vote it will be for Rajini only' through the day, calling their 'Thalivar' to come and also questioned the veracity of the 'leaked letter.'

Even as the hashtag was trending, Rajinikanth put out a tweet past noon saying: 'A letter masquerading as my statement has been making its rounds on social networking sites and the media. Everyone knows that it is not my statement. Yet some of the information in the letter on my health condition and doctors' advice are all true.'

He went on to say that he would inform his political stand to the people after discussing it with the office-bearers of Rajini Makkal Mandram (Rajini People's Forum). The forum was formed with the members of his erstwhile fans' association after he had made an announcement that he would be entering politics by launching his own party.

The actor had held meetings with the office-bearers in earlier occasions to elicit their views and also to guide them on the way he would like to fashion his party. But subsequently in a press conference, in which he just spelt out his plans and left the venue without taking any questions from the media persons, he made it clear he was not entering politics.

Later on, when it BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah mentioned that his party was waiting for Rajinikanth to float his party to forge an alliance with it, media started speculating about the possible party launch, enthusing his fans.

It was in that backdrop the 'leaked letter' surfaced on Wednesday, throwing cold water on the hopes of the actor's fan brigade. So they wanted to send across the message to their leader and hence took the Twitter route to draw his attention.

Most of the tweets projected him as the only alternative in Tamil Nadu politics. 'Expecting a better government is my right. Expecting selfless people in politics is minimum wish. Pls come Thalaivaa. Show some light for TN. Give some hope,' said a fan who had been repeatedly tweeting through the day.

Now, it is speculated that the alleged 'leaked letter' was a planned leak.



A vehicle in flames after it was set on fire by a mob during a protest over recent police firing during a Durga Puja event in Munger on Thursday. — PTI

Protesters target cops over Munger firing; SP removed

Angry agitators torch mofussil and women police stations in the town

Patna/Munger, Oct. 29: The Election Commission has removed the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police of Munger over the violence during a Durga Puja event early this week, even as a group of protesters went on the rampage in the town on Thursday, setting some police stations and outposts on fire and ransacking the SP office.

The poll panel on Thursday also ordered an inquiry into the firing and stone-pelting during the immersion of an idol of goddess Durga late Monday night in which one person had died and several others were injured.

The election commission has asked Magadh Divisional Commissioner Asangba Chuba Ao to complete the probe within a week.

Rajesh Meena is District

Magistrate and Lipi Singh is SP of Munger. The EC statement said Munger will get a new DM and a Superintendent of Police Thursday itself.

Alleging that no action was taken against the SP and other police personnel over the Monday night incident, the agitators allegedly torched mofussil and women police stations in the town.

They also allegedly set police outposts at Purab Sarai and Basudeopur on fire, and ransacked the SP office and several other police stations and outposts. The office of Sub Divisional Officer was also allegedly targeted by the protestors, official sources said.

Witnesses said that finding themselves outnumbered, the police personnel at all these stations escaped from the premises.

Official sources said the agitators went berserk and also tried to set kotwali and Kasim bazar police stations on fire, but there they faced a strong resistance from the policemen who fired in the air to disperse the mob.

They burnt tyres near Rajiv Chowk in the Munger town, demanding action against the SP and the police personnel responsible for allegedly opening fire during the idol immersion procession.

Additional Director General of Police (Headquarters) Jitendra Kumar said in Patna that extra police force has been sent to Munger.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, Munger, Manu Maharaj led a flag march in Munger town to bring the situation under control.

The RJD-helmed Grand

Alliance has strongly criticised the Monday incident, likening the district police with General Dyer of infamous Jallianwala Bagh incident in Punjab during British rule on April 13, 1919.

IPS officer Lipi Singh is the daughter of RCP Singh, the JD(U) leader in the Rajya Sabha.

Coming on the eve of the first phase of polling, the incident had its impact voting too as two of the three Assembly seats — Munger, Jamalpur — in the district witnessed lower voter turnout as compared to the 2015 polls.

While Munger constituency had witnessed a poll percentage of 54.26 in 2015, it recorded 47.89 Wednesday. Similarly, the decline was from 49.70 per cent to 47.24 per cent in Jamalpur this time.

But Tarapur constituency recorded a polling per-

centage of 54.80 this time compared to 52.66 in 2015.

State minister and senior JD(U) leader Shailesh Kumar is in the fray from Jamalpur seat.

Meanwhile, the police department has ordered the removal of in-charges of muffasil police station and Basudeopur outpost in connection with the October 26 firing and baton-charge incidents.

RCP Singh was mobbed Wednesday by angry protesters demanding action against the "guilty officials" when he visited Begusarai, where polling is scheduled for November 3. Begusarai is the Lok Sabha seat of BJP leader and Union minister Giriraj Singh who had condemned the Munger incident and sought action against "erring officials no matter how highly connected they may be.

— PTI

Bombay HC directs Central govt to clear its stand on media trials

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 29

The Bombay High Court on Thursday asked the Union government to clarify whether excessive reportage by the press on an ongoing investigation of Sushant Singh Rajput case amounted to interference in the administration of justice under the Contempt of Courts Act.

The court also asked the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting why it should not frame guidelines on media coverage of sensitive criminal cases.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni was hearing PILs filed by some former IPS officers of

● **THE COURT** also asked the Ministry of I&B why it should not frame guidelines on media coverage of sensitive criminal cases.

Mumbai police and activists seeking restrictions should be imposed on media trials in SSR death case.

The PILs also alleged that some media channels are maligning the image of Mumbai police deliberately and requested court to interfere in the matter.

In the previous hearings, the HC heard the petitioners, private TV news channels, and the National Broadcasters Standards Authority (NBSA) on the

need for a regulatory mechanism for the electronic media.

The TV channels and the NBSA argued in favour of a self-regulatory mechanism and said the state must not be given any control over their content.

On Thursday, senior counsel Aspi Chinoy, representing former police officers, submitted to the court that there had been blatant violation of rights of various persons by the news channels while reporting on the SSR death case.

He said that the channels had resorted to pre-judging and conducted irresponsible coverage of the actor's death case, and that it was affecting

administration of justice and fundamental rights such as the right to fair trial guaranteed under Article 21.

Mr Chinoy submitted that the media had violated statutory framework of the Cable TV Regulation Act by transmitting content which amounted to contempt of court and though the Central Government, which was empowered under the Cable TV Act and the Programme Code for TV channels laid down under it failed to take suo motu cognisance of the media trial in Rajput's death case while the coverage by certain errant news channels was ongoing for over two months.

SC seeks Centre's response on use of remdesivir, HCQ

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The Supreme Court on Thursday sought a response from the Centre on a PIL seeking to restrain on prescribing Remdesivir and HCQ as medicines to cure Covid while making it clear that it was not going to adjudicate on as to which medicine should be provided to treat highly contagious disease.

Seeking response from the Centre, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde heading a bench also comprising Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice V. Rama-swaramanian told the PIL's petitioner's advocate M.L. Sharma "We are telling you, we are only going to make the government aware of it, we are not going to judge which medicine should be prescribed for Covid treatment."

The court issued notice after Adv. Sharma referred to October 15 World Health Organisation report which says that "the interim results from the Solidarity Therapeutics Trial, coordinated by the World Health Organisation, indicate that Remdesivir Hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir/ritonavir and interferon regimens appeared to have little or no effect on 28-day mortality or the in-hospital course of Covid-19 among hospitalised patients..." Sharma referred to vari-

NIA RAIDS AT NINE LOCATIONS IN VALLEY, ONE IN DELHI

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 29

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) continued its raids on the offices of various Non-governmental organisations and some other aid agencies and the homes of their organisers across Kashmir Valley on the second day on Thursday.

Premises owned or used by a similar organisation in Delhi were also searched by it in connection with a case pertaining to alleged misuse of funding received by these NGOs from across the country and abroad.

The case was registered by the NIA earlier this month under sections 120B and 124 A IPC and sections 17, 18, 22A, 22C, 38, 39 and 40 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The agency has claimed that it began investigations in the matter after receiving "credible information" that certain NGOs and trusts operating in J&K "are collecting funds domestically and abroad through so-called donations and business contributions, etc. and are then utilising these funds for secessionist and terrorist activities in J&K".

On Thursday, nine locations in the Valley and one in Delhi were raided by the NIA sleuths.

Those whose premises were searched include Falah-e-Aam Trust, Charity Alliance in Delhi, Human Welfare Foundation, JK Yateem Foundation, Salvation Movement and JK Voice of Victims.

A day earlier, the agency had raided and searched the offices of mass-circulated newspaper *Greater Kashmir* and a couple of NGOs and the homes of several journalists and human rights and political activists simultaneously in the Valley and Bangalore.

The NIA had, however, said that the raids at *Greater Kashmir* office and the homes of some journalists were not in connection with their journalistic work and other professional pursuits but a case pertaining to alleged misuse of foreign contributions.

NOW, KERALA EMERGES AS COVID HOTSPOT

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 29

The overall coronavirus cases in India crossed 80.40 lakh on Thursday with 49,881 fresh cases.

However, out of these, 73.16 lakh have already recovered and little over 6 lakh people still remain infected.

The total fatalities so far has been close to 1.21 lakh out of which 517 deaths took place in the last 24 hours.

However, Kerala, which is reporting the highest number of daily fresh cases, has become a major concern for health authorities as it is emerging as the country's biggest Covid-19 hotspot now.

In Maharashtra, though daily fresh detections has dropped substantially from what it was for the last few months it still has second highest cases after Kerala.

Situation in the national capital too is worrisome which on Thursday had 5,739 fresh cases.

ous countries including UK and the US which have held the same view backing the WHO conclusions.



IN BRIEF

8 inmates dead after prison riot

Kabul: Rioting at a prison in western Afghanistan has left at least eight inmates dead, provincial officials said Thursday. The violence erupted on Wednesday night at the prison in Herat, the capital of western Herat province, said Mohammad Rafiq Shirzai, spokesman for the provincial health department. He said 12 others — eight inmates and four prison guards — were wounded in the outbreak at the facility, which holds around 2,000 prisoners. It wasn't immediately known if there are any Taliban at the penitentiary. The rioting started after guards began clearing some partitions created by prisoners, said Jelani Farhad, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Pak seminary blast probe ends

Peshawar: The investigation team probing the bomb blast at a religious seminary in northwestern Pakistan's Peshawar city has completed its initial report and arrested one student in connection with the attack that killed eight persons, officials said on Thursday. The investigation team that included officials of counter-terrorism department, police and law enforcement agencies, recorded statements of several eye witnesses and obtained the record of the students of the seminary and the labourers engaged in a construction work there. One student of the seminary has been arrested over his alleged links to the blast, suspected to have targeted a senior cleric from Afghanistan, officials said. The blast occurred around 8:30 am on Tuesday at a local mosque, which also serves as a religious school in Dir Colony in Peshawar, while students were reading the Quran. There was no claim of responsibility for the blast in the city, bordering war-torn Afghanistan. Law enforcement agencies on Wednesday detained several people in connection with the bomb blast.

59 bodies found in Mexican pits

Mexico City: A Mexican search group said that it found 59 bodies in a series of clandestine burial pits in the north-central state of Guanajuato and that more could still be excavated. The head of the official National Search Commission, Karla Quintana, Wednesday said excavations began a week ago based on a tip from relatives of missing people. Given the deficiencies of local law enforcement in Mexico, relatives of missing people in many states have formed their own search groups, collecting information and exploring possible body dumping sites and clandestine graves. Quintana called it "a sad and terrible discovery." She added that there were more "possible positive sites" where more bodies could be found, and that work would continue. The bodies were extracted over the last week from 52 pits at a property on the outskirts of the Guanajuato city of Salvatierra. The scene was considered dangerous enough that the army and National Guard provided security for the excavations. Guanajuato has the largest number of homicides of any state in Mexico.

JALLIANWALA BAGH STORY SHORTLISTED

London, Oct. 29: British Indian journalist and author Anita Anand's book that tells the story of a young man caught up in the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar has been shortlisted for a prestigious history-literary prize in the UK. 'The Patient Assassin: A True Tale of Massacre, Revenge and the Raj' will compete with six others for the PEN Hessel-Tiltman Prize for History 2020, awarded annually for a non-fiction book of specifically historical content.

Entries are required to be works of high literary merit — that is, not primarily written for the academic market — and can cover all historical periods. "Modern history is well-represented with Anita Anand's 'The Patient Assassin' showing us how empire continues to haunt us," said Rana Mitter, Professor of the History and Politics of Modern China at the University of Oxford, who is the chair of this year's judging panel. In the shortlisted book, Anand tells the dramatic story of an orphan Udhram Singh's 21-year quest for revenge.

France knife attack: 3 dead**Third attack in 2 months; attacker wounded by cops, hospitalised**

Paris, Oct. 29: An attacker armed with a knife killed three people at a church on Thursday in the Mediterranean city of Nice, authorities said. It was the third attack in two months in France.

The assailant was wounded by police and hospitalised after the killings at the Notre Dame Church, less than a kilometre from the site in 2016 where another attacker plowed a truck into a Bastille Day crowd, killing dozens.

Thursday's attacker was believed to be acting alone and police are not searching for other assailants, said two police officials, who were not authorised to be publicly named.

France's anti-terrorism prosecutor's office opened an investigation into the killings, which marked the third attack since the opening in September of a terrorism trial in the January 2015 killings at the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket.

"He cried 'Allah Akbar' over and over, even after he was injured," said Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi, who told *BFM* television that three people had died, two inside the church and a third who fled but was mortally wounded.

"The meaning of his gesture left no doubt." In Nice, images on French media showed the neighborhood locked down and surrounded by police and emergency vehicles.

Sounds of explosions could be heard as sappers exploded suspicious objects. The lower house of parliament suspended a debate on France's new virus restrictions in the wake of spurt in cases and held a moment of silence Thursday for the victims.

The prime minister rushed from the hall to a crisis centre overseeing the aftermath of the Nice attack. French President Emmanuel Macron was headed to Nice later in the



French President Emmanuel Macron (2nd-L) visits the scene of a knife attack at the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Nice in Nice on Thursday. — AFP



day.

Less than two weeks ago, an assailant decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of the Prophet for a class on free speech. Those caricatures were published by *Charlie Hebdo* and cited by the men who gunned down the newspaper's editorial meeting in 2015.

In September, a man who had sought asylum in France attacked bystanders outside *Charlie Hebdo*'s former offices with a butcher knife. — AP

FRENCH PM RAISES ATTACK ALERT TO EMERGENCY AFTER CHURCH KILLINGS

Paris, Oct. 29: France's prime minister Jean Castex says the country's threat level will be raised to its maximum after an attack near a church killed three people Thursday in Nice.

The move comes just hours before the country was going into its second coronavirus lockdown.

An attacker armed with a knife killed three people at a church Thursday in Nice, French authorities said. It was the third attack in two months in France amid a growing furor over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were re-published by the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*. — AP

SAUDI MAN STABS, WOUNDS GUARD AT FRENCH CONSULATE, ARRESTED

Dubai, Oct. 29: Saudi Arabia's state-run news agency is reporting that a Saudi man has been detained after stabbing and slightly wounding a guard at the French Consulate in the city of Jiddah.

The Saudi Press Agency report on Thursday offered no motive for the attack. However, it comes amid heightened tensions

after an assailant decapitated a French middle school teacher who showed caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad for a class on free speech.

Those caricatures were published by *Charlie Hebdo* and cited by the men who gunned down the newspaper's editorial meeting in 2015. — AP

Antisemitism row: Labour Party suspends Corbyn

London, Oct. 29: The UK's Opposition Labour Party on Thursday suspended former leader Jeremy Corbyn from its ranks after a report by the country's human rights watchdog held the party "responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination" during his time in charge.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which had launched an investigation into antisemitism within the party following a string of complaints, found that Labour had broken the law in its failure to handle antisemitism, or anti-Jewish, complaints and there were "serious failings" by its leadership at the time.

However, in his reaction to the report, Corbyn said that the number of complaints made during his tenure were "dramatically overstated". "One antisemitic is one too many, but the scale of the problem was also dramatically overstated for political reasons by our opponents inside and outside the party, as well as by much of the media. That combination hurt Jewish people and must never be repeated," said Corbyn, in reference to the report.

A Labour Party spokesperson issued a statement soon after to announce that Corbyn had been suspended from the party. "In light of his comments made today and his failure to retract them subsequently, the Labour Party has suspended Jeremy Corbyn pending investigation. He has also had the whip removed from the Parliamentary Labour Party," the spokesperson said.

In his reaction to the EHRC report, current Opposition leader Keir Starmer had indicated that a denial stance to the report would not be tolerated,

● THE EHRC had served the Labour Party with an unlawful act notice after an investigation into antisemitism by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found it responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination. The BJP was quick to hit back.

without any specific references to Corbyn.

Starmer said: "And if — after all the pain, all the grief, and all the evidence in this report, there are still those who think there's no problem with antisemitism in the Labour Party. That it's all exaggerated, or a factional attack. "Then, frankly, you are part of the problem too. And you should be nowhere near the Labour Party either."

Earlier, the EHRC had served the Labour Party with an unlawful act notice after an investigation into antisemitism by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found it responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination. Its investigation, launched in May last year, identified serious failings in the party leadership in addressing antisemitism and an inadequate process for handling antisemitism complaints. The party was found responsible for three breaches of the UK's Equality Act (2010) relating to political interference in antisemitism complaints; failure to provide adequate training to those handling antisemitism complaints; and harassment. "The equality body's analysis points to a culture within the party which, at best, did not do enough to prevent antisemitism," the EHRC said. — PTI

Computerised lottery scheme for H-1B may go

Washington, Oct. 29: The Trump administration has proposed to scrap the computerised lottery system to grant H-1B work visas to foreign technology professionals and replace it with a wage-level-based selection process, a move that is expected to counter the downward pressure on the wages of US workers.

A notification on the new system is being published in the Federal Register on Thursday. Stakeholders have 30 days to respond to the notification, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said on Wednesday, less than a week before the US presidential election.

Replacing the computerised draw of lots to decide on the successful H-1B applicants, the DHS said it is expected to help counter the downward pressure on the wages of American workers that is created by an annual influx of relatively lower-paid, new cap-subject H-1B workers. The H-1B visa, most sought-after among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality

● THE TRUMP administration has proposed to replace the computerised lottery system with a wage-level-based selection process, a move that is expected to counter the downward pressure on wages of US workers.

occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

If finalised, US Citizenship and Immigration Services would first select registrations (or petitions, if the registration process is suspended) generally based on the highest Occupational Employment Statistics prevailing wage level that the offered wage equals or exceeds for the relevant Standard Occupational Classification code and areas of intended employment. "Prioritisation and selection based on wage levels better balances the interests of petitioners, H-1B workers, and US workers," the DHS said. "The Trump administration is continuing to deliver on its promise to protect American workers," said Acting DHS Deputy Secretary Ken Cuccinelli. — PTI

Four-week lockdown in France

Paris, Oct. 29: French doctors expressed relief but business owners were in despair as France prepared Thursday to shut down again for a month to try to put the brakes on a fast-moving fall coronavirus outbreak.

Shoppers at a Paris farmers' market said Thursday they were ready to restrict their freedoms given the rising number of virus-related deaths and Covid-19 patients filling French hospitals.

The new lockdown is gentler than what France saw in the spring, but still a shock to restaurants and other non-essential businesses that have been ordered to close their doors in one of the world's biggest economies.

French schools will stay open this time, to reduce learning gaps and allow parents to keep working. Farmer markets, parks and factories can also continue operating, officials said.

French lawmakers are voting Thursday on the new restrictions announced by President Emmanuel Macron, which are set to come into effect at midnight. The lower house of parliament is dominated by Macron's centrist party, so approval is virtually guaranteed.

The prime minister will lay out details of the virus-fighting plan Thursday evening. — AP

London, Oct. 29: New Coronavirus infections are rising by an estimated 96,000 cases daily across England, according to the findings of a new government-backed study released in London on Thursday.

An interim report led by Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI, which includes swab tests on thousands of people taken between October 16 and 25, shows that the prevalence of infection has more than doubled since the last round of similar

testing. This means an estimated 128 people per 10,000 of England's population has the virus that causes Covid-19, compared to 60 as of October 5. "These interim findings paint a concerning picture of the situation in England, where we're seeing a nation-wide increase in infection prevalence, which we know will lead to more hospitalisations and loss of life," said Professor Paul Elliott, director of the programme at Imperial College London. "We're also detecting

early signs that areas which previously had low rates of infection are following trends observed in the country's worst-affected areas. Now more than ever we must all work together to curb further spread of the virus and avoid subsequent overwhelming of the health service," he said.

The critical reproduction number (R) — the rate of virus transmission — has also increased further to 1.6, with infections doubling every nine days. — PTI

INDIA, UK INK NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESEARCH TO BATTLE COVID-19

London, Oct. 29: India and the UK have clinched new partnerships to boost bilateral cooperation on combating the Coronavirus pandemic as part of the 10th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD), held virtually following the Covid-19 lockdown and travel constraints. A £8-million joint funding initiative announced on Wednesday as part of the EFD outcomes will

support collaborative research focused on understanding the severity of Covid-19 in South Asian populations in India.

The UK Research and Innovation and the Department of Biotechnology in Indian Ministry of Science and Technology said their collaborative research will support research projects that are trying to understand the pandemic. — PTI

INFECTED MOUNT ROBUST DEFENCE

New York, Oct. 29: A vast majority of individuals infected with mild-to-moderate Coronavirus mount a "robust" defence via antibodies that is relatively stable for "at least five months".

This is the finding according to a new study which says this immune response significantly reduces the risk of reinfection with the Coronavirus. — PTI



Mike Pompeo

POMPEO, IN INDONESIA, BLASTS CHINA

Jakarta, Oct. 29: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo renewed the Trump administration's rhetorical onslaught against China in Indonesia on Thursday as the American presidential election looms.

With China a central theme in President Donald Trump's campaign to win a second term in just five days time, Pompeo took aim at Chinese aggressiveness in the South China Sea, where it has advanced maritime and territorial claims over the objections of its smaller neighbors, and over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking in Jakarta, the headquarters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Pompeo praised Indonesia's leadership in ASEAN for pushing back on what he called China's "unlawful" claims and lauded Jakarta's protection of its own territory.

"We respect freedom of the seas, sovereignty and the rule of law," he said, standing beside Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi. Marsudi agreed, saying "international law must be respected," although she did not specifically mention China.

"Our law-abiding nations reject the unlawful claims by Chinese Communist Party in the South China Sea as is clear from Indonesia's courageous leadership on this subject within ASEAN and at the United Nations," Pompeo said.

"It's a cause worth pursuing in multilateral settings and the Trump administration very much supports this."

POWER | PANGS

Some regions have been unable to report details of damage and casualties**Typhoon, landslides leave 35 dead in Vietnam**

Hanoi, Oct. 29: A typhoon that officials said was the most powerful to hit Vietnam in 20 years blew away from the country on Thursday after setting off landslides, sinking boats and knocking out power to at least 1.7 million people. At least 35 people were killed and more than 50 were missing, state media said.

The immediate focus for rescuers was on three villages in the country's central region where landslides killed at least 19 people and are suspected of

burying more than 40 others in thick mud and debris.

Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung travelled to the site of one landslide where soldiers were working to clear debris with bulldozers and he ordered officers to urgently send more troops to help with the efforts. "We must reach the landslide site the fastest way. First, send in more soldiers before we can get the big machine there. We have to reach the area by all means, includ-

ing by using helicopters," he said.

Also among the dead were 12 fishermen whose boats sank Wednesday as Typhoon Molave approached with winds of up to 150 kilometres (93 miles) per hour. Another 14 fishermen were still missing.

Officials said the death toll across the country may rise as some regions have been unable to report details of damage and casualties. Rescuers dug up eight bodies Thursday morning in Tra Van village in

Quang Nam province where a hillside collapsed on houses. The victims had taken shelter in the community as the typhoon approached, the official *Vietnam News Agency* reported.

In Tra Leng village, about 45 kilometres (28 miles) from Tra Van, another landslide buried a community with several houses occupied by about 45 people. Four people escaped, while rescuers recovered eight bodies and pulled out four villagers alive. — Agencies



A landslide triggered by Typhoon Molave leaves a trail of rocks and mud as it swamps a village in Phuoc Loc district of Quang Nam province, Vietnam on Thursday. — AP

DECCAN
Chronicle
30 OCTOBER 2020

Land for all in Kashmir:
Wait for SC to take call

A recent Union home ministry order, which opens the door for any Indian to buy non-agricultural immoveable property in Jammu and Kashmir, deals a grievous blow to the aspirations — and to the psyche — of the people of Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, and Ladakh. The legal status of this order shall remain dubious until the Supreme Court has dealt with the challenge before it to the law through which whittled the constitutional autonomy of the erstwhile J&K state and whose long-term consequences for India appear far from happy. The long delay in the top court pronouncing on one of the most consequential matters brought before it in Independent India has occasioned considerable surprise.

Since constitutionally downgrading J&K, the Centre has taken a series of steps that have negatively impacted the lives of ordinary people in the UT and bred resentment. Among these are the hampering of the study of ordinary students by not permitting high-speed Internet, virtually killing journalism through the harsh treatment of media personnel, placing severe restrictions on the movement of people, banning protests, filling top positions in the UT administration by non-Kashmiri officers — to say nothing of putting thousands of non-BJP politicians in jail. In addition, in the name of quelling terrorism (and instilling patriotism by fiat) there is the egregiousness of troop deployment on an extensive scale not seen even in the intense militancy-affected years of the late 1980s-the early 1990s. To place matters in perspective — all policy actions derive from executive orders alone, as in the colonial era, and there is the denial of election to the UT legislature. The Centre gave itself the luxury to do all of these while the Supreme Court has delayed beyond comprehension hearing the case of the reading down of Article 370 and the re-fashioning of an adjunct provision, the Article 35-A. It is the latter which had made ownership of immoveable property, government employment, and state scholarships, the exclusive preserve of permanent residents of the state.

In May, new domicile rules were devised to let some people from outside J&K to apply for permanent resident status. This has now been widened to let anyone own immoveable property. Such a situation does not obtain in other special category states such as Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. In 1950, the Sheikh Abdullah government had brought the Big Estates Abolition Act to permit the tillers of land of big zamindars beyond certain ceiling prescriptions to become owners, and it is this which had made the former state among the top performers on social and economic indices. Under the new land orders, this Act stands revoked, probably opening the door for corporate houses.

Jammu and Ladakh have reacted negatively to the new land rules though the Centre may have hoped for support from those quarters on religious grounds. The heart of the matter is the taking away of the former J&K's autonomy, a condition laid down by Maharaja Hari Singh, and endorsed by Sheikh Abdullah, for joining India in 1947, rather than go with Pakistan.

Heed ASER's red flag

There has been a shift from private to government schools between 2018 and 2020, says the Annual Status of Education Report. The reasons include financial distress in households due to loss of income and shut-down of private schools. There has been an unregulated mushrooming of private schools all over the country in the past decades.

Alarming, India is among the few countries where the ratio of private to public schooling is the highest. That's because the coverage of the government school network is patchy at best and the quality of learning dispensed there abysmal. The ASER study showed, for instance, that during the survey week, only one in three rural children had engaged in a learning activity. And only 36 per cent of schools provided them with textbooks.

In urban centres, there has been a boom in the edutech industry in pandemic times. However, exposing the criminally negligent logic behind the government's great e-education push is a well-anticipated outcome. Although smartphone ownership almost doubled from 2018, a third of children with smartphone access still did not receive any learning materials. Significantly, less than 15 per cent of rural Indian households have Internet. The poorest homes cannot afford a smartphone or a computer. Some were found selling their only assets so the children could continue learning. Though it is highly iniquitous, the National Education Policy is silent on this yawning academic divide. The government, in its unseemly haste to pacify the influential middle classes, was loath to drop the JEE and restarted lessons for older students. But it paid scant regard to the increase in dropouts at the elementary and secondary levels.

It is a fact that 90 per cent of brain growth occurs by age five, meaning that the quality of early childhood schooling has a crucial impact. The ASER report shows that factors determining the quality of education received at this stage include the mother's education and the type of school, government or private. There is a need to strengthen the government school system urgently. India is going through an education emergency, which has been exacerbated by Covid.

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Subhani



Death talk: Euthanasia
tales amid Covid times



Karan Thapar

As I See It

I started reading Arun Shourie's new book *Preparing for Death* whilst in quarantine after I happened to meet someone who subsequently tested positive. Had I an inkling that in a couple of days I would follow suit I doubt if this would have been my first choice. But since I had started it, I decided to continue. The fear that suddenly loomed ahead seemed to add macabre interest. At least, during daylight hours!

It's not an easy book to read. Written in a deliberate stream-of-consciousness style, it is often erudite and learned but there are occasions when it's prosaic and even pedestrian.

Like his other work, this book can be repetitive or, to be more accurate, Arun argues his case so thoroughly that you feel he's nailed the point long before he's finished with his hammer blows. Consequently, you need to read it in stages. Bit by bit. To make it easier, don't read in chronological sequence. Flip forward and back as curiosity guides you.

Well, that's what I did and thus stumbled upon five pages that tell a story that I find hard to describe. Perhaps my personal Covid affliction added to my fascination but I feel certain it would grip anyone who reads it. It's the most excruciatingly honest but also deeply disturbing and distressing account of a father's death told by his son. I admire Arun for sharing it with strangers and outsiders — because that's what readers are — but I also question why he wanted to do so

or what purpose it serves. It left me feeling uncomfortable. Actually, unsettled. I felt I was intruding into someone's privacy where I had no right to be.

The question this mesmerising account raises — actually explicitly though it shies away from an answer — is did Arun's father, Hari Dev Shourie, the founder of Common Cause, commit euthanasia? Everything in your head and heart tells you the answer is yes. Even the way Arun relates the story suggests this conclusion is unavoidable. In fact, there are a couple of sentences that, particularly for the suggestive or intuitive, could clinch the issue. "He was a strong advocate of euthanasia", writes Arun. "He had even written a book on the subject: *Life's Finale: Voluntary Exit*."

Arun's account of his father's death begins on the morning it happened. H.D. Shourie, who was 91 and had recently lost his wife, asked for tea at 8 am. When Ganesh, his trusted attendant, served it he was told to come back in an hour and a half. "When he went at 9.30, our father was gone."

A note written in his hand was found on the table by his bed. "I have

It's not an easy book to read. Written in a deliberate stream-of-consciousness style, it is often erudite and learned but there are occasions when it's prosaic and even pedestrian

By making convincing forensic use of the letter his father left, Arun presents a compelling case that drives one to the conclusion that his father committed euthanasia

led a full life". H.D. Shourie began. "My time has come... I have no regrets... today, the three of you are in town." It was that last sentence that shook Arun, his brother Deepak and their sister Nalini. "We used to travel a lot", writes Arun, "and often Nalini, Deepak or I would be out of town: he had clearly chosen a day when we were all in Delhi — none of us would have to rush back."

As the three siblings read and reread their father's last letter, their grief and shock mounting, they discovered it contained further evidence to suggest that H D. Shourie had committed suicide. Arun writes that whenever he gave advice to others, the elder Shourie would say: "When you write the final note or your will, as far as possible write it in your own hand... and include in it some detail which no one but you know about... this will help establish the authenticity of the document." And that is precisely what he had done. The letter mentions "a souvenir" hidden in an "almirah". None of his children knew it was there.

If you still have doubts this was a case of death by euthanasia there is, right at the end of the five pages, a sentence spoken by Arun's mother-in-law that will simply blast them away. Maltiji, as Arun refers to her, lived her life with the Shouries, looking after their son Adit. Consequently, she got to

know his father well. She also shared a birthday with H.D. Shourie. It's what she suddenly said a few months after his death that seems to erase all doubts of how it happened. "*Bhai Sahib* had even written the recipe in his book, she told us one day — she was the only one in the family to have read the book."

So, doesn't that seem to suggest that H.D. Shourie put something in his morning tea which took his life? Something that would take 90 minutes to work, which is why he asked his trusted Ganesh to return an hour and a half later?

This is where Arun's account of his father's death stops. He doesn't answer the question — did H.D. Shourie take his own life? But then he doesn't really need to. By making convincing forensic use of the letter his father left, Arun presents a compelling case that drives one to the conclusion that his father committed euthanasia. It's hard to come to any other. In fact, you sense that is also what Arun believes — though, understandably, he can't bring himself to say so — when he writes of this father's book... "though years have passed since he went, I haven't had the courage to read it to this day".

Yet Arun has had the courage to tell us this story and share its harrowing impact on himself and his siblings. Speaking out is often a way of coming to terms with terrible tragedy or inexplicable mystery. Perhaps that was his reason for revealing something most people would, almost certainly, have kept to themselves. But it's not easy for the rest of us to handle. It not only left me full of questions and conflicting emotions but also quite shaken.

The writer is a television commentator and anchor

LETTERS

HYDERABAD FLOODS

I am one among the many people in Hyderabad who has been severely affected by the heavy rains recently. The government said every home that is affected will get money. However, the government officials are interpreting that only homeowners will get the money. We do not own a house but cast our vote. There is a concept called equality. I feel people living on rent have more financial problems than homeowners. The government must clarify the issue.

Sanju
Hyderabad

BIHAR ELECTIONS

The voter turnout in spite of pandemic gave us a feel good vibe (*Over 53% vote in 1st phase of Bihar polls, DC, Oct. 29*). We hope that the result may change the political equations drastically in India. We are aware that Nitish Kumar has lost his charisma and even Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reputation is dented as he failed miserably on many issues, especially in job creation and bringing back black money. In spite of caste and religion equations, it may not be so easy for the NDA to win absolute majority as predicted in the surveys.

G.S. Dwivedi
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN
DECCAN
Chronicle

New light on Netaji

NASIK, Oct. 29. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, dressed in Japanese clothes, left Taipei airport with some Indian companions for an unknown destination on August 18, 1945, after ordering the plane that brought him there to be brunt, according to Mr. Mohammed Usman Patel, who claims he was Netaji's bodyguard at the time.

Mr Patel told PTI yesterday he had prepared a detailed statement about Netaji's movements at the time as known to him and was sending it to the Prime Minister. He has suggested that the Khosla Commission, set up to inquire into the circumstances of Netaji's reported death, hear him and some others who were present at Taipei airport at the time.

Abhijit
Bhattacharyya



Stop Dragon's
free ride, don't
let it exploit
our democracy

It has been long-term Chinese policy, almost since the inception of the People's Republic, to try and mock India's democracy as the Dragon, deep down, is convinced it is democracy which makes this country weak, and its leaders ineffective and inefficient. This has driven the Chinese Communist Party's strategic thinking for decades.

The CCP's mission to humiliate India has become more diabolical by the day. In association with its allies in the Pakistan Army and its ISI, the Chinese are going all out in a bid to internationalise India's internal issues, though with little success, at the United Nations and elsewhere. President Xi Jinping is, of course, only continuing a tradition set long back by Chairman Mao Zedong.

The Dragon's diplomatic deception now borders on the ludicrous. You don't need a trained Sinologist to uncover duplicity and the plot to attack India from within. Thus, when Beijing's man in Delhi, ambassador Sun Weidong, parrots the one-liner "the common interests of the two countries (India and China) far outweigh the frictions and differences", he's either hallucinating or trying hard to convince his bosses that he's working hard in Delhi to mislead gullible Indians, and take them for a

ride!

Therefore, one should seek some clarifications from Mr Sun, and put forward some pertinent questions to him: "Mr Ambassador, please define the common interests of the two countries". Specifically, with facts and figures, without airy semantics. In what way do the "common interests", if any, "far outweigh the friction and differences"? Does it imply that India, for the sake of the so-called "common interests", be silent and succumb to the CPC's blandishments despite all the unilateral violence, killings, invasions, forced occupation of Indian territory since the 1950s, setting the tribal areas of Northeast India on fire, destroying West Bengal through the treacherous anti-national Naxalites and other marauding Communists, the unprovoked killing of Indian border personnel at Longju (August 1959), Hot Springs (October 1959), the 32-day invasion of India (October-November 1962), Nathu La (September 1967), Cho La (October 1967), Pangong Tso Lake (May 2020), the China-Pakistan CPEC through India's J&K, and now the Galwan Valley massacre (June 2020)? Should India forget and forgive President Xi, who has made himself China's lifetime dictator, and his cohorts for the sake of what Beijing hypocritically

calls "common interests"?

Does the recurring murder of Indian soldiers by the CPC-controlled private militia called the People's Liberation Army constitute the "common interests" of Beijing and New Delhi? Does the loss of limbs of Indian officers and men and the forced occupation of Indian territory by the CPC constitute "common interests"? Or do the Chinese hope to tire out the Indian soldiers standing guard on the banks of Pangong Lake and force their commanders to talk from 10 to 14 hours a day in a diplomatic engagement with PLA generals? Is this why India maintains a standing army? Soldiers aren't diplomats, and it isn't their role to resort to Gandhi-like "*ahimsa*" to counter the CPC's "*hinsa*"!

Sorry, Ambassador Sun, that's the job of the foreign office and its diplomats, who should "enter the dragon" and play hardball, telling Beijing that there is a limit to how long such gross violations of India's sovereignty can continue.

It's time for the Chinese to forget about access to India's market of 1.3 billion people. It's time their spies operating under garb of companies, investors and tourists stop interfering in India's internal affairs. Let them not issue brazen threatening

"advisories" to India's independent media, ordering it to "desist" from writing about Taiwan, Xinjiang, the Dalai Lama, Hong Kong, Uighurs and human rights violations. One wonders what the battalions of Chinese diplomats have understood about this country that they would think India's media would follow the foreign ministry's lead in its reports and comments?

It's also time for Beijing to stop instigating India's neighbourhood through its cash, threats, deceit, deception and lies.

The Indian State should seriously go back to basics of the Constitution to deal with the Chinese assault on Indian territory and revisit Article 1(3) - "The territory of India shall comprise" ... and "(c) such other territories as may be acquired". Simply put, India's Constitution doesn't have any provision to cede territory to any foreign power/country. It permits acquisition only... "as may be acquired". If at all, India can only cede its own territory subject to an amendment of the Constitution. Thus, with the passing of Constitution (119th Amendment) Bill 2013, for example, for operationalising the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh, notified as "100th Amendment Act" after the assent of

the President, the border readjustment between New Delhi and Dhaka took place peacefully and with mutual respect and honour. India cannot otherwise cede an inch of its territory to any foreign country. That's the bottomline.

It is clear as daylight that the Chinese are bent on hurting and humiliating democratic India. There is no chance of any change in the congenial psyche of hostility and aggression by the CPC. That's the reason attempts are being constantly made to dishonour and discredit this country before the comity of nations. If an India of 1.3 billion people cannot safeguard its sovereignty, Constitution and territorial integrity, and allow its trade, commerce, banking, economy and strategic sectors to be penetrated by the CPC, it's time for Delhi to snub the wayward ambassador publicly. Enough is enough! Without any further ado, India must decisively abort the Chinese geo-economic strategy which is penetrating and slowly poisoning the very fabric of our republic.

The writer is an alumnus of the National Defence College. The views expressed are personal.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39749.85	-0.43
Nifty 50	11670.80	-0.50
S&P 500*	3,303.20	0.98
Dollar (₹)	74.10	98.9
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.27	-0.20
Euro (₹)	86.94	-0.14
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,309▼186	0.37
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	37.46	-1.66
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.881	0.023
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.803	0.022

* As of 9:30 PM IST

P&G to set up ₹400 cr 'India Growth Fund'

FMCG major Procter & Gamble (P&G) on Thursday announced a Rs 400 crore fund to help its existing and new suppliers in India to build capacities. Through the 'India Growth Fund', P&G will collaborate with suppliers to build capacities that will further localise the manufacturing of finished products, procurement of raw materials and packaging materials, and adopt go-to-market innovations and technology, P&G said in a statement.

DPIIT's new quality control norms for leather footwear



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has come out with quality control norms for different leather foot-wear including anti-riot shoes with a view to contain imports and production of sub-standard products in the country. The products would have to conform to the specified standards and bear the standard mark under a licence from Bureau of Indian Standards. The items cannot be produced, sold/traded, imported, stocked unless they bear BIS mark.

IndiGo posts ₹1,194 crore loss for Sept quarter

Budget carrier IndiGo on Thursday reported a net loss of ₹1,194 crore for the second quarter ended September 30. It had posted a net loss of ₹1,062 crore in the September quarter of the previous financial year. In the April-June period this year, the airline had incurred a net loss of ₹2,884 crore. The airline's total income stood at ₹3,029 crore in the second quarter of 2020-21, a decrease of 64.5 per cent over the year-ago period, it said.

BP pitches for infra sharing with cos like ONGC

Ahead of starting the next wave of gas production from the KG basin, UK-based supermajor BP Plc has pitched for oil and gas producers sharing their infrastructure to help cut costs and monetise small and marginal discoveries. BP, which in partnership with Reliance Industries Ltd is investing USD 5 billion in developing three sets of discoveries in the Krishna Godavari basin block KG-D6, also wanted sanctity of contracts to be honoured and policy stability.



Gold demand in India plunges to 25-year low

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

India's gold demand in 2020 might be the lowest in 25 years as the pandemic has already dragged down consumption in the first three quarters by almost half. Central banks have turned net sellers in the September quarter after a gap of 10 years. In the first three quarters of 2020, gold demand stood at 252 tonnes, which was 49 per cent down from 496 tonnes in the same period last year. With one more quarter to go, the World Gold Council expects that India's gold demand would be the lowest since 1995.

"The year 1995 had seen one of the lowest yearly demand of 462 tonnes. In Q4 of last year, the demand stood at 194 tonnes. Even if we assume that the country consumes 200 tonnes in the festive quarter of Q4 this, which though is unlikely, the total consumption for the calendar year will touch 452 tonnes and will be lesser than 1995 demand," said Somasundaram PR, Managing Director, India, World Gold Council.

According to him, some of the organised jewellers have reportedly seen 60 – 80 per cent of the demand recovering in the month of October.

The September quarter saw gold demand falling by 30 per cent to 86.6 tonnes on the back of Covid-19 related disruptions, bleak consumer sentiment and high prices accompanied by volatility.

RBI on gold buying spree

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

While central banks turned net sellers after a gap of 10 years, the Reserve Bank of India bought 6.8 tonnes of gold during the pandemic-hit September quarter. In fact India has bought a total of about 30 tonnes since March this year.

India was among the six central banks that increased their reserves in Q3 by a tonne or more. India bought 6.8 tonnes of gold in the quarter when the gross purchases by all the banks totaled a modest 33 tonnes. United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan and Cambodia were the other buyers.

Earlier in February, RBI had bought 6.8 tonnes taking the total gold reserves to 641.8 tonnes. As on October 9, gold reserves have increased to 670.1 tonnes, as per the data of RBI. In the past seven months, RBI has bought close to 30 tonnes of gold in staggered purchases. India has been buying

gold in smaller tranches since 2017. In 2019, the bank had bought 34.5 tonnes and in 2018, 42.5 tonnes. In 2017 it had bought 0.3 tonnes. Prior to that, RBI had purchased 200 tonnes in 2009.

However, in the September quarter, Central banks turned net sellers of gold for the first time since Q4 2010. Against a net purchase of 141.9 tonnes in the same quarter last year, banks made a net sale of 12 tonnes.

Turkey and Uzbekistan accounted for the bulk of the sales. Central banks of the two large buyers- Russia and China - also have not been buying gold for some time.

According to the World Gold Council, Covid-19 continued to inflict widespread economic hardship, and this pre-occupied central banks and governments around the world.

"Uncertainty has been elevated by the pandemic, motivating many investors – including central banks – to seek assets

This is the third lowest quarter since 2000 when the World Gold Council began publishing quarterly demand.

This is, however, higher than Q2 which saw a 70 per cent drop – 64 tonnes - and the second lowest in World Gold Council's quarterly series.

While jewellery demand was down 48 per cent in Q3 against the year-ago quarter, investment demand was 51 per cent up to 33.8 tonnes compared to 22.3 tonnes in the Q3 2019. In value terms, investment demand went up by 107 per cent to Rs 15,410 crore.

Hiring in e-commerce, retail bouncing back

Mumbai, Oct. 29: The retail segment, which has been badly hit due to the lockdown restrictions, is bouncing back gradually with an uptick in hiring of 15 per cent in September when compared with the previous month, according to a report.

However, the hiring activities are still down by 50 per cent compared to the corresponding month a year ago, according to a report by Naukri.com.

The sector is showing a slow but steady sequential recovery but the sector is likely to bounce back further during the festive season in the country, it added.

"As more public spaces have opened up keeping social distancing in mind, we see movement pick up in retail spaces. Hiring is also picking up accordingly," the report added.

"The Naukri retail hiring report is based on hiring activities in the sector on the job site's platform."

Top roles that recruiters are hiring for include retail store manager, sales or business development manager, merchandiser,



software developer, tech architect, designer and accountant.

Roles such as logistic manager, interior designer, warehouse assistant and tech lead have seen 100 per cent, 66 per cent, 44 per cent and 42 per cent growth in demand year-on-year.

Keywords like logistics and retail sales executive are up by 247 per cent and 500 per cent in recruiter searches for the sector, it added.

Meanwhile, the report further stated that there has been an upward trend in hiring activities in the Internet sector with a sequential recovery since July onwards.

"This is backed by various phases of unlocking

along with the huge demand from consumers for daily essentials through online channels.

Major hiring to prepare for the festive season is indicative in August but has become flat through September, it added.

Even though the internet or e-commerce industry started seeing a decline in hiring since the start of the year, when compared with the pre-COVID-19 period, we see a high recovery; the sector is down by only seven per cent in September compared to February.

Even digital marketing and pay per click specialist roles have seen an annual growth of over 40 per cent, it added.

— PTI

Mistrys seek to split Tata Sons' shareholding

Mumbai, Oct. 29: The Shapoorji Pallonji Group on Thursday said it has submitted a plan to Supreme Court to end its seven decades-old association with the Tata Group.

The Mistrys have valued their holding in the Tatas at ₹1.75 lakh crore, it informed the apex court, which is hearing the long-drawn legal battle between the two groups that began after the Tatas in a boardroom coup on October 28, 2016 sacked Cyrus Mistry as the Chairman.

"Tata Sons is effectively a two-group company, with the Tata Group comprising Tata Trusts, Tata family members and Tata companies holding 81.6 per cent of the equity share capital, and the Mistry family owning the balance 18.37 per cent," the Shapoorji Pallonji Group said in a statement quoting from its submission to the apex court.



The group has submitted a plan for separation from Tatas to the Supreme Court.

Tata Sons is the core investment company and is the holding company for the Tata Group and its value arises from its stake in listed equities, non-listed equities, the brand, cash balances and immovable assets. The value of 18.37 per cent stake of the SP Group in Tata Sons is over ₹1,75,000 crore, it said.

— PTI

Global trade to shrink by 20%

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

Revising its earlier estimate, the UNCTAD has predicted global trade to plummet by 20 per cent or by about \$6 trillion in 2020.

In 2019, global trade stood at about \$25 trillion, with estimates then predicting a 3 per cent rise in 2020. Without a swift recovery in the second

half of 2020, the consensus now is that trade will instead plummet by about 20 per cent this year, or by about \$6 trillion. Such a decline would be unprecedented, being significantly larger than the \$4 trillion fall seen during the 2009 recession, said Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General, UNCTAD in a recent article.

In early October, UNCTAD had said that it

Centre rejigs norms for PLI scheme

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, OCT. 29

Making the production-linked incentive schemes more attractive for bulk drugs and medical devices manufacturing, the government has replaced "minimum threshold investment" criterion with "committed investment".

The government has replaced the criterion of 'minimum threshold' investment with 'committed' investment by the selected applicant. The change has been made to encourage efficient use of productive capital. Further, the amount of investment required to achieve a particular level of production depends upon choice of technology and it also varies from product to product. However, the verification of the actual investment for incentives under the scheme continues.

M&M to launch 3-wheeler e-cargo

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 29

Mahindra Electric on Thursday announced the launch of its new electric 3-wheeler cargo model Treo Zor at starting price of ₹2.73 lakh at Delhi showroom which includes the FAME 2 and state subsidies.

The Mahindra Treo Zor electric 3-wheeler, built on the Treo platform, will be available in pickup, delivery van and flat bed variants at Mahindra small commercial vehicle dealerships in select cities across the country from December.

The vehicle will be retailed through Mahindra's SCV dealerships in select cities with deliveries commencing in December 2020.

With a best-in-class payload capacity of 550 kg, the Treo Zor is suitable for last mile transport and is claimed to offer savings of around ₹60,000 per year

(fuel cost saving of ₹2.10/km) compared to a diesel model.

The goods carrier is claimed to have a maintenance cost of 40 paise per km. The certified driving range on a full charge stands at 125 km.

"The Treo Zor will provide a clean, sustainable and affordable solution for last-mile delivery," Mahindra & Mahindra's MD and CEO Pawan Goenka said at the launch.

On August 11, the Sputnik V vaccine developed by the Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology was registered by the Ministry of Health of Russia and became the world's first registered vaccine against Covid-19 based on the human adenoviral vector platform.

Currently, there are two indigenously developed vaccine candidates for COVID-19.

— PTI

DRL ties up with BIRAC for vaccine trials

New Delhi, Oct. 29: Drug major Dr Reddy's Laboratories on Thursday announced its partnership with the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, set up by the Department of Biotechnology, for advisory support on clinical trials of Russian Covid-19 vaccine, Sputnik V, in India.

"The partnership will allow Dr Reddy's to identify and use some of BIRAC's clinical trial centres for the vaccine, which are funded under the National Biopharma

Mission (NBM), implemented by Project Management Unit-NBM at BIRAC. Further, the company will have access to good clinical laboratory practice labs to conduct immunogenicity assay testing of the vaccine," Dr Reddy's Laboratories said.

Earlier this month, Dr Reddy's and Russia Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to conduct an adaptive phase 2/3 human clinical trial for Sputnik V vaccine in

India.

On August 11, the Sputnik V vaccine developed by the Gamaleya National Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology was registered by the Ministry of Health of Russia and became the world's first registered vaccine against Covid-19 based on the human adenoviral vector platform.

— PTI

SUN | RISE India can make Perovskite solar cells, a potential cheap alternative to silicon cells

US pitches cheaper solar power tech to India

Chennai, Oct. 29: The United States wants India to explore manufacturing a cheaper alternative to silicon solar cells, United States. Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette said on Wednesday, amid high dependence on Chinese technology.

Brouillette, who was addressing a virtual press conference at the conclusion of the India energy forum at the IHS CERA Week, said India was "perfectly positioned as a potential manufacturer" of perovskite cells, on which the United States was conducting research at its national laboratory in Colorado.

"We have seen recently with this pandemic, supply chain issues have arisen



with countries like China and in certain cases we have become overly dependent upon one country," Brouillette said.

India has an ambitious plan to increase its renewable energy capacity to 175 gigawatts (GW) by 2022, nearly three-fifths of

which will be solar power. India, an energy hungry nation, which imports over 80 per cent of its solar cells and modules from its neighbour, wants to increase domestic manufacturing but has so far had little success.

"It is a technology we

want to share with India, we think it is better done there than other parts around the world," Brouillette said.

Perovskite solar cells (PSCs) are considered by scientists as a potential cheap alternative to silicon cells.

● INDIA HAS an ambitious plan to increase its renewable energy capacity to 175 gigawatts (GW) by 2022.

● THE ENERGY hungry nation imports over 80% of its solar cells and modules from its neighbour.

● SCIENTISTS are also exploring using perovskite in tandem with silicon to increase efficiency.

efficiency has improved dramatically," said Sandeep Ravishankar, a scientist researching Perovskite solar cells at the Institute of Energy and Climate Research, Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany.

"However, Perovskite solar cells are still not stable enough to be considered as a commercial competitor of silicon," Sandeep said.

Scientists are also exploring using perovskite in tandem with silicon to increase efficiency, and research on the technology is being carried out in countries including the United States, Saudi Arabia and Federal Republic of Germany.

SHORT TAKES



Novak Djokovic gestures after defeating Borna Coric in the Vienna Open pre-quarterfinal.

Djokovic seals 2020's top spot

Vienna: Novak Djokovic virtually ensured equalling Pete Sampras's record of ending the year as world number one for the sixth time on Wednesday when he reached the Vienna ATP quarterfinals. Djokovic defeated Croatia's Borna Coric 7-6 (13/11), 6-3 and will secure the year-end top spot as long as Rafael Nadal does not take an unlikely wild card into the Sofia event next month. If Novak wins the Vienna title on Sunday, he will make sure of the landmark regardless of whether or not Nadal plays in Bulgaria. Djokovic, who now has 39 wins and just two defeats in 2020, has been the top-ranked player at the end of a season five times: in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2018. He shares that mark with career rivals Roger Federer and Nadal. Sampras achieved the feat six years in succession between 1993 and 1998. — *AFP*

Green in Oz squad for India series

Melbourne: Australia on Thursday included young all-rounder Cameron Green in their T20 and ODI squad for the limited-overs series against India while Moises Henriques returned to national fold after three years following his exploits in the Big Bash League. India will play three One-day Internationals (November 27, 29, December 2) and as many T20Is (December 4, 6, 8) against Australia before the much-awaited Test series. "Cameron's domestic form has been outstanding and he has carried it through for Western Australia this summer. As a potential player of the future this is an opportunity for him to be part of the squad and build on his experience," national selector Trevor Hohns was quoted as saying by Cricket Australia. — *PTI*

Man U dismantle Leipzig, Barca win

Paris: Marcus Rashford was again the star for Manchester United in the Champions League with a hat-trick in a 5-0 thumping of RB Leipzig on Wednesday as Barcelona put their off-field troubles to one side to win 2-0 away to a Ronaldo-less Juventus. Rashford came on as a second-half substitute and scored three times from the 74th minute on in what was a fine win against last season's semifinalists. Mason Greenwood and Anthony Martial also scored. In Italy Barcelona bounced back from their weekend defeat in the Clasico against Real Madrid to beat Juventus 2-0. Lionel Messi got his name on the scoresheet late on, netting a stoppage-time penalty to seal Barca's second victory in as many Group G outings.

THE RESULTS
Manchester United 5 (Greenwood 21, Rashford 74, 78, 90+2, Martial 87-pen) bt RB Leipzig 0; Juventus 0 lost to Barcelona 2 (Dembele 14, Messi 90-pen); Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sancho 78-pen, Haaland 90+1) bt Zenit Saint Petersburg 0; Istanbul Basaksehir 0 lost to Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Kean 64, 79).

HOLDER'S SIGN

Dear Readers, What do you think Jason Holder of Sunrisers Hyderabad is signalling when he raises three fingers after taking each wicket? Write to us at sportsdesk@deccanmail.com

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Kings XI Punjab vs Rajasthan Royals from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

Women's Big Bash League: Sydney Thunder vs Adelaide Strikers from 6.45 am (Saturday) on Sony Six

WWE

Smackdown: Bouts from 5.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1

Gaikward off KKR

Jadeja cracks whip as CSK beat Knights in thriller

Dubai, Oct. 29: Chennai Super Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by six wickets in a thrilling IPL match here on Thursday.

Ravindra Jadeja scored an unbeaten 31 off just 11 balls which included two boundaries and three sixes, the last of which was struck on the last ball of the match to overhaul KKR's total of 172 for 5. Needing 30 runs off the last two overs, CSK smashed 20 off the penultimate over bowled by fast bowler Lockie Ferguson, thanks to Jadeja, who hit two more sixes in the last over bowled by pacer Kamlesh Nagarkoti.

Earlier, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad set a solid foundation for the chase by scoring 72 in 53 balls (4x6, 6x2).

For KKR, opener Nitish Rana made 87. Following Rana's 61-ball effort, cameos from skipper Eoin Morgan (15 off 12) and Dinesh Karthik (21 not out off 10) allowed KKR to put up a competitive total.

CSK, who pulled things back in the middle overs, leaked 66 runs in the last five overs.

Lungi Ngidi (2/34) was the best bowler for CSK while Sam Curran also bowled well early on.

The KKR innings was built largely on Rana's knock which comprised 10 fours, four sixes.

Rana hit three consecutive sixes off Karn Sharma in the 16th over to up the ante as the Kolkata side looked for quick runs.

— *PTI*



Ruturaj Gaikwad of Chennai Super Kings plays a shot against Kolkata Knight Riders during their IPL match at Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Thursday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubman Gill b Karn Sharma 26, Nitish Rana c Sam Curran b Lungi Ngidi 87, Sunil Narine c Ravindra Jadeja b Mitchell Santner 7, Rinku Singh c Ambati Rayudu b Jadeja 11, E. Morgan c Gaikwad b Ngidi 15, D. Karthik not out 21, R. Tripathi not out 3. Extras (LB-1, W-1) 2. **Total (for 5 wickets 20 overs) 172.**

FOW: 1-53, 2-60, 3-93, 4-137, 5-167. **Bowling:** Chahar 3-0-31-0, Curran 3-0-21-0, Ngidi 4-0-34-2, Santner 3-0-30-1, Jadeja 3-0-20-1, Karn Sharma 4-0-35-1.

Chennai Super Kings: Shane Watson c R. Singh b Varun Chakravarthy 14, RD Gaikwad b Cummins 72, Ambati Rayudu c Narine b Cummins 38, M. S. Dhoni b Varun 1, Sam Curran not out 13, Jadeja not out 31. Extras (NB-1, W-8) 9. **Total (for 4 wickets in 20 overs) 178.**

FOW: 1-50, 2-118, 3-121, 4-140. **Bowling:** Pat Cummins 4-0-31-2, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 3-0-34-0, Sunil Narine 4-0-23-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-54-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-20-2, Nitish Rana 1-0-16-0.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	12	8	4	0	16	+1.186
Royal Challengers Bangalore	12	7	5	0	14	+0.048
Delhi Capitals	12	7	5	0	14	+0.030
Kings XI Punjab	12	6	6	0	12	-0.049
Kolkata Knight Riders	13	6	7	0	12	-0.467
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	5	7	0	10	+0.396
Rajasthan Royals	12	5	7	0	10	-0.505
Chennai Super Kings	13	5	8	0	10	-0.532

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

SHASTRI URGES SURYAKUMAR TO BE PATIENT

New Delhi, Oct. 29: National coach Ravi Shastri has urged Suryakumar Yadav to "stay strong and patient" after the MI batsman impressed with an unbeaten 43-ball 79 in the IPL despite the heart-break of being ignored for India's tour of Australia. His consistent run in domestic cricket and the IPL notwithstanding, Yadav did not feature in India's white-ball squad named for the series against Australia.

"Surya namaskar. Stay strong and patient @ s u r y a _ 1 4 k u m a r #MivsRCB," Shastri tweeted.

His innings earned praise from several former stars with Virender Sehwag saying it won't be long before Yadav dons the Indian jersey. — *PTI*

Powerful Punjab face languishing Rajasthan

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 29: A rampaging Kings XI Punjab would look to extend their exceptional run and inch closer to a Play-offs berth while Rajasthan Royals would be desperate to stay alive in the tournament when the two sides clash in an IPL match, here on Friday.

It has been a dramatic turnaround for the KL Rahul-led side after a string of losses earlier in the tournament.

They have managed to weave together five consecutive wins against the top four sides in the tournament, infusing life into their campaign. They are in fourth position with 12 points from as many games, while the Royals have slumped to the penultimate spot with 10 points having

NUMBERS GAME	
HEAD TO HEAD	
OVERALL:	● Matches: 20 ● Rajasthan: 11 ● Punjab: 8 ● Tied: 1 (Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals in Super over after match ended in a tie)
MEETING IN 2019	
● Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals by 14 runs at Jaipur.	● Kings XI Punjab beat Rajasthan Royals by 12 runs at Mohali.
MEETING IN 2020	
● Rajasthan Royals beat Kings XI Punjab by 4 wickets at Sharjah.	
FOR THE RECORD	
● Mayank Agarwal made 106 runs off 50 balls with 10 fours and seven sixes against Rajasthan Royals in first meeting at Sharjah.	● Rajasthan Royals' 226 for six in 19.3 overs against Kings XI Punjab in first meeting at Sharjah was the highest successful run-chases in IPL.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

suffered seven defeats from 12 outings.

The Royals can't afford to slip up, if they lose on Friday they will be out of the reckoning while a defeat for Punjab will

dent their chances for a top-four finish.

The Royals will be high on confidence after their win over Mumbai Indians in their list outing. — *PTI*

HARDIK, CHRIS REBUKED FOR ALTERCATION

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 29: RCB all-rounder Chris Morris and his MI's counterpart Hardik Pandya have been reprimanded for a verbal altercation during their teams' IPL clash here.

The incident took place in the 19th over of MI chase when Pandya struck Morris for a massive six and gestured towards the South African.

Morris got his revenge when he dismissed Pandya in the fifth ball of the over and gave him a send off. MI won the match by five wickets.

A press release from the IPL said that both of them admitted to breaching the Code of Conduct.

"For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the match referee's decision is final and binding," said the release. — *PTI*

India for Kiwi as ICC's chairman

New Delhi, Oct. 29: The BCCI is likely to back the candidature of New Zealand's Greg Barclay over Singapore's Imran Khwaja in the elections for the ICC chairman, a post vacated by India's Shashank Manohar after two terms in July this year.

Barclay and Khwaja are the only two candidates contesting for the chairman's post and the 16-member all-powerful ICC Board is set to vote in the first week of December.

While hectic back-channel talks are on to find a unanimous candidate and put up a picture of unity among the Board of Directors (mostly comprising of member nations), it is highly unlikely that Khwaja will have the backing of the Indian cricket board.

"The BCCI is more aligned with New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and those who matter in Indian cricket board find Barclay as a more suitable candidate for the post. Also Khwaja's policy position-

ing isn't exactly in favour of Indian cricket," a senior official, privy to developments in ICC board said. There are a few issues due to which current ICC deputy chairman Khwaja won't find favour with the BCCI.

Firstly, the role played by him along with Manohar to roll back the proposed revenue model in which India, England and Australia stood to gain more.

The matter was up for vote and Khwaja and Manohar, had back then, gathered enough votes to crush the BCCI.

Secondly, the ICC in 2019, had drawn up a rough calendar for the 2023 FTP cycle and till 2028, each and every year; there was a senior men's flagship event kept in that, the revenues from which would have benefitted the smaller nations.

It is understood that the white paper that ICC prepared had Khwaja's tacit support. In fact, BCCI had strong objections to such a proposal. — *PTI*

KAPIL SHARES HIS WELL BEING IN VIDEO MESSAGE

New Delhi, Oct. 29: A week after undergoing angioplasty, the legendary Kapil Dev on Thursday greeted his former India teammates from the 1983 World Cup, saying he is "feeling very good" and eager to meet everyone soon.

The 61-year-old underwent the procedure after suffering a heart attack. He was discharged from the hospital a couple of days later.

"My family 83. The weather is very pleasant and I am very eager to meet you all. I am feeling very good. Thanks to all for your wishes and concern."

"I am hoping that we all will meet pretty soon. I will try to meet you all as early as possible. We have approached the end of the year and I am confident that we will have a great start to next year. Love you all," an enthusiastic Kapil, dressed in a purple T-shirt, said in a video which he shared with his 1983 teammates. — *PTI*



A screengrab of Kapil Dev from a video released by him.



In this file picture taken on December 6, 2008 Argentina's national team coach and football star Diego Armando Maradona gestures as he attends a felicitation programme at Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata, India. — *AFP*

Maradona turns 60 in self-isolation

Buenos Aires, Oct. 29: Notorious for his wild lifestyle, Argentina great Diego Maradona turns 60 on Friday in far more sober circumstances sheltered in self-isolation to protect him from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Having suffered two heart attacks in the last 20 years and contracted hepatitis, Maradona's precaution after a bodyguard started displaying Covid-19 symptoms earlier this week is understandable.

Born in a poor Buenos Aires neighborhood on October 30, 1960, Diego Armando Maradona quickly marked himself out as special talent. Defiant and ingenious, macho, a loyal friend and spiteful enemy, Maradona has always been magnetic.

IDOLIZED LIKE A GOD

First came the highs. Having made his name helping Boca win the Argentine title, he earned a move to Catalan giants Barcelona at just 21.

At 25 he dragged

Argentina to World Cup glory at Mexico 86. In the quarterfinal against England he displayed both the devil in him, and his genius, first scoring a goal with his hand — which he later dubbed the "Hand of God".

THE LOWS OF LIFE

Maradona broke down in floods of tears in 1990 after he failed to inspire an ill-disciplined Argentina to retain the World Cup, losing 1-0 to West Germany in the final. The next year his Napoli career ended in disgrace after he was handed a 15-month ban for taking cocaine.

He'd scored 346 goals in 679 matches over a 21-year career. As a coach he never enjoyed the same success, and certainly did not have the same flair.

Put in charge of the national team with a Lionel Messi in his pomp, Maradona's charges slumped out of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa with a 4-0 quarterfinal drubbing by Germany. — *AFP*

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