

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
ANANTAPUR | SUNDAY | 4 OCTOBER 2020



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face of grand alliance**



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to big win**



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WEATHER

Max: 31.0°C
Min: 14°C
RH: 83%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky. Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 31/14 9C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+75,748)	(+939)
65,47,413	1,01,812

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,718)	(+8)
TS: 1,97,327	1,153
(+6,224)	(+41)
AP: 7,13,014	5,941

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,50,37,210

DEATHS

10,35,993

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES **213**

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana
Tithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula
Vidiya till 7.27 am
Star: Ashwini till 11.51 am
Varjyam: 7.21 am to 9.09 am
10.41 pm to 12.29 am (Monday)
Durmuhurtam: 4.24 pm to 5.12 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm
HUJI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 16, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.31 am
Zohar: 12.26 pm
Asar: 4.28 pm
Maghrib: 6.05 pm
Isha: 7.21 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM
SUNSET TODAY 6.25 PM
MOONSET 12.42 PM
MOONRISE 12.56 AM

COUNTER POINT

TRUMP TURNS POSITIVE

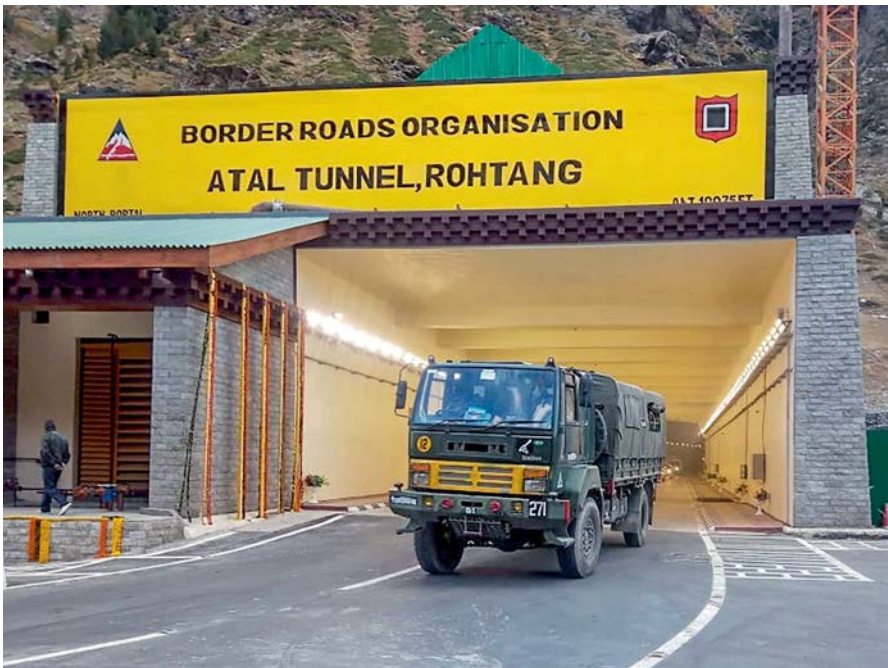
BRIEF

AIIMS report: SSR died by suicide

New Delhi: In a significant development, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Forensic Medical Board — that was formed to examine forensic evidences pertaining to the Sushant Singh Rajput death case — has ruled out murder of the late actor. Dismissing the theories of poisoning and strangling, in its “conclusive medico-legal” opinion to the CBI, the panel said, “there were no injuries over the body of the victim other than hanging”. The panel further said, “There were no marks of struggle on the body and clothes of the deceased”.

Billions of bullion shifted by road

The Hague: This really was the gold standard of road trips. The Netherlands’ central bank transported its Dutch-based stock of gold — 14,000 bars and about 1,000 boxes of gold coins — from its headquarters in Amsterdam to a safe in the nearby city of Haarlem in a closely guarded operation that ended on Saturday, the bank said. Along with the bullion worth \$11.7 billion, the bank also shifted bills worth another \$5.3 billion in the operation that was led by the Royal Dutch Military Police. It was shifted about 20 km with a police helicopter hovering overhead.



An army convoy passes through the Atal Tunnel after its inauguration, on the Manali-Leh route on Saturday. — PTI

Amid border tension, PM opens Atal tunnel in HP

**PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 3**

At a time of heightened tensions with China, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the strategically important all-weather Atal Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh, which connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley and will reduce the road distance to Leh by 46 km and travel time by four to five hours.

The Atal Tunnel, which is the world’s longest highway tunnel, is part of government effort to improve connectivity to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) so that forces and ammunition reach the forward areas faster. The tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifications in the Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas at an altitude

of 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) above sea level.

The 9.02 km long tunnel built by Border Roads Organisation can be used around the year. Earlier the valley was cut off for about six months each year owing to heavy snowfall. The tunnel reduces the road distance by 46 kms between Manali and Leh and the time by about 4 to 5 hours.

Launching an attack on the Congress, the Prime Minister said that country had seen a time when defence interests were compromised and cited the delay in buying modern fighter aircraft (Rafale) for the Air Force, the plan to put indigenous aircraft Tejas in cold storage, the lack of modern rifles for the armed forces, and not strengthening ordnance factories.

The Prime Minister said that the construction of the Atal tunnel was delayed once the Atal Behari Vajpayee government went out of power.

“Atalji laid the foundation stone of approach road of this tunnel in 2002. Once his government went out of power, this job was most likely forgotten. Till 2013-2014, progress was made only on 1.5 km. Experts say that if the pace of progress had continued at the same rate then the tunnel would have been completed by 2040. After 2014, the project progressed with unprecedented pace. Every problem which BRO faced was removed. Earlier 300 metres of the tunnel was being constructed but after 2014 it increased to 1,400 metre per year,” said Modi.

Stand-off on MBBS, BDS counselling

**SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3**

There seems to be a stand-off between the NTR university of health sciences and the department of higher education over counselling for admission into first year MBBS/BDS courses in both government and private medical/dental colleges in the state.

Following trouble in counselling for admission into PG medical courses in the last academic year, AP High Court had issued an order for the constitution of a committee to come up with a set of recommendations on the conducting of counselling.

It had directed the university authorities to take steps to avoid anomalies in the counselling process for admission and also ensure no repetition of the lapses.

● **NTR VARSITY** officials not willing to issue any notification over counselling for MBBS/BDS

NTR university authorities are unwilling to issue any notification on conducting counselling for admission into first year MBBS/BDS courses in the current academic year, unless the state government issues two orders with specification of the procedure for counselling and also on fee structure.

A six-member committee, including health special chief secretary, Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy, higher education special chief secretary, Satish Chandra, with university registrar, K. Sankar, as convener, submitted its report to the health special CS recently.

■ **Page 3: NEET results in October third week**

Trump given experimental drug, flown to military hosp

Washington, Oct. 3: US President Donald Trump, who was shifted to a military hospital after being tested positive for Covid-19, is undergoing remdesivir therapy and is doing well, White House physician Dr Sean Conley said.

Trump, 74, was flown to Walter Reed Military Medical Centre in Bethesda, a Maryland suburb of Washington DC, on Friday. He wore a mask and walked up to the helicopter from the White House. He was administered supplemental oxygen at the White House hours after being diagnosed with Covid-19 and before being flown to the hospital.

Dr Conley said that as a precautionary measure the President had received a single eight-gram dose of an experimental drug, Regeneron’s polyclonal antibody cocktail. He com-



US President Donald Trump gestures as he walks to Marine One prior to departure from White House on Friday. — AFP

pleted the infusion without incident.

“He is not requiring any supplemental oxygen, but in consultation with specialists we have elected to initiate remdesivir therapy. He has completed his first dose and is resting comfortably,” Dr Conley

said. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump, 50, were tested positive for Covid-19 on Friday. While the President was taken to the military hospital, the First Lady stayed back at the White House.

A person familiar with US President Donald Trump’s Covid-19 illness said some of his vital signs over the past 24 hours were very concerning but they have improved since he was admitted to a military hospital.

It contradicted Trump’s doctors, who said during a press conference Saturday that the President was doing very well and felt as though he could walk out of the hospital. They said he had not been on oxygen on Saturday or when he was with their medical team Friday, and that his symptoms were subsiding.

— Agencies

■ **Page 3: Water resources are getting dried up**

COAST | UNSAFE Deforestation, mining, lack of fruit trees, mobile radiation culprits

Urbanisation driving away native birds

**V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3**

Heavy pollution and lack of food is taking a toll of bird species, which are gradually vanishing from the north coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh.

This is a huge let-down from the fact that forests in the region were favourite spots for some species. They started to move away from the area after HudHud cyclone wreaked havoc and disturbed their

habitat. The optimism of ornithologists that the birds would migrate back to the native areas once normalcy was restored appears to be far-fetched.

Though there is no scientific data about returns of bird species, tribals, who roam around the forests, state that they have not seen most of the native birds.

The forest cover in north coastal districts is said to be home to hornbills, hill mynas, orange breasted

● **TRIBAL COMMUNITIES** and researchers are saying there is a drastic fall in the population of birds in the foothills of Eastern Ghats in the last six years.

green pigeons and woodpeckers linked with big trees, imperial pigeons and several other birds.

However, tribal communities and researchers are saying there is a drastic fall in the population of birds in the foothills of

Eastern Ghats in the last six years. The factors that are attributed to their disappearance are deforestation, mining, an increase in human habitations, lack of fruit-bearing trees and heavy radiation from mobile towers.

According to reports till the 1990s, ornithologists found a big number of Malabar trogon, nuthatches, malkoha, green avadavats, rufous woodpeckers, greater yellow naped woodpeckers and shymas,

hawks, falcons, eagles, and owls. Similarly, there were hanging parrots, emerald doves, yellow-throated bulbul, thrushes, spotted creeper, oriental pied hornbills, pied hornbills and blossom-headed parakeets.

Maoist movements and combing operations by police are also causing disturbance to native bird-houses.

■ **Page 3: Water resources are getting dried up**



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Gandhis meet Hathras victim’s kin, to fight on

UP orders CBI probe, family wants judicial investigation

**SREEPARNA CHAKRABARTY | DC
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, OCT. 3**

In what could be their ‘Belchi’ moment, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday capped a day-long struggle by meeting the family of the 19-year old Dalit girl in Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, who was allegedly gangraped and later died at Delhi’s Safdurjang hospital. The victim was cremated without the family’s permission on the night of her death.

In the morning, the UP police turned the Noida-Delhi border at the DND flyover into a virtual fortress. Hundreds of workers from the Congress’ frontal organisations like Mahila Congress, around 35 MPs and top Congress leaders assembled at the border.

At around noon, Priyanka Gandhi drove her brother to the spot and an argument ensued with the police.

There were many skirmishes between Congress workers and police, followed by a mild lathi-charge.

Priyanka Gandhi was seen jumping in to save a Congress worker. The visual shared widely on social media by the party could haunt the Yogi Adityanath government and possibly the BJP.

There were comparisons of Saturday’s visit with the 1977 visit of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on foot and on an elephant to Bihar’s Belchi,



Congress leaders Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi meet the family members of a 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after being allegedly raped two weeks ago, at Bulgadi village in Hathras, Saturday. — PTI

the site of a Dalit massacre. The incident is largely credited with having brought Mrs Gandhi, who was out of power then, to the political forefront again.

At the DND flyover, the Gandhis were informed that they could proceed to Hathras in a small group. The Gandhis left along with senior leaders K.C. Venugopal, Mukul Wasnik and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhary.

However, a cavalcade followed.

During the nearly 45-minute long meeting of the Gandhis with the family, Priyanka sat with the mother and aunts of the victim and consoled them while Rahul spoke with the brothers and the father.

Mr Gandhi asked the family whether they want-

ed a CBI probe to which the kin said they would prefer a judicial investigation instead.

Mr Gandhi said, “no power on earth” can stop the voice of this family. Later, on Twitter, he said the Uttar Pradesh government will not be able to have its way as the entire country has now risen for justice to “this daughter of the nation”.

Minutes after the Gandhis wrapped up their visit, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath recommended a CBI probe into the incident.

Before that, Uttar Pradesh additional chief secretary (home) Awanish Awasthi and Director General of Police H.C. Awasthi met the family. The authorities also allowed the media to enter the village.

VALMIKIS PROTEST POLICE ACTION IN HATHRAS

Agra (UP), Oct. 3: Scores of Valmiki community members who were protesting against the Hathras incident clashed with the police here on Saturday. The protesters pelted stones at the policemen and official vehicles.

Police was deployed at the clash site outside a municipal corporation office in Kothi Meena Bazaar area, officials said. Some visuals showed that Valmiki members reached the municipal corporation office and pelted stones at the garbage collection vehicles at around 12 noon. — PTI

Megha, Ramky, Navayuga ink pact on AP port

**N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3**

In a significant development, major corporates Megha, Ramky and Navayuga have signed a tripartite agreement on the Machilipatnam port.

Representatives of the three companies signed the agreement on Friday and decided to pursue the project.

Sources in know of the development confirmed to *Deccan Chronicle* that the agreement was signed and Megha would have a controlling stake while Navayuga would have a 26 per cent share.

The development comes after Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy recently directed the infrastructure depart-

ment to float tenders under the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) mode for the port which has been in limbo for almost two decades.

The YSRC government had cancelled the concession agreement with Navayuga on the Machilipatnam port as the company had failed to take up construction since 2008. Navayuga challenged the government’s decision in the AP High Court, which allowed the state government to float fresh tenders but put a condition that the final award should done subject to the outcome of its verdict.

■ **Page 2: Consortium gets two options**

Centre to support Balaji reservoir

**AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 3**

Union minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said that the Centre will extend support and assistance in the construction of the Balaji reservoir to meet the drinking water needs of pilgrims in Tirumala.

Paying a visit to the Papavinasanam dam in Tirumala along with irrigation minister P. Anil Kumar, Shekhawat had

darshan of Lord Venkateswara at the Tirumala temple. TTD chairperson Y.V. Subba Reddy and additional executive officer A.V. Dharma Reddy welcomed him.

TTD SE-II Nageswara Rao and EE, water works Srihari updated Shekhawat on the status of all five projects in Tirumala and the need for the reservoir to meet the water needs of pilgrims.

■ **Page 2: Water from big resources not enough**



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OTHER STORIES

MP: DRIVERS CAN CARRY DOCUMENTS IN ELECTRONIC FORM

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3

YSR Congress Narasaraopet MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu said that the Union ministry of road transport and highways agreed to allow drivers to carry electronic versions of their documents with validated digital signature.

The MP said that he had written to Union minister Nitin Gadkari, suggesting suitable amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act allowing drivers to carry vehicle documents in digital format. He stated that the drivers not carrying physical copies of documents had to pay up hefty fines.

"I welcome digitisation of documents and it will ease compliance on the part of lakhs of drivers. This also shows the power of youth coming together and approaching responsible public representatives to bring about positive developments."

WATER FROM BIG RESOURCES NOT ENOUGH

From page 1

They brought to Shekhawat's notice that the water being drawn from major sources like Papavinasanam, Kumaradhiara, Pasupudhara, Akasaganga and Gogarbhram was not sufficient.

Shekhawat said the Centre will offer support towards the construction of the Balaji reservoir. He asked the state government to send a report on the project and assured that favourable action will be taken after examining it. MP Mithun Reddy, Srikalahasti MLA B. Madhusudhan Reddy and others were present.

The TTD trust board in its maiden meeting last year took up a discussion for the approval of much-delayed project. The demand for drinking water in Tirumala is growing year after year and the deficiency is somehow being managed by the temple body every year.

In order to ensure the continuous supply of drinking water, the TTD has decided to utilise the catchment of water flowing from the Tirumala hills. They wanted to retain nearly 1 tmc ft of water flowing down from the Tirumala hills at the Mallemadugu project and pump it back to Tirumala.

₹10 CRORE TO DEVELOP TIRUPATI SHILPARAMAM

AVINASH P SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, OCT. 3

Shilparamam here is all set to get a major face-lift to attract more visitors.

The state government on Saturday gave an administrative sanction for ₹10 crore to the AP Shilparamam Arts, Crafts and Cultural Society to take up development of Shilparamam.

The Shilparamam park was established in 2014 to promote, popularise and preserve the cultural heritage of the Telugu states. The existing basic infrastructure provided initially now outlived its utility and is in a dilapidated condition.

The old-fashioned infrastructure and dull environs have adversely impacted the visitors' footfall, denting the revenue and image of the park.

The CEO of AP Shilparamam Arts, Crafts and Cultural Society has prepared a master plan to give a facelift to the park and submitted proposals to the government, seeking a sanction of ₹10 crore for the project.

The state government readily agreed to the proposals and, on Saturday, accorded administrative sanction for ₹10-crore investment to make improvements to Shilparamam.

The development work includes construction of entrance plaza, arch, visitor's facility centre, water fountain and arts and crafts village with stalls and open ground, training centre for artisans, crafts emporium with souvenir shop, food courts, toilet blocks and renovation of open-air theatre, providing pathways, landscaping and gazebos, storm-water drains, external electrical works, plumbing and sanitation works.

● The Shilparamam park was established in 2014 to promote, popularise and preserve the cultural heritage of the Telugu states.

● The existing basic infrastructure provided initially now outlived its utility and is in a dilapidated condition.

Encroachment razed



GVMC staff demolishes a portion of the house belonging to former MP Sabbam Hari at Seethammadhara in Visakhapatnam on Saturday. A huge portion of Public Park was occupied while constructing the house earlier according to a GVMC official.

— P. NARASIMHA MURTHY

AP has a strong case on Krishna waters, says ENC

Engineers preparing arguments for presentation before Council

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC KURNOOL, OCT. 3:

Sharing of Krishna river waters, a contentious issue between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, would be on top of the agenda during the Apex Council meeting on October 6, the second since September 16, 2016, under the provisions of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014.

Telangana is objecting to the Rayalaseema Lift Scheme to take waters to Nellore through Rayalaseema districts from the Pothireddypadu head regulator. It has a carrying capacity of 44,000 cusecs and the Andhra Pradesh government called for tenders and finalised packages at a cost of ₹23,000 crore.

Affirming the stand taken by Andhra Pradesh, the Union Government made it clear that Rayalaseema Lift Scheme does not require any environmental clearance as it was not a new project and does not involve any addition in culturable command area (CCA).

Irrigation engineers are preparing arguments for presentation before the

● In a letter addressed to Chandrasekhar Rao, the minister referred to the objection raised by Andhra Pradesh in its letter dated May 14 to the Godavari River Management Board on the new projects taken up by Telangana in the Godavari basin in violation of relevant provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act 2014.

Council. Telangana even wants control over Srisaillam dam.

Engineer-in-Chief (ENC) of Andhra Pradesh government Narayana Reddy said, "Our arguments are sound and we will put up a bright show at the meeting."

Narayana Reddy told *Deccan Chronicle*. "technically we have a robust argument and our engineers are fine-tuning it. Telangana objections fly in the face as they are rebuttable and lack any solid ground".

On Telangana Chief Minister, K Chandrasekhar Rao, seeking management of Srisaillam dam that falls in Andhra Pradesh, he said, "We cannot speak on political statements. That itself shows that they have no arguable ground on the projects being taken up by us on using Krishna river waters."

The Ministry of Envi-

ronment, Forest Clearance, and Climate Change deposited before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) last month that Rayalaseema Lift Scheme does not fall under any of the categories listed in the schedule of EIA notification 2006. It says Rayalaseema Lift is neither an irrigation project nor is a power-generation component involved. Therefore, it is not covered under item 1(c) of the EIA notification, 2006.

This stand of the Union Government on Rayalaseema Lift Scheme is expected to put at rest the contentions of Telangana government as it vindicates the stand of Andhra Pradesh.

Union minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, in a letter dated August 7, prevailed upon the two Chief Ministers not to go ahead with projects on Krishna God-

avari rivers, which are being objected to by them.

In a letter addressed to Chandrasekhar Rao, the minister referred to the objection raised by Andhra Pradesh in its letter dated May 14 to the Godavari River Management Board on the new projects taken up by Telangana in the Godavari basin in violation of relevant provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act 2014.

The seven projects objected to by Andhra Pradesh include Kaleshwaram LIS, GLIS phase 3, Seetarama LIS, Tupakulagudem, Telangana drinking water supply project, barrages on lower penganga river, and Ramappa Lake to Pakhal Lake division.

The minister also stated that the draft project report of Kaleshwaram LIS was accepted by the advisory committee of the ministry in June 2018. But the government of Telangana has subsequently changed the scope and opted for enhancement of lifting of Godavari waters from 2 TMC per day to 3 TMC per day without submitting the DPR to Godavari River Management Board.

TD launches website for Covid-19 affected

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3

The Telugu Desam has started a website, www.apfightscorona.com, to gather information on the people's problems due to Covid-19 and seek to resolve them.

TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu said that though Unlock 4.0 has begun, the number of Covid-19 cases in AP continues to increase rapidly. He said that TD wants to ensure that no AP citizen suffers from the ill-effects of the virus and had started the website to raise problems on the platform.

The public who lost work opportunities, need medicines and who require ambulance services may look up and seek help from this website, said Naidu, claiming that the need for this forum

was felt even more because of the failure of the government in resolving the grievances of the people which became clear if one followed the latest Covid-19 reports.

Terming it alarming that Coronavirus cases crossed the seven-lakh mark in AP, Naidu deplored the fact that infections reached one lakh in East Godavari district and young people were succumbing to the virus.

He stated that according to an Oxford University report, poor families in AP were struggling for even daily food grains and it was revealed that 99 per cent of families covered under the midday meal scheme could not get groceries enough for a single meal a day.

Citizens can share their experiences and requirements, Naidu said.

YSRC looking for a leader to help party in Vizag civic polls

KMP PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3

The ruling YSRC is in serious search for a leader who could lead the urban segment of the Visakhapatnam city, in its run up to the mayoral elections. The party lost all the four Assembly segments to the Telugu Desam in the last general elections. Soon after coming to power, the top leaders launched a strategy to weaken the Opposition by luring some of its leaders.

Former MLA of Gajuwaka Palla Srinivasa Rao, a prominent Yadava leader and son of former legislator Palla Simhachalam, turned down the offer of mayor post. The party has been dilly-dallying on admitting former minister Ganta Srinivasa Rao, who held a sway over north Andhra during the Chandrababu Naidu regime.

Recently, Visakhapatnam South MLA Vasupalle Ganesh Kumar quit TD and joined the YSRC along with his two sons. However, there were no second rung leaders to follow him. This leaves

● SOON AFTER coming to power, the top leaders of YSRC have launched a strategy to weaken the Opposition by luring some of its leaders

Visakhapatnam East MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu, who won for the third time in a row and another old-timer P.V.G.R. Naidu who has roots in the Visakhapatnam West constituency since his father Petakamsetti became Anakapalle MP for the first time.

Naidu, popularly known as Ganababu, also refused offers from YSRC though there were reports in local newspapers of his joining the ruling party.

"Our cadre and second-rung leaders are intact and there was not much loss after the exit of Vasupalle Ganesh Kumar. We had a meeting of senior leaders in the presence of former minister Ch. Ayyanna Patrudu and other leaders and we could assess that our strength has not eroded,"

said Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu while talking to *DC* after the meeting.

Now the city leadership is left to minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao (Avanthi), whose influence is limited to Bhimili and Anandapuram mandal, Malla Vijay Prasad, who has hardly any say either in Visakhapatnam West, where he won during the Congress rule or his home constituency Visakhapatnam North. Former city president Vamsi Srinivasa Yadav, who was denied ticket for East constituency and Akkaramani Vijayanirmala, who lost to Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu, are now not showing much interest in the party activities.

"It is a difficult task for the party to pick up a leader who would manage the affairs of the entire urban segment, a role played by Ganta Srinivasa Rao in the previous government. We will plan to get a majority of seats in the corporation elections and a person who would don the mayor post would also lead the city affairs," said a senior YSRC leader.

CONSORTIUM GETS TWO OPTIONS

From page 1

Following the tripartite agreement, the consortium will have two options, one being that the consortium will propose to the state government to revive the concession agreement with Navayuga and allow the consortium to take up construction at the earliest. The second option would be that Navayuga would withdraw the case, paving way to the government to float the EPC tenders and the consortium would bag the contract.

"Navayuga retaining 26 per cent indicates that the consortium would attempt the first option of reviving the concession agreement, according to which the original concessionaire should hold a minimum stake of 26 per cent during the construction period," sources pointed out.

BOPPARAJU ELECTED APRSA PRESIDENT

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3

Bopparaju Venkateswarlu has been elected as president of Andhra Pradesh Revenue Services Association for a fourth successive term, in the elections held for the 2020-23 term here on Saturday. All 23 office-bearers were elected unanimously. Pithani Trinadha Rao will be the associate president while V. Giri Kumar Reddy is the treasurer.

Venkateswarlu called for construction of new buildings replacing the offices of Tahsildar/RDO that are in a dilapidated condition, release of funds spent to meet various expenditures and ex gratia for revenue employees while on Covid-19 duty and better service conditions.



CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy performs final rites to his father-in-law E.C. Gangi Reddy at Pulivendula.

CM attends burial of father-in-law

NAGESWARA RAO BALLEDA | DC KADAPA, OCT. 3

Eminent pediatrician Dr E.C. Gangi Reddy, the father-in-law of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, passed away in Hyderabad early on Saturday. The last rites were performed in his native Pulivendula where his body was taken by about 1 pm.

Dr Reddy, father of Y.S. Bharati, was undergoing treatment at a superspeciality hospital at Hyderabad.

The CM arrived at Pulivendula from Vijayawada

by 1.40 pm and paid floral tributes to Gangi Reddy along with his wife and family members. Later, he joined the funeral procession. After the funeral, the Chief Minister left for Vijayawada via Kadapa.

Seeing him off at the airport were senior party leaders, Deputy Chief Minister Amjad Basha, A. Suresh, Gadikota Srikanth Reddy, D.C. Govinda Reddy, Sudhir Reddy, Amarnath Reddy, Suresh Babu, Rythu Sangham's Sambatur Prasad Reddy, and officials like Midde Gowthami, Prithvitej, Vikas Marmat, and airport director Shiv Prasad.

DURGA FLYOVER INAUGURATION ON OCT. 16

Vijayawada: The much-awaited formal official inauguration of Kanaka Durga flyover here will take place on October 16.

Roads and buildings minister Shankara Narayana on Saturday said that Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy and Union minister Nitin Gadkari will jointly inaugurate the flyover virtual-

ly. He further said that the CM and the Union minister will also take part in the foundation laying and inaugural ceremonies of 16 projects worth ₹7,584 crore.

The flyover inauguration was scheduled on September 4, but was postponed due to the death of former President Pranab Mukherjee.

LOCKDOWN | IMPACT

Endowments department fails to avail loan facilities to clear their pending dues

Temple staff suffers due non-payment of salaries, pension

V.K.L. GAYATRI | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3

Although, the state Endowments Department is one of the strongest financially, its employees are struggling to make ends meet since March. The closure of all temples till June is adding to the woes.

Temples like Kalipakam Vigneswara Swami, Sri Durga Mallikharjuna Swamy, Lord Sri Venkateswara Swamy of Chinna Tirupati, Bheemavaram Mavoolam Thalli, Draksharamam Beemilingeswara Swamy, Annavaram Satyanarayana Swamy, Anakapalle Nookalamma Thalli, Srikanakam-

ahalakshmi Thalli Ammavari of Vizag Old Town, Sri Varahalakshmi Nrusimha Swamy of Simhachalam, Sri Pydithalli Amma Varu

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3

The richness of a temple and its assets, notwithstanding, most of them pay salaries to their vedic and non-vedic employees from the revenue generated through hundi collections, rentals, hair contracts, and other resources.

In revolutionary initiatives post 1970s, the state government after bringing even big temples g into the

of Vizianagaram and Srisuryanarayana Swamy varu of Arasavilli are among some with strong enough financial sources with

Endowment Departments, fixed salaries based on the earnings of temples.

According to the information, over 58,000 temples have been notified in the state and brought under the Endowment Department.

However, the governments have failed to bring a uniform pay structure to employees with almost 70 per cent of employees, including archakas, hired on a temporary basis.

lands, fixed deposits, gold and silver deposits in banks. Since March 20, the Endowments Department organised everyday rituals by

Though there was near zero income for several months because of lockdown, the resumption of services is helping to bring modest income with which they are gradually clearing salaries and pension dues.

"As of now, we have to clear four months' salaries and pensions. We will shortly pay them up," executive officer of Sri Durga Mallikharjuna Swamy Devasthanam of

allowing limited staff. During Covid-19 lockdown, the government stopped salaries to employees and pension to those retired till June.

Vijayawada M.V. Suresh Babu told *Deccan Chronicle*.

Meanwhile, the Hindu Dharmik Associations are resenting non-payment of salaries.

"We fail to understand why even rich temples are defaulting and putting the staff to hardships and testing times," said Srinangam Srinivasa-charyulu, a senior priest wondered.

After relaxation, the management is paying 50 per cent of salaries and pensions to all category of employees.

● Govt has failed to clear salary and pension dues because there has been no daily collection. Even temples having thousands of crores in deposits, gold, and silver reserves are in the dubious loss.

● Employees are seeking parity with teachers and government employees who are getting complete salaries even without work.

However, some devasthanams retrenched outsourcing personnel on a massive scale. However, following hue and cry, they

were all reinstated.

Simhachalam devasthanam needs ₹2.20 crore towards payment of salaries and pensions every month. The department has paid 50 per cent of salaries and pensions till July. After receiving petitions from unions, the devasthanam urged the government to obtain permission to clear the dues, said executive officer of Sri Varahalakshmi Nrusimha Swamy Devasthanam of Simhachalam V. Trinatha Rao.

Meanwhile, a similar situation is prevailing at all high revenue earning temples in the state. The Satyanarayana Swamy temple of Annavaram is supposed to pay ₹3 crore as salaries and pensions every month but has not paid them since July.

SHORT TAKES

RINL STEEL FOR ATAL TUNNEL IN HIMACHAL

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3

RINL-Vizag Steel said it had supplied a major share of TMT requirements, approximately 8,500 MT of Vizag Steel TMT bars, for the Atal Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh that was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday.

The 9.02-km tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley, ensuring connectivity throughout the year. The valley was earlier cut-off for about six months every year by heavy snowfall. The tunnel reduces the road distance between Manali and Leh by 46 km and the travel time by about five hours.

Chairman and Managing Director P.K. Rath congratulated RINL for the achievement. RINL has the highest share amongst all steel suppliers in the TMT section, he

WASHED AWAY BODY FOUND IN PAGERU RIVULET

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, OCT. 3

The body of one Sarath Kumar Reddy, who was washed away three days ago in the Kamalapuram Pageru rivulet, was found on Saturday.

Sharath was going on a motorcycle with his wife Ishwarya to Pedda Cheppali in Kamalapuram mandal when the vehicle was washed away by the Pageru rivulet which was flooded with rainwater. Ishwarya was rescued by locals but Sarath was washed away. Fire and police were searching for him since then.

NANNAYYA CET FROM OCTOBER 16 IN 10 CENTRES

DC CORRESPONDENT
RAJAHMUNDRY, OCT. 3

Adikavi Nannayya University Vice-Chancellor Mokka Jagannadha Rao on Saturday said that Nannayya CET-2020 (Common Entrance Test) for admission to Post Graduate courses will be held from October 16 to 19 in 10 examination centres, including at Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam along with East and West Godavari districts. Around 6,810 students have applied for the test. The examinations would be held from 9.30 am to 11 am and 2.30 pm to 4 pm.

He said that the candidates can download hall tickets from October 7 on www.aku.edu.in. Further details can be had on the website.

16-10-2020: Life Sciences, Mathematics and Zoology.

17-10-2020: Physical Sciences, Computer Sciences.

18-10-2020: Chemical Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences.

19-10-2020: English and M.P.Ed (morning), Hindi and Telugu (evening).

DASARA FESTIVITIES AT SRISAILAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, OCT. 3

The nine-day Dasara Utsavams will commence from October 17 and continue through 25th amid changing scenarios in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. The festivities will kick off with Goddess Bhramaramba in Shaila Putri avatar with dazzling radiance. This is the first of nine avatars of Nava Durga. Bringi Vahana Seva will be performed to Utsava Murthulu in the evening, said the Srisailam temple Executive Officer K.S. Rama Rao.

The nine-day festival will start with special pujas like Utsava Sankalpam and Ganapati pooja and Siva Sankalpa at Yagasala. The temple officials and main priest have offer special pujas for Lord Mallikarjuna swami and his consort Sri Bramaramba Devi, part of mahotsavams starting the program. These utsavams will continue to October 25 and ends with Chandiyagam and Purnahuti event. Elaborate arrangements are being made and provide all facilities for devotees who will come from various places on the occasion of Dasara, the temple EO stated. The important events of these utsavams are performing of Chandiyagam, and Rudrayagam.

AP records 6,224 Covid-19 cases, 41 deaths, toll 5,941

Krishna district has registered six deaths, WG has 890 new cases

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3

Andhra Pradesh has registered 6,224 new Coronavirus cases, raising the overall tally to 7,13,014, apart from 41 deaths of infected patients during the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 5,941.

State health authorities, in their Covid-19 bulletin issued here on Saturday, reported that out of 72,861 samples tested, 6,224 individuals have been found to be infected with Coronavirus. Out of a total number of 60,21,395 samples tested so far in the state, 6,51,791 patients have been discharged after recovery, while 55,282 patients are

7 MEMBERS OF CBI TEAM PROBING VIVEKA MURDER TEST POSITIVE

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA I DC
KADAPA, OCT. 3

Out of the 15 members of a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) team, seven have reported Covid-19 positive.

For the past 15 days, the team has been investigating the death of former minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy.

The team has been staying at the Kadapa Central Prison guest house and

interrogating suspects. On Tuesday, two officers fell ill and underwent a Covid test. One of them was diagnosed positive.

The rest of the team then underwent tests of whom six reported positive. Following this, the investigation has been put on hold.

Meanwhile, at Rayachoti Covid Care Centre, Covid-19 patients undergoing treatment expressed their happiness over good medical

pitals. Among daily new Covid-

undergoing medical treatment at various hos-

Tests ramped up



Health workers collecting swab for Covid test at IGMSC Stadium in Vijayawada on Saturday, who were not maintaining social distancing. — C. NARAYANA RAO

‘Child-to-child transmission high in state’

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 3

High prevalence of Covid-19 infection has been found among the children who were contacts of the virus-hit victims of their own age group.

The New Delhi-based Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy has carried out a study on Covid-19 disease transmission patterns among 5,75,071 individuals exposed to 84,965 confirmed cases of Covid-19. A team of investigators from CDDEP and also from the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, has carried out the comprehensive analysis of Covid-19 epidemiology to-date.

AP health special chief secretary Dr K.S.

● The study found that Covid-19 mortality is higher in the age group of 40-69 in India

Jawahar Reddy has authored a paper on the study. The study found out that children were active transmitters of Covid-19 among their age group and so was the case among the adults of the same age group. However, all the infected individuals do not transmit Covid-19 and the prospective follow-up testing of exposed contacts revealed that 70 per cent of the infected individuals did not infect any of their contacts.

The study also found that Covid-19 mortality is higher in the age group of 40-69 in India than in other countries.

WATER RESOURCES ARE GETTING DRIED UP IN NORTH COASTAL

FROM PAGE 1

In fact, the north coastal forest region is not a virgin territory and the water sources getting dried up have also contributed to the exit of native birds. Birds are very clever and assess the future potential before deciding to stay, pointed out noted ornithologist Srimanth Roy.

Meanwhile, due to hormonal imbalances, the birds are facing tough times in egg-lay-

ing capacity. As part of rapid urbanisation, after people dump food waste in dustbins, civic authorities dump them in yards. Except for a very few species, many are not getting food and the egg-laying capacity is also coming down, state scientific surveys and studies.

It is time the youth come forward to conduct a study and survey, said Professor, Zoology Department of Andhra University, U. Shameem.

YSRC leader suffocated to death by second wife

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 3

A man's second wife allegedly suffocated him to death after serving him a soft drink mixed with an intoxicant under I. Polavaram police station limits.

According to SC, ST Cell DSP Elia Sagar, YSRC SC Cell leader Vangalapudi Subba Rao, 56, married Durga of Kotha Muramalla village. But, she was allegedly involved in an extra-marital relationship with Yalamanchili Kondababu and planned to kill her husband.

Conspiracy to kill him, on September 29 she served a cool drink to

Subba Rao mixing an intoxicant. Soon after he fell asleep, she suffocated him to death and she took the body to the lane where his house is situated and shouted that her husband was electrocuted.

She was helped by Yedukondalu and M. Durga Prasad.

However, Victoria Rani, daughter of Subba Rao's first wife, lodged a complaint with I. Polavaram police, who registered a case under suspicion.

Sagar said that the three accused were arrested under SC,ST Atrocities Prevention Act.

Mummdivaram Circle Inspector Mr Janakiram is investigating the case.

EXPERT TEAM FROM ISO VISITS VIKRAMA SIMHAPURI VARSITY

Tirupati: A two-member expert team from the ISO (International Organisation for Standardization) on Saturday paved a visit at the Vikrama Simhapuri University in Nellore to assess the standard operating practices being followed in the academic research

and administration to accord the ISO 9001:2015 certification to the varsity.

A team chaired by Alapati Sivaiah across the departments and inspected the academic records, achievements, students' activities, research infrastructure and other amenities.

Screening of volunteers for vaccine

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 3

King George Hospital, the premier medical institution in north Andhra, will soon start clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccines manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII). The procedure of screening of volunteers began on Saturday. The hospital received vaccine doses from the institute and

began screening of recruits to check their physical fitness to undergo the trials. This is phase three of the clinical trial.

Sources in the hospital said out of four patients, three would be given vaccine doses and one placebo. After vaccination, the recruits would be observed for over a period of six months.

“We will be conducting double blinded study of

MINISTER DIRECTS SECRETARIAT STAFF TO FOCUS ON BASIC AMENITIES

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, OCT. 3

Minister for industries Mekapati Goutham Reddy instructed the village secretariat staff of Paderu in Chejerla mandal of Nellore district to focus on providing basic amenities in the villages.

The industries minister on Saturday interacted with the secretariat staff, volunteers and villagers of Paderu through a

video conference from his camp office in Nellore. The villagers appealed to the minister to allocate land for burial grounds in the SC colony.

Responding to the issue, he directed the tahsildar concerned to allocate suitable land for the construction of burial grounds immediately and instructed him to utilise SC/ST funds for the construction of the burial ground in the village.

ALLAGADDA COPS AWAIT LAB REPORT

D SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, OCT. 3

Allagadda police are awaiting a forensic science lab (FSL) report on the death of a boy and two girls, who died after eating Rose Mango biscuits. The food inspector, who sent samples for analysis, has submitted a report that the biscuits did not contain any harmful substances.

Three children in the 6-8 years age-group fell ill after eating biscuits at Chinthakommandinne village in Allagadda mandal on September 13. Within a few minutes, Hussain Basha, 6, died before he could be shifted to a local hospital and his sister

Hussain Bee, 4, died the next day at Kurnool government general hospital. The third one succumbed on Wednesday while she was undergoing treatment.

Rose Mango biscuits, the alleged cause of death, are manufactured by Veeramani Industries located in Ranga Reddy district of Telangana, said Allagadda DSP Pothu Raju.

He said samples of the biscuits, tea glasses they had used and utensils, and samples of children's viscera have been collected and sent for FSL analysis. “Once the report comes, we will act according to law”, the DSP said.

NEET results in likely October third week

FROM PAGE 1

The report, after clarification of some doubts raised by the health CS, was uploaded on the web portal of the department of higher education a few days ago for issue of a new GO amending the existing GO RT No. 111 dated 13-08-2019 issued by the department of higher education. Meanwhile, the national testing agency is likely to issue all India ranks of NEET UG in the third week of October.

The university authorities are anticipating the issue of two GOs on counselling and fixing of fee structure by that time so that they can issue a notification on the counselling.

However, the higher education authorities seem not to have taken cognisance of the urgency of the need to release a fresh GO on counselling process.

When contacted, Chandra said, “All the committee members have submitted a

● The university authorities are anticipating the issue of two GOs on counselling and fixing of fee structure by that time so that they can issue a notification on the counselling.

unanimous report on the counselling process to the government. I will talk to the university VC and will attend to whatever is required. I hope we can complete our task by the announcement of NEET UG results.”

“Following court direction, we cannot go ahead with counselling for admission of first year MBBS/BDS courses unless the state government issues two GOs on process of counselling and fixes the fee. It is imperative to conduct counselling soon after NTA announces NEET UG results for the reason that any delay in doing so will make our students move to other states,” said Sankar.

CASE BOOKED AGAINST TRADER BY FSSAI

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 3

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has booked a case against T. Ramachandra, a trader from Rekapedam, on charges of selling food items without taking having a licence and seized 100 grams of sweetmeats (teepi gavalu) from him.

Eleven persons, including eight children, had consumed the sweets at Pulusumamidi in Vara Rajapuram mandal of East Godavari and fell ill, said FSSAI assistant controller B. Srinivas.

Food inspector Kalyana Chakravarthi inspected the shop and seized the sweetmeats. Samples would be sent to an accredited food lab at Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Kakinada.

Action will be taken after getting the reports.

Chakravarthi in his report said the trader was selling sweetmeats and other eatables along with books and groceries. He had no trade or food licence. Chakravarthi said that a meeting was held in VR Puram with traders to create awareness among on food laws and securing licences.

All the children and adults were discharged from the hospital after their recovery, said tahsildar Sridhar. Dr A. Chaitanya, medical officer at the primary health centre in Rekapedam, said that when three girls were admitted with vomiting; they said they had consumed rosogullas.

Dr Chaitanya said the others, suffering from the same symptoms, were brought to the PHC and given treatment but a five-year-old was admitted in the government hospital at Bhadrachalam. Her condition is stable now.

Yetapaka circle inspector M. Geetha Ramakrishna said that there was no case registered against the trader who was said to have caused the food poisoning as nobody lodged a complaint against him.

6,802 TO TAKE UPSC PRELIMS IN TIRUPATI

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 3

The District Revenue Officer (DRO) Murali said that as many as 6,802 aspirants are going to take the UPSC preliminary examination 2020, conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in Tirupati on Sunday.

The DRO said that the UPSC has 14 examination venues approved to conduct the prelims in the city.

TEAMS TO HUNT FOR GOLD TRADER

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 3

Five police teams have been formed to search for a gold trader Koushik Kumar Jain, who went missing from Amalapuram three days back.

According to sources, Jain came to Amalapuram from Vijayawada on September 29. He took his orders and was staying in a lodge. He phoned to his family members on the morning of September 30 that he was on his way.

TRS leader could be the comeback man

The sudden surfacing of a former deputy chief minister, who was putting in only occasional appearances after the 2018 Assembly elections, is being seen as significant in the TRS ranks. In the 2018 elections, he had sought the party ticket for his daughter but did not have his way. Now, for the election to the Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam graduates' constituency of the Legislative Council, the ruling party is in search of a strong candidate. Though the seat is in the kitty of the ruling party, TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao is keeping all options open: The party is wary after suffering defeat in the Karimnagar-Medak-Adilabad graduates' seat. In this context, the former deputy chief minister met the TRS working president and interacted with him for a while. TRS cadres feel that KTR may field the former deputy CM for the forthcoming poll. Confidants of the former deputy CM say that he has laid down a condition, that his daughter should get a ticket in the 2023 Assembly elections if the party wants to field him for the MLC poll.

KCR keeps the water boiling

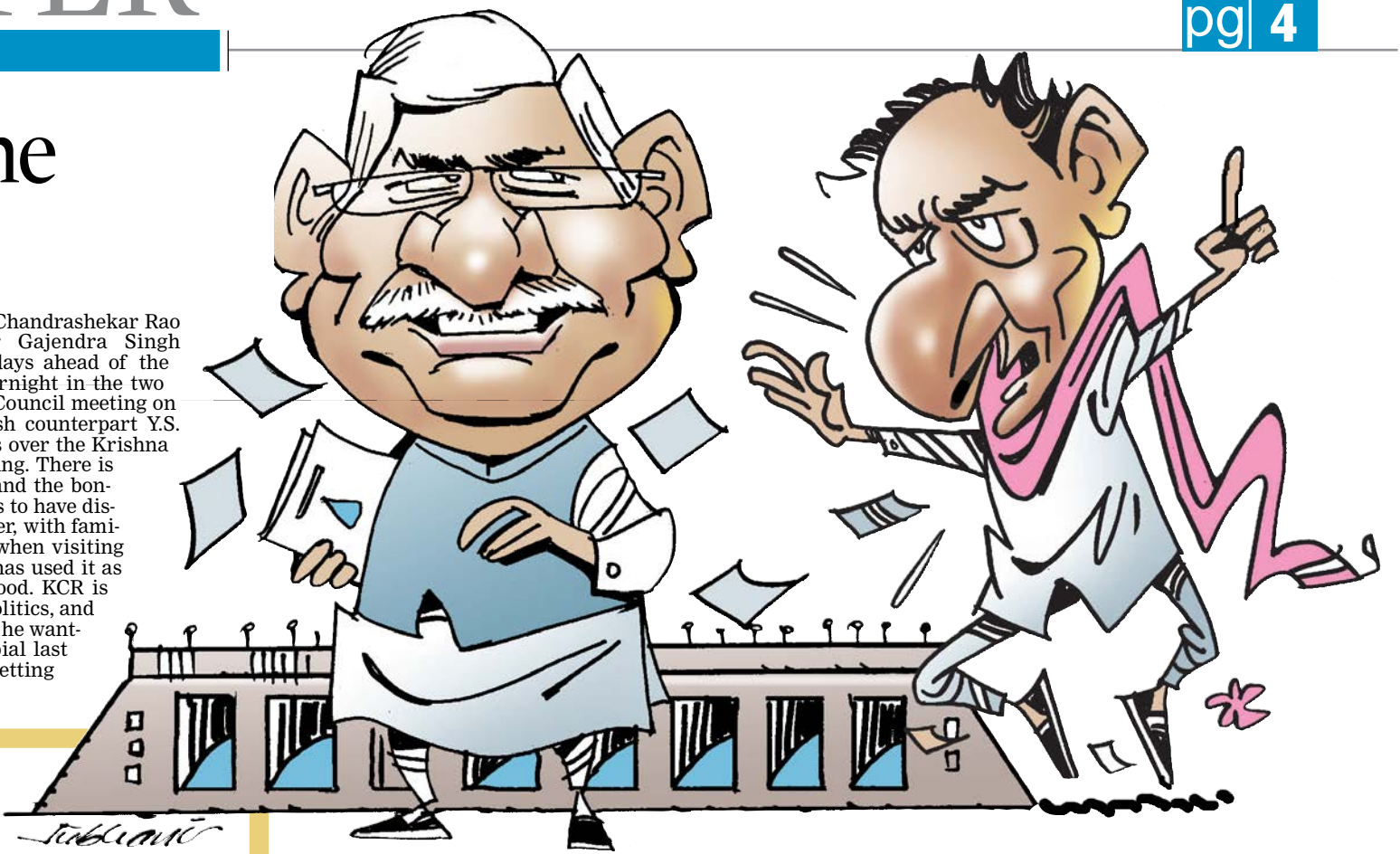
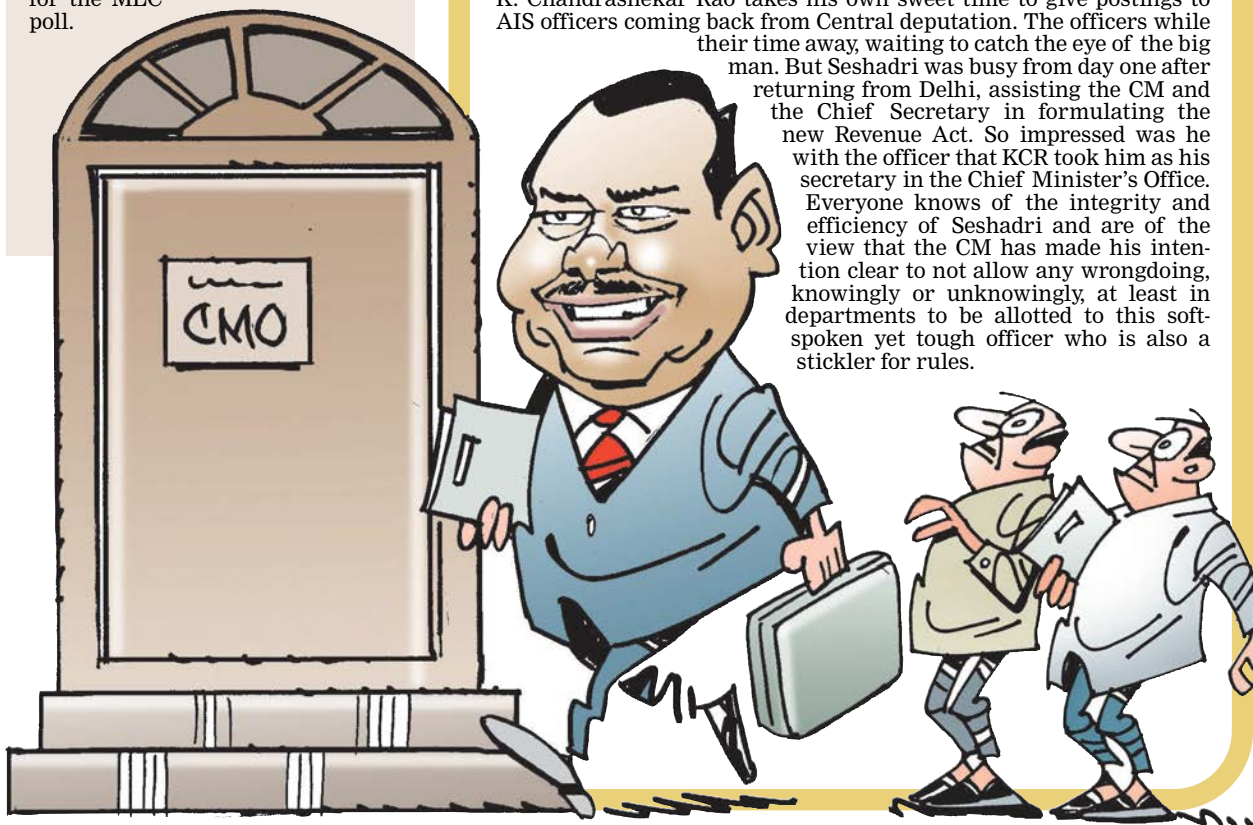
The six-page letter that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao wrote to Union Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Friday night, just three days ahead of the Apex Council meet, has built up curiosity overnight in the two Telugu states. The Centre has called the Apex Council meeting on October 6 where KCR and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will discuss their disputes over the Krishna and Godavari river waters, with Singh overseeing. There is wonder that things have come to such a pass and the bonhomie between the two Chief Ministers appears to have dissipated so quickly: They have had lunch together, with family in tow, and each received a warm welcome when visiting the other. Water is a sensitive issue, and KCR has used it as one of the main pillars in his fight for statehood. KCR is seen as a veteran in politics, especially water politics, and observers are trying to figure out what message he wanted to send by writing the letter at the proverbial last minute before the Apex Council meeting and setting out tough terms.

KCR quickly rewards a prodigal

Senior bureaucrat V. Seshadri has created a record of sorts by getting a posting within a short period after coming to the Telangana state cadre from the Prime Minister's Office. Usually, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao takes his own sweet time to give postings to AIS officers coming back from Central deputation. The officers while their time away, waiting to catch the eye of the big man. But Seshadri was busy from day one after returning from Delhi, assisting the CM and the Chief Secretary in formulating the new Revenue Act. So impressed was he with the officer that KCR took him as his secretary in the Chief Minister's Office. Everyone knows of the integrity and efficiency of Seshadri and are of the view that the CM has made his intention clear to not allow any wrongdoing, knowingly or unknowingly, at least in departments to be allotted to this soft-spoken yet tough officer who is also a stickler for rules.

Inside track of Jagan-Shah meeting

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's recent meeting with Union home minister Amit Shah has become a hot topic of debate in political circles. Contrary to public pronouncements that the CM had discussed many issues concerning the state, sources said his main agenda was to tell his side of the story in the ongoing tussle with the High Court. Also on the agenda was to explain to the No. 2 man at the Centre the insider trading of land in Amaravati and a few other issues concerning a powerful man in the judiciary. Grapevine has it that the CM made use of the services of an advocate, son of a former SC judge from the state, in building up his case. The advocate was called to the Shah-CM meeting but only for a brief moment. After documentary evidence collected against the powerful figure was handed over, the invitee had to leave. The curious moments continued even after Jagan left for Tirupati. The same evening, sources say, a YSRC parliamentarian who aspires to become No. 2 in the state hosted a dinner for his fellow MP from the state who had switched loyalties to the BJP and a young and a flamboyant leader from Rayalaseema who contested the last Lok Sabha polls on a TD ticket. The sad part is that while the young politician is having a gala time with ruling party leaders in Delhi, his close relatives are languishing in jail in cases which they alleged were foisted out of political vendetta.



LEISURE

BRIDGE | Susanna Gross

Dealer North	Neither vulnerable
<p>♠ A Q 4</p> <p>♥ A Q 10 7</p> <p>♦ 2</p> <p>♣ K Q J 9 8</p>	<p>♠ J 9 8 2</p> <p>♥ K J 5</p> <p>♦ A K 7 5 3</p> <p>♣ 4</p>
<p>♠ 10 7 6 5 3</p> <p>♥ 9 6</p> <p>♦ 10 9</p> <p>♣ A 10 7 5</p>	<p>♠ K</p> <p>♥ 8 4 3 2</p> <p>♦ Q J 8 6 4</p> <p>♣ 6 3 2</p>
West	North
	East
	South

The Alt Invitational is a prestigious online teams tournament held every fortnight or so, packed with world-class players. It's not easy to secure a place, but my friend Jonathan Harris managed it for the first time last week. Things didn't start well for his 11-strong team, and by Thursday morning, after four days of play, it seemed impossible they would qualify for the quarterfinals. As it happens, I spent Thursday afternoon playing rubber bridge with two of the team, Steve Root and Niall Igoe (with a client of ours who doesn't like playing online). As Steve and I travelled home in the same direction, he got an urgent text: they were through! He needed to be ready to play in 20 minutes.

The rest unfolded like a dream. Few expected Team Harris to beat the all-star Team Donner, but they made light work of it. The next day, they played the semis against the brilliant Peter Fredin and his team, and triumphed again. And in the final they met the mighty Team Zhao — and ended up champions. What a debut! Congratulations to the whole team, and particularly the four who played the final: Steve, Niall, Marusa Gold and Todor Tiholov. On this deal, Steve was North.

East led the ♠2, won in dummy. Steve did well to play a club to the ♠9, followed by the ♣K (East throwing a diamond). West won and returned a spade. Steve now ran the clubs, carefully watching East's discards. East came down to ♠J9 ♥KJ, ♦AK. He should have thrown a winning diamond and kept the ♥5, but that was hard to do. Steve cashed the ♥A, and played the ♥10 to East's ♥K. East cashed the ♦AK — but that was it for the defence.

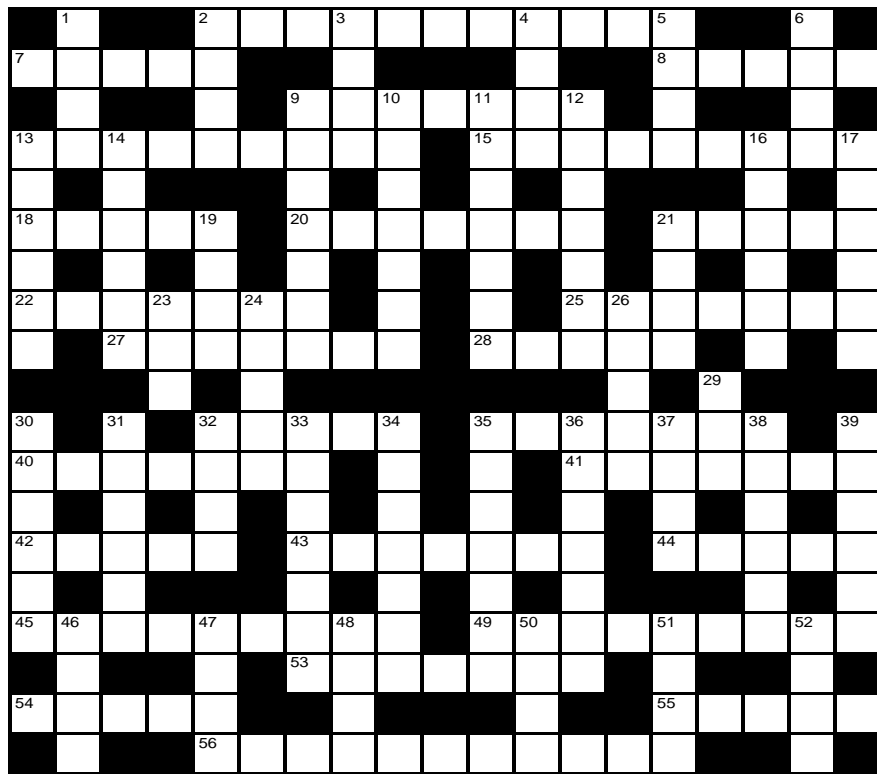
SUNDAY CROSSWORD — 954

ACROSS:

- 2 A light medium-dry sherry (11)
- 7 Trunk of a young fir tree (5)
- 8 Forbidden (5)
- 9 Got one's own back (colloq) (7)
- 13 Associated on very friendly terms (9)
- 15 Speak; utter (8)
- 18 Approaches (5)
- 20 Pertaining to curved courses of planets (7)
- 21 Customs; practice (5)
- 22 Combine with water (7)
- 25 Scheduled in sequence, informally speaking? (7)
- 27 Seats for monarchs (7)
- 28 Ancient language (5)
- 32 Staircase post (5)
- 35 Planned, plotted or concluded (7)
- 40 American state (7)
- 41 Deer horns (7)
- 42 Former Force India driver (5)
- 43 Reassemble (7)
- 44 Parasite (5)
- 45 Pull the shutters for the day? (5,4)
- 49 Doodled (3)
- 53 In the correct manner? (7)
- 54 ___ forth: begin or start a journey? (5)
- 55 Vegetables similar to onions (5)
- 56 Went faster or speeded up (11)

DOWN:

- 1 Sandwich content (4)
- 2 Jason's vessel (4)
- 3 Part of a church — "Evan" changed? (4)
- 4 Right to hold another's property till debt is paid (4)
- 5 Ear-related (4)
- 6 Under ___ in the way? (4)
- 9 Belly (7)
- 10 Things fit to eat? (7)
- 11 Affectedly polite? (7)
- 12 Least bright? (7)
- 13 Largest of Japan's four main islands (6)
- 14 Peace Nobelist of '71 (6)
- 16 Modified (5)
- 17 Puts right (6)
- 19 Joust (4)
- 21 Atop or over (4)
- 23 Greek letter (3)
- 24 Tribal symbol (5)
- 26 Compare (5)
- 29 Come together (3)
- 30 Astronomical distance of 3.26 light years (6)



SOLUTION FOR CROSSWORD - 952

P	A	R	O	R	E	C	R	I	B	S	O	F	F	E	R	S
O	L	A	S	A	G	N	E	L	A	U	E	B	I			
L	E	S	A	G	N	A	L	A	O	P	E	R	F	E	C	T
E	N	V	A	C	A	T	I	N	G							
T	H	A	R	B	H	A	J	A	N	O	F	F	S	P	R	I
R	A	A	B	A	J	A	N	O	F	F	S	P	R	I		
W	I	L	I	N	G											
C	O	N	T	E	S	T	A	R	S	O	N	I	S	T		
D	N	I	P	E	M	P	A	T								
R	E	T	C	H	E											
A	S	B	E	T	W	O	L	O	P	E	S	I				
C	O	U	R	T	I	E	R									
H	E	T	E	W	T	N										
M	O	D	I	S	H											
A	N	G	S	T												
A	G	E	N	T												

WIN A PRIZE

Here's your chance to win a cash prize of ₹200 each. All you need to do is rush in your completed crossword entry to us by Wednesday with your full name and address. Mark the envelope to:

Sunday Crossword-954
Sunday Magazine, 36, S.D. Road, Secbad-03

WINNERS OF CROSSWORD 952

M Nikhil
Hyderabad
S.D Toorkey
Secunderabad

CROSSWORD JIGSAW

K	E	G	L	E	R	S	E	L	E	N	E
A	A	A	O	R	T	A	L	S			
O	N	W	A	R	D	E	R	O	D	E	S
L	I	A	N	E	P	A	L	E	A		
I	L	I	A	O	L	D	A	R	M	Y	
N	I	N	N	Y	E	A	R	S	I	S	
M	G	E	T	A	W	A	Y	T			
C	E	R	E	S	T	H	A	T	E	D	
I	Y	A	R	R	E	V	N	E	R	O	
T	I	T	V	I	D	E	O	N	E	C	
I	R	O	N	E	D	R	A	T	T	L	E
E	O	E	G	E	S	T	E	N			
S	E	N	A	R	Y	E	S	P	R	I	T

STRIKE OUT

F	U	R	C	A	T	E	N	O	D	D	Y
I	U	P	N	A	G	E	I				
N	O	R	T	H	E	R	W	I	T	H	E
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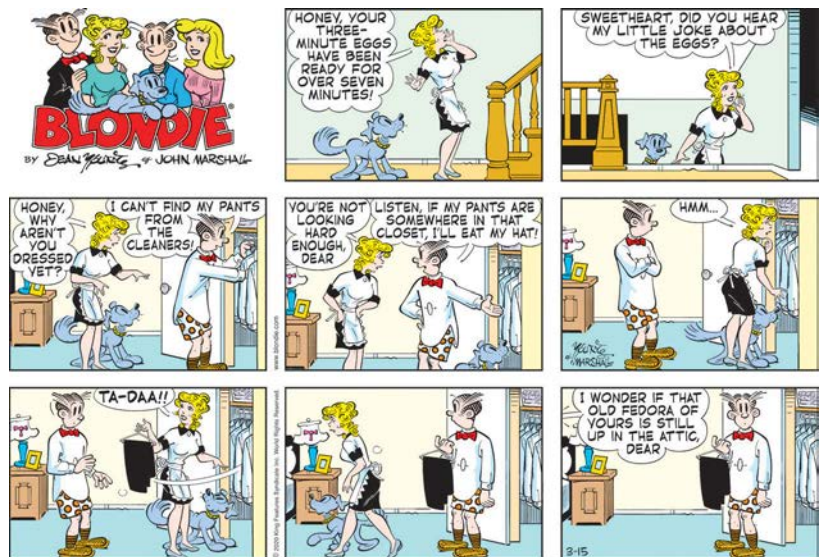
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GARFIELD



BLONDIE



SHORT TAKES

RJD MP MOVES SC AGAINST NEW FARM LAWS

New Delhi, Oct. 3: RJD MP Manoj Jha has moved the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional validity of the newly enacted three agriculture laws, saying they are “discriminatory and manifestly arbitrary” and will expose marginal farmers to exploitation by big corporates.

Parliament has recently passed the three Bills - the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020. These have come into effect from September 27 after President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent.

Jha, a Rajya Sabha member of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), has filed the plea in the top court through lawyer Fauzia Shakil.

Besides Jha, Congress Lok Sabha member from Kerala TN Prathapan and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Rajya Sabha member from Tamil Nadu Tiruchi Siva had moved the top court against the farm laws.

BSP ANNOUNCES 2ND LIST OF 10 CANDIDATES

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOVAL, OCT. 3

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on Saturday announced its second list of 10 candidates for the November 3 by elections in 28 Assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh.

Former minister Mahendra Singh Boudh who has recently joined BSP after resigning from Congress has figured in the second list of candidates of the party and has been given ticket for the Bhandar (SC) Assembly seat.

The BSP has earlier announced the first list of eight candidates for the assembly by-polls.

“BSP has decided to field candidates in all the 28 Assembly seats that are going to by-elections in MP on November 3. The party will go alone in the ensuing assembly by-elections”, state party president Ramakant Pippal said.

KERALA RECORDS OVER 7,000 CORONA CASES

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT. 3

Kerala on Saturday recorded 7,834 cases of Covid-19 taking the total number of cases so far to 21,333 even as 4,476 persons recovered from disease during the last 24 hours.

Of the total cases, 1,39,620 patients have recovered and 80,818 are under treatment in various hospitals across the state. Of the fresh cases, 6,850 contracted the infection through contact, the source of infection among 648 is yet to be known, 95 health care workers got infected, 49 came from abroad while 187 from other states.

The state also reported 22 more deaths taking the official death toll to 813.

COVID RECOVERIES SURGE TO 54,27,706

New Delhi, Oct. 3: India's Covid-19 death toll crossed one lakh and the infection tally climbed to 64,73,544, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease crossed 54 lakh pushing the recovery rate to 83.84 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 64,73,544 with 79,476 new infections being reported in a day, while the death toll climbed to 1,00,842 with the virus claiming 1,069 lives in a span of 24 hours, data updated at 8 am showed.

The total recoveries have surged to 54,27,706, while there are 9,44,996 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 14.60 per cent of the total caseload, the data showed.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate was recorded at 1.56 per cent.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28.

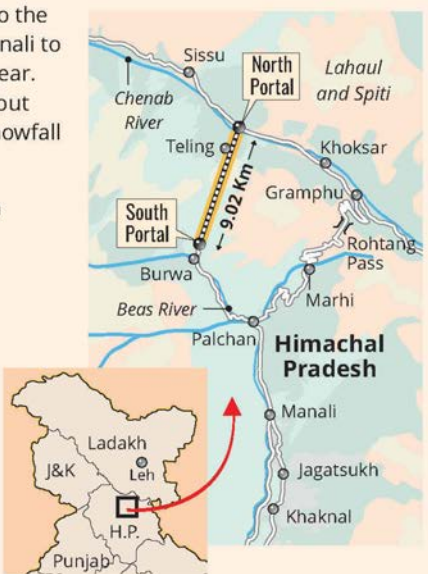
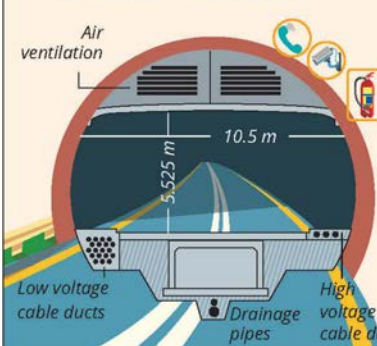
Atal Tunnel Inaugurated by PM Modi

The 9.02 km long tunnel, dedicated to the nation on Oct 3, 2020, will connect Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.

Earlier the valley was cut off for about 6 months each year owing to heavy snowfall

Key Facts

- The project was announced by the then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee in June 2000
- Built by Border Roads Organisation at a cost of ₹ 3,200 crore, it is the world's longest highway tunnel
- It reduces the road distance by 46 km between Manali and Leh and the time by about four to five hours
- Constructed with ultra-modern specifications at an altitude of 3000 metres from the Mean Sea Level
- Single tube double lane tunnel with a roadway of 8 metres and an overhead clearance of 5.525 metres



- It is 10.5-metre wide and has a 3.6 x 2.25 metres fire-proof emergency egress tunnel built into the main tunnel itself
- Designed for traffic density of 3000 cars and 1,500 trucks per day with max speed of 80 km/hr
- The tunnel has ample safety features built into it, which include telephone connections, fire hydrant mechanisms and auto incident detection system with CCTV cameras

KBK Infographics

Dream of Atal's friend comes true after opening of tunnel

Tholang (HP), Oct. 3: The decades-long dream of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's friend, Arjun Gopal, came true on Saturday with the inauguration of Atal Tunnel at Rohtang in Himachal Pradesh.

Amar Singh and Ram Dev, sons of Arjun Gopal alias Tshidawa, said their father had suggested the construction of the tunnel to the former prime minister.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the strategically important all-weather Atal Tunnel, which reduces the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 km and the travel time by four to five hours.

Atal Tunnel is the longest highway tunnel in the world, and the 9.02 km long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year. The valley was earlier cut off for about six months every year due to heavy snowfall.

The tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifications in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas at an altitude of 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) from the Mean Sea Level (MSL).

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur

● **AMAR SINGH** and **Ram Dev**, sons of Arjun Gopal alias Tshidawa, said their father had suggested the construction of the tunnel to the former prime minister.

had earlier said, Vajpayee got the idea for constructing the tunnel on a suggestion from his friend Arjun Gopal of Tashi Dohbe village in Lahaul.

Talking to PTI in their native village Tholang in Lahaul-Spiti district, Amar Singh (75) said his father met Vajpayee in 1998 in Delhi, seeking the construction of the strategically significant tunnel beneath Rohtang Pass for the benefit of the residents of Lahaul-Spiti district.

My father passed away in 2008. Today, his decades-long dream came true and my joy knows no bound, he said.

Singh, who retired as state deputy director (education), said the former prime minister and his father came close during an officers' training camp (OTC) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1942 in Gujarat's Vadodara.

When Vajpayee became the prime minister in 1998, my father met him

through a prominent RSS activist Chaman Lal, he said.

Singh said Lahaul-Spiti-Pangi Janjaati Sewa Samiti' was formed with Gopal as its founder president to pursue the construction of the tunnel.

He said Vajpayee sent copies of the memorandum submitted to him for construction of the tunnel to defence, finance and surface transport ministries.

Following initial objection by the defence ministry, the Union government gave its approval for constructing the tunnel in 2000, Singh claimed, adding that Vajpayee himself announced about the project during a public meeting at Keylong in June, 2000.

Gopal's other son, Ram Dev (61), a retired officer of the state information department, said the economy of Lahaul-Spiti district would see a drastic change after the opening of the tunnel. He also travelled in a Himachal Road Transport Corporation bus which was flagged off by Modi from north portal in Lahaul to south portal in Manali of Kullu district. Residents of the tribal district also hailed the construction of the tunnel. — PTI

TEJASHWI YADAV IS CM FACE OF GRAND ALLIANCE

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, OCT. 3

The opposition Mahagathbandhan in Bihar on Saturday announced seat-sharing formula for the upcoming assembly elections amid high drama.

Congress in-charge for Bihar assembly elections Avinash Pandey announced Tejashwi Yadav as the CM face of the grand alliance.

As per the seat-sharing formula in the opposition coalition, the RJD will be contesting on 144 seats, the Congress 70 and Left parties 29 seats. “Two smaller partners JMM and Vikasheel Insan Party (VIP) will be getting seats from the RJD quota”, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said while making a formal announcement in Patna on Saturday.

Upset over being ignored by the grand alliance leaders, VIP Chief Mukesh Sahani walked out of the event and hinted that he may quit the opposition coalition.

Mukesh Sahani had joined the RJD-led grand alliance just before the Lok Sabha polls in 2019 and he was expecting “sizeable seat share” to contest in the assembly elections.

Reports suggest that he also wanted the grand alliance to declare him as a deputy CM candidate.

“I will announce my next move after meeting party leaders. I feel cheated”, VIP Chief Mukesh Sahani said.

The grand alliance in Bihar comprises RJD, Congress, VIP and three left parties (CPI-ML, CPI and CPM).

Two of RJD's prominent allies Jitan Ram Manjhi and Upendra Kushwaha had earlier left the grand alliance due to differences over leadership and seat-sharing pact.

Political analysts claim that Manjhi's exit was a jolt for Tejashwi Yadav who has been trying to strengthen his party's structure and voter's base in Bihar in the absence of his father.

BIHAR BSP PRESIDENT QUILTS PARTY

Patna, Oct. 3: The BSP of Mayawati which is part of a three-party alliance headed by Upendra Kushwaha of RLSP for Bihar polls, suffered a setback on Saturday when its state unit president Bharat Bind quit and joined RJD.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav gave membership of the party to the BSP leader.

Yadav released a picture admitting Bind into the party on his twitter and also the party's social media platform.

Yadav, the younger son of RJD supreme Lalu Prasad, wrote on his twitter handle that the Bahujan Samaj Party Bihar president joined them to lend support in making a new Bihar and remove anti-youth NDA.

After being spurned by the NDA and discarded by the RJD-helmed Mahagathbandhan, Kushwaha has forged an alliance with the BSP and a non-descript Janatantrik Party (Socialist) for the Bihar elections. — PTI

MP gangrape victim ends life

Cops had not registered victim's FIR

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOVAL, OCT. 3

An alleged gangrape victim in a Madhya Pradesh village committed suicide over non-registration of FIR in the case by police.

The 33-year-old woman, who was allegedly gangraped in her village of Gotgoria under Narasinghapur district on September 28, was found hanging in her house on Friday, police said on Saturday.

Her husband said she took the extreme step when police refused to file an FIR in the case, besides harassing her relatives for asking to register an FIR in the incident.

Two police officers were arrested for not registering a case in the incident.

In-charge of Gotgoria police outpost Misrilal Koddape and in-charge of Chacheli police station Anil Singh were arrested for lapses in registering the case. They were booked under section 166-A (non-recording of information) of Indian Penal Code.

Besides, three other people were arrested on charges of rape and two others arrested for instigating suicide (of the victim), Narasinghpur district superintendent of police Ajey Singh said.

The deceased's husband told the police that his wife was gangraped by three local villagers, Parsu, Arvind and Anil, when she was cutting standing crops in a farm land on September 28.

She narrated the incident to the family members when she returned home. Later, the family members took her to the Gotgoria police outpost to lodge a complaint on the night of the fateful day.

Gotgoria police, however, said an FIR would be registered after her medical examination.

However, the complaint was not registered by Gotgoria police on September 29 also.

They then approached Chichli police station to lodge the complaint.

Later, instead of registering the case, the deceased's husband and her brother-in-law were locked up in the police station, her husband said.

The harassment by the police provoked her to end life, he added.

Didi: BJP is the biggest pandemic of the country

Kolkata, Oct. 3: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Saturday took out a protest rally in the city against the Hathras alleged gangrape case and launched a scathing attack against the BJP, which is in power in Uttar Pradesh, calling it the “biggest pandemic” torturing Dalits the most and running a “dictatorship” in the country.

Banerjee said she would stand by the Dalit community till the end as her caste is “humanity” and she does not believe in differentiation on the grounds of caste and religion.

● **THE WEST BENGAL** Chief Minister said she would stand by the Dalit community till the end as her caste is “humanity” and she does not believe in differentiation on the grounds of caste and religion.

darkness, but we will lead them towards the light,” she said, addressing the rally.

Continuing her tirade against the saffron camp, Banerjee said, “The country is going through super autocracy as democracy has been murdered by BJP.

“Dictatorship is going on across the country. Instead of government for the people, it is running a government against the people, the Dalits and the farmers. This is super autocracy,” she said.

Referring to the TMC delegation being stopped by the Uttar Pradesh police from meeting the victim's family at Hathras on Friday, Banerjee said she felt like “running to UP and standing by the family of the victims”.

She said, “My heart is in Hathras. I feel like running to that village and standing by the Dalit family in their fight against injustice. Our representatives went to Hathras but were stopped a km from the village.

— PTI



TMC Supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee participates in a rally to protest over the death of Hathras victim in Kolkata on Saturday. — PTI

India reiterates no first use of nuclear weapons

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 3

India on Saturday reiterated its nuclear doctrine of “No First Use” against nuclear weapon states and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. India also reiterated its “long-standing and unwavering commitment to universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons”.

New Delhi's position was reiterated by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla at the “High-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of

● **INDIA'S REITERATION** of its nuclear doctrine is significant, as it comes at a time when the armed forces are on alert at the borders, both at the LoC with Pakistan and the LAC with China.

Nuclear Weapons”.

India's reiteration of its nuclear doctrine is significant, as it comes at a time when the armed forces are on alert at the borders, both at the LoC with Pakistan and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, and also in readiness for any contingency to face a “two-front war”, an euphemism for a hypothetical Sino-Pakistani joint attack on India. Both

these neighbours also possess nuclear weapons.

Shringla said, “India espouses the policy of “No First Use” against nuclear weapon states and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. India reiterates its unwavering commitment to universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, in line with the Final Document of the First Special Session of the UNGA on disarmament.” He added, “We believe that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and a multilateral framework.”

SALUTING THE BRAVE

Memorial located in eastern Ladakh mentions the heroics of the ‘Gallants of Galwan’

Army builds memorial for soldiers killed in Galwan Valley

New Delhi, Oct. 3: The Indian Army has built a memorial for its 20 personnel who were killed while valiantly fighting Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh on June 15, official sources said on Saturday.

The memorial, located at Post 120 in eastern Ladakh and inaugurated earlier this week, mentions the heroics of the ‘Gallants of Galwan’ under operation ‘Snow Leopard’ and the

way they evicted the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops from the area while inflicting “heavy casualties” on them in “hand-to-hand combat”.

China is yet to disclose the number of its soldiers killed and injured in the clash though it officially admitted to have suffered casualties.

According to an American intelligence report, the number of

casualties on the Chinese side was 35.

Post 120 lies along the Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) road. The names of all the 20 Indian Army personnel were inscribed at the unit-level memorial.

Colonel B. Santosh Babu, the commanding officer of the 16 Bihar regiment, was among the Indian Army personnel killed in the clash that had significantly escalated the border tension between the two coun-

tries with India calling it “a premeditated and planned action by China”.

The Chinese soldiers used stones, nail-studded sticks, iron rods and clubs in carrying out brutal attacks on Indian soldiers after they protested the erection of a surveillance post by China around patrolling point 14 in Galwan Valley.

Giving a brief account of Operation ‘Snow Leopard’, the Army mentioned in a

plaque at the memorial that Colonel Babu led the ‘Quick Reaction Force’ of 16 Bihar Regiment and attached troops tasked to evict a group of Chinese troops from the general area in ‘Y nala’ (a junction) and stop them from moving further to Patrolling Point 14.

“The column successfully evicted the PLA OP from Y Nala and reached PP14 where a fierce skirmish broke out between

the IA (Indian Army) and PLA troops. Col B Santosh Babu led from the front and his troops fought gallantly in hand-to-hand combat, causing heavy casualties to the PLA. In the ensuing fight twenty ‘Gallants of Galwan’ achieved martyrdom,” the Army wrote.

The list of 20 personnel in the memorial included three naib subedars, three havildars and 12 sepoy. The defence ministry has

also started the process to inscribe the names of Colonel Babu and other soldiers at the National War Memorial in Delhi.

During a visit to Lukung forward post in eastern Ladakh on July 17, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh personally conveyed his appreciation and compliments to the troops from the Bihar regiment for displaying exemplary grit and courage in fighting the Chinese troops.

DECCAN
Chronicle

4 OCTOBER 2020



Shreya Sen-Handley

Off the beaten track

A Kolkata 'Kumroween' & other Covid sacrifices

I could murder a malpoa right now. And that potoler dolma I've been drooling over in my dreams, the shorshe illish that dance in my peripheral vision, disappearing like chimera (or Nemo) when I look them in the eye. Some nights I wake in a chom chom sweat, and dig around my kitchen cupboards to find my dalmut hoard sadly depleted. Nor can Tesco's mango chutney fill the yawning achaar-shaped chasm in my gut. And when I think of mishti doi — oh boi, I melt into a puddle of yearning. My dwindling pile of panchphoron too, in its steel tiffin box, is not to be sneezed at (what will I have left then?).

It's been more than a year since we last travelled to Kolkata, the city of my birth, of my parents and oldest friends, of the spices, sweets, books and great memories I bring back yearly, and our stocks are all but gone. Cold turkey they call this sudden, enforced withdrawal, but it's kosha mangsho for me. As merry as our Sherwood curry may be, there are jhaals, jhols and ombols that can't be concocted outside Bengal. Not without an infusion of its tangy winter smog, monsoon winds that roll from the Bay, and Rabindrasangeet saturating the air no matter what the weather. Sniff as hard I might, I can smell none of this now.

Sure sign of Covid you say, but these notun gurer cravings and maacher muthia longings are symptoms of homesickness instead. Evading the former has unfortunately required the renunciation of the akash, batash, and barir ranna of Kolkata this year. Abetted by inept, often unfeeling governments, the Coronavirus has harvested death and deprivation everywhere. In Bengal alone so far there are a staggering 216,000 cases, and nearly 5,000 deaths, with Kolkata accounting for 70 per cent of it.

But just for a moment, shall we dwell on the lesser tragedies? Like the suspension of flights to Kolkata from much of Britain and the hijacking of my annual trip home. Since moving to Britain two decades ago, I have returned home for the harvest every year. Of a very different crop usually; the diurnal glide of crisp blue skies and mellow sun, long addas over favourite foods, slow, smoky evenings with family and friends, and pilgrimages to fondly remembered haunts. Including the biggest and brightest of festivals.

This pandemic has put paid to even that. It has hijacked not just my homecoming but mighty Durga's too. Kolkata's Durga Puja is an extravaganza so massive, so magnificent, so, er, mingly, it can only be a shadow of itself this socially-distanced year. The ocean of humanity that swamps the resplendent pandals and eye-popping illuminations won't be welcoming the Mother Goddess with their customary rapture this year, because they will, hopefully, stay home to prevent further dissemination of the killer virus. Which is as it should be. But because it is indeed the high point of the year for many and in these dismal times, a tonic for the soul, some puja organisers have been exploring alternatives, from virtual pujas to portable ones. Bearing the Devi round in a bedecked palanquin in Jodhpur Park, for people to see from the safety of their homes, is one such I gather. As if Corona Devi, flexing her spiky muscles to demonstrate her might, instructed the good folks of Kolkata — "Koro na!" But Kolkata peeps replied (cching Durga), "OK tata, but y' know? Ashche bochor abar hobe!"

The high point of our trip back however is quite another tradition. Timing it so the bulk of our visit is post-puja; quiet and contemplative after the fervour and din, we finish every trip with the tiny, homegrown celebration we've come to know as 'Kumroween'. It all started with October being the best time for us to visit India, but the kids didn't want to miss the trick or treating of an English Halloween. So we devised our own little fusion festival, a best-of-both-worlds hybrid that was all treats and no trick, incorporating an array of Bengali delicacies and bonhomie, with fancy dress, eerie party balloons and trim (on which we had fun scrawling a scary range of faces), and the pièce de résistance - a glowing Jack o' Lantern carved from an almost invariably misshapen kumro. Thus 'Kumroween', an invariably misshapen but always entertaining tradition was born. Over the years, patched together Gupis and Baghas have rubbed shoulders with Professor Lupin and Harry Potter, a cobbled Captain Hook has sung along with affable, unthreatening crocs, whilst pleasantly plump skeletons tucked into kochuri, aloor dom, and goja. Most of all, it has given us the opportunity to gather our family and friends round, to say hello, thank you, and au revoir, so quickly do our fortnights in Kolkata fly. Two splendid weeks of breaking bread, or indeed luchi, with family, catchup addas with friends lasting half the day, and storytime and play for our children with their beloved but rarely-seen Dida and Dadu, coalescing one last time on spooky, sparkling, slightly sad Kumroween night.

There can be no Kumroween this year. No festivities of any sort for us in Kolkata. In fact, no trip at all. Just sadness and long distance anxiety as every day brings the names and images of people we once knew, or knew of, who have succumbed to the marauding bug. With more to come. But malpoa, madugga, Mababa, and my mother city; you are on my mind. And if it is OK tata for this year, horn please, because ashche bochor abar hobe.

Shreya Sen-Handley is the author of the recently published Strange: Stories, the award-winning Memoirs of My Body, and a forthcoming book of travel misadventures. Her Twitter and Insta handle is @shreyasenan.



The writer's children celebrate Halloween in Kolkata.
— STEPHEN HANDLEY

Subhani



Napping media awakes, puts Yogi on the spot



Pavan K. Varna

Chanakya's View

The horrific Hathras rape outrage raises some deeply disturbing questions. First and foremost, is the role of the UP government and police. Why was the victim's body taken away forcibly from her home and cremated against her family's will in the dead of night? The family wanted to perform the last rites in the morning and then cremate her. But her parents and brothers were locked in their house.

Quite apart from the legal propriety of cremating the body when another autopsy was clearly warranted, there is a shocking insensitivity to this episode. The family of the young Dalit girl was in trauma. They had just lost a daughter to one of the most brutal rape incidents seen in recent times. To take away the dead body against the family's will, lock up family members, and forcibly carry out the cremation at 2:30 am, shows an unpardonable callousness to basic human emotions.

Why was the UP sarkar in such a tearing hurry? Quite clearly, there must be a reason. If it thought that with her cremation the matter may quickly die a natural death, the outcome was just the opposite. Thanks to the media, most of them brave young women, the entire nation was sickened by the pitiless, cruel and high-handed behaviour of the police. The visuals of the mother wailing at not being able to even see the face of her dead daughter were appalling.

The UP government seemed to have only one priority, which was to

claim that the girl was not gangraped. The state police cited the report of the Forensic Science Lab in Agra, which apparently said that no trace of semen was found. Surely, the police would know that the absence of semen is no proof that rape did not take place. Moreover, as against the forensic report, there is the dying declaration of the girl herself where she says that she was raped. Is this not proof enough? In the light of the victim's confirmation of rape, why was the body not subjected to a fresh examination by a panel that would include a senior gynaecologist? Was this the reason why the body was cremated in such unseemly haste?

There is also the visual of the district magistrate of Hathras obviously trying to intimidate the victim's family. The media will go away in a day or two, he can be heard telling the family; only the police will remain, so it would be better if you change your statement. This raises the question of why the UP police want to whitewash this gruesome incident. Who is UP chief minister, Yogi Adityanath, trying to protect? Is there a caste angle to this dastardly crime, which has something to do with the fact

Why was the UP sarkar in such a tearing hurry? Quite clearly, there must be a reason. If it thought that with her cremation the matter may quickly die a natural death, the outcome was just the opposite.

Who is the Yogi trying to protect? Is there a caste angle to this dastardly crime, which has something to do with the fact that the four accused are allegedly of the dominant Thakur caste, the same caste as the UP CM?

that the four accused who have been arrested are allegedly of the dominant Thakur caste, which is the same caste as the UP CM?

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), nearly 10 Dalit women are raped every day, with UP recording the largest number, 14.7 per cent of India's total. No doubt, UP is the most populous state in the country, but the fact remains that even nationwide — again as per NCRB data — crimes against Dalits have increased by 47 per cent in the period between 2014 and 2018. The rivalry between the BJP and the Congress has triggered a "competitive rape politics" where a rape in Rajasthan — a Congress ruled state — is being compared to the Hathras incident. This is deeply shameful. Both incidents were heinous and gruesome. But Yogi Adityanath, who dresses in saffron and calls himself a Yogi, must answer for the condemnable manner in which his administration and police acted in Hathras. Even now the victim's family is being barricaded by the police, their phones are being illegally tapped, and journalists or politicians of Opposition parties are not being allowed to meet them freely. Why?

The brutal Nirbhaya rape led to national outrage because it happened in the capital of the Republic. But the Nirbhaya of Hathras was not that fortunate. She was fatally assaulted on September 14, and — as per her own state-

ment — raped, her neck broken and her tongue cut. But national media hardly took any real notice of this shocking incident, until her death on September 29. On electronic media we were presented frenzied accounts of which actresses allegedly smoked hash, Rhea Chakraborty's bail application, and Kangana Ranaut's verbal tantrums. If the media had paused from its breathless chase of Bollywood actresses and focused on this case, perhaps the victim would have got better medical attention, and her life could have been saved.

The minimum that should be done now is to immediately suspend the Hathras DM. The Superintendent of Police (SP) has been suspended. The accused should be tried through a fast-track court in a time bound manner, and if found guilty, hanged like the Nirbhaya perpetrators. There is a demand that an investigation into the rape and murder should be entrusted to the CBI. But, a "caged parrot" may not be the solution. What this case needs is a time bound inquiry by a Supreme Court designated judge, which must also fix responsibility for the highly suspect role played by the UP government and the police. It would be good if the UP CM is asked a few questions, not only by his political opponents, but in a judicial process.

The writer, an author, is a former diplomat and in politics

What this case needs is a time bound inquiry by a Supreme Court designated judge, which must also fix responsibility for the highly suspect role played by the UP government and the police

LETTERS

NAIDU'S FORECAST

The BJP has been hobnobbing with this idea for long (*Naidu foresees simultaneous LS, Assembly elections in 2022, DC, Oct. 3*). What N. Chandrababu Naidu stated is not new. The Indian democracy witnessed several ups and downs over seven decades and yet survived major assaults. Naidu also contributed to the sabotage one way or the other. It is no surprise he is hailing every step taken by the BJP/NDA.

Govardhana Myneedu
Vijayawada

HATHRAS GANGRAPE

The horrendous Hathras gangrape has exposed the deep-rooted malaise of caste and gender discrimination in our society. The dangerous part is the apathy or antipathy of police towards the hapless victim and her family. The state is supposed to be custodian of rights. If it is lenient towards predators, it will be a disservice to society. There is glaring failure, if not connivance of authorities to the dismay of civilians.

Dr D.V.G. Sankararao
Vizianagaram

LIQUOR POLICY

It is shocking that Andhra Pradesh government has miserably failed repeatedly in liquor policy (*AP to change 3 Liquor bottle rule, DC, Oct. 3*). It is clear that the government wants to loot Bacchus lovers in a big way and keep prices high in the name of prohibition process, that too non-branded liquor. Controlling this is not that easy as ruling party leaders are involved indirectly.

Panchakarla Govardhana Rao
Kankipadu, Krishna district

GANDHI VS GRANDHI

It is shocking to delete the name of Kasturba Gandhi on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday and rename the junior college with the local MLA, Grandhi Srinivas' father, G. Venkateswara Rao at Bhimavaram (DC, Oct. 3). It seems that the MLA is paying respects to his father, instead of Father of the Nation at the cost of a government college.

Parthasarathy Mandadi
Tirupati

Foundation laid for fertilizer project

BY M.P. Rabindranath
"Chronicle" staff reporter

HYDERABAD, October 3 A giant step that would transform Andhra Pradesh's agrarian economy into one of the modern economy was witnessed yesterday as the Union Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals, Dr. Triguna Sen laid the foundation for the Ramagundam Fertilizer Project.

The banks of Godavari — the site of the project-presented a glittering sight with thousands of people pouring in to witness the realisation of the Rs. 71 crore project that would in course of time change the face of Karimnagar district — may be even Telangana and its impoverished masses.

The project when commissioned will save the country annually Rs. 36 crores in foreign exchange by reduction of fertilizer imports and Rs. 120 crores by replacement of imported foodgrains.

50 YEARS AGO IN
DECCAN
Chronicle

Hope alive for those shown the door in BJP reshuffle

Great expectations

The BJP organisational reshuffle has not disappointed anyone. It seems all those shown the door are hoping for "better" options. The party's former vice-president, Vinay Sahasrabudde, is said to be angling for a Union Cabinet berth. Mr Sahasrabudde is currently head of ICCR, enjoying a Cabinet rank. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi would accommodate him as the country's education minister. Another axed vice-president, Prabhat Jha, is hoping to get a gubernatorial assignment. Ram Madhav, who was a party general secretary and a player in the north-eastern states and Jammu & Kashmir, is aspiring to head the party in his home state Andhra Pradesh.

Swamy's allegation

Subramanian Swamy filing yet another complaint against Congress president Sonia Gandhi for allegedly giving "wrong"

information on her educational qualification is not news. In a letter addressed to the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Mr Swamy observed, "In our country, the educational qualification is highly valued and obtained after much effort. Hence our culture has given such high value to educational qualifications." Mr Swamy's focus on obtaining a higher educational qualification is being viewed with a lot of interest. Some cynics wonder why Mr Swamy, an astute politician, currently unhappy with the BJP leadership for its failure to "discipline" in-house Swamy-baiter Amit Malviya, has written this. Mr Malviya heads the BJP IT cell and weeks before the BJP organisational reshuffle, Mr Swamy had boasted that Mr Malviya would be removed. Nothing happened.

The controversy around Sonia's educational qualification was first raked up in 1999 when the Congress president reportedly attributed her English language course obtained in Cambridge to the University of Cambridge. Sonia had apologised, pointing that it was a "typing mistake".



By WAQYANAWIS

Man of many bosses

He has been described as an 'eighth wonder' of the world. Uttar Pradesh's senior bureaucrat Navneet Sahgal has a knack of bouncing back. The former principal secretary to chief minister Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav, has now become head of the information and public relations department under

chief minister Yogi Adityanath after the Hathras gangrape outrage. Yogi, struggling to counter adverse media coverage, had no choice but to think of Mr Sahgal as his Man Friday. Mr Sahgal also holds the distinction of serving as personal secretary to Union minister Akhilesh Das who had belonged to the Congress during Manmohan Singh era. In a state where bureaucrats get marked over their alleged political affiliation, Mr Sahgal, currently additional chief secretary, is proving to be an exception. Exceptional.

Midnight 'news' alerts

Journalists covering the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) are both intrigued and annoyed for getting WhatsApp messages on almost a daily basis post-midnight. The message, attributing information to a prominent LJP leader, makes sensational claims such as LJP walking out of NDA or fighting all Bihar Assembly seats independently. While it disturbs the sleep of many scribes, mornings usher in business as usual within the NDA.

Abandoned Kamal Nath

All is not well between former Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath and senior party leader Digvijaya Singh. At one point when the Congress was in power for 15 months from December 2018 to March 2020, the Nath-Digvijaya jodi was a *bada bhai-chhota bhai* pair. But now that crucial Assembly by-polls have been announced in 28 seats, Digvijaya is not to be seen. Kamal Nath, at 72, is fighting a lone and grim battle to regain a foothold in MP politics. Chances of dislodging Shivraj Singh Chouhan regime are slim as the BJP needs to win barely one third of the seats going to polls while the Congress would need almost all of them: the 20 out of 28 seats for Congress is seen as a figure that would rattle everyone in the BJP from Bhopal to New Delhi. The Nov. 10 verdict is keenly awaited when results of these bypolls would be declared along with the Bihar Assembly outcome.

The writer is a keen observer of the goings-on in backrooms of power

IN BRIEF

Reunification: German anniv

Berlin, Oct. 3: Germany is marking the 30th anniversary of its reunification on Saturday, drawing a generally positive picture of the progress made in knitting together east and west amid celebrations that are low-key because of the Coronavirus pandemic. Germany was reunited on October 3, 1990, after four decades of Cold War division. East Germany joined the western federal republic less than a year after the east's Communist rulers — under pressure from growing protests — opened the Berlin Wall and the rest of the highly fortified border between the two states. While much progress has been made since then, economic and other differences between the west and the less-prosperous east still persist.

Sudan, rebels seal peace deal

Juba: Sudan's transitional authorities and a rebel alliance signed on Saturday a peace deal initialed in August that aims to put an end to the country's decades-long civil wars, in a televised ceremony marking the agreement. "The next biggest challenge is to work with all local and international partners to preach the agreement and its benefits," Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok tweeted on Friday upon his arrival at Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Reaching a negotiated settlement with rebels in Sudan's far-flung provinces has been a crucial goal for the transitional government, which assumed power after a popular uprising led the military to overthrow President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. Sudanese civilian leaders hope the deal will allow them to revive the country's battered economy by slashing military spending, which takes up much of the national budget.

Afghan car bomb attack: 15 killed

Jalalabad: At least 15 people were killed and more than 30 others wounded in a car bomb attack that targeted a government building in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday, officials said. The explosion occurred at an administrative building that also housed some military facilities in the Ghani Khel district of Nangarhar province, the governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani said. "The car bomb detonated at the entrance of the district headquarters building. Several armed attackers tried to enter the building after the attack but were killed by security forces," he said. Provincial police spokesman Farid Khan confirmed the details. He said most of the victims were Afghan security force members but several civilians were also among the dead. No one had so far claimed responsibility for the attack but Khan blamed the Taliban. Both the Taliban and the Islamic State group are active in the region.

RICK MORANIS PUNCHED IN ATTACK

Los Angeles, Oct. 3: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" star Rick Moranis was assaulted in an apparently random street attack in New York. The 67-year-old actor was punched in the face by a random passer-by when he was walking on Central Park West near 70th Street, reported *New York Post*. A CCTV video footage, released by the police, showed a man dressed in black hoodie with a backpack on his shoulder punch Moranis with a closed fist directly into the face. Afterwards, the actor fell to the ground and the suspect nonchalantly walked away. Moranis, who suffered pain in his head, back and right hip, went to a local hospital to be evaluated, police said. He later filed a complaint with the police. In a statement, Moranis' spokesperson said that the actor is doing "fine". "Rick Moranis was assaulted on the Upper West Side yesterday. He is fine but grateful for everyone's thoughts and well wishes," the representative said. Moranis rose to prominence with his work on Canadian comedy sketch series "Second City Television". He later became one of the most sought-after comic stars in the 1980s and 1990s. His film credits include 1984's "Ghostbusters" and its 1989 sequel, "Spaceballs", "Parenthood" and "The Flintstones" remake.



A demonstrator holds up a placard reading "Fake news Trump tested positive" to protest against masks and virus restrictions during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic in Konstanz, southern Germany, on Saturday.

Cavalier WH approach to Covid catches up to Don

Washington, Oct. 3: Masks were rarely spotted in the West Wing. Crowds of people gathered shoulder to shoulder on the White House South Lawn. And Air Force One streaked across the sky from one massive campaign rally to another. With ready access to testing and the best public health minds at his disposal, President Donald Trump and first lady Melania who have tested positive for Coronavirus. In a message to Trump, Xi, 67, said that after learning President Trump and Melania have tested positive for Covid-19, he and his wife Peng Liyuan extend sympathy to them and wish them a speedy recovery, state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported.

Leaders and prominent figures from around the world on Friday sent their best wishes to Trump and his wife. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind wished Trump and the first lady a quick recovery. "Wishing my friend @POTUS @realDonaldTrump and @FLOTUS a quick recovery and good health," Modi tweeted. "Our prayers and best wishes are with you during this time," Kovind said. In a message posted on his official web page, Russian President Vladimir Putin wished Trump well, saying: "I am sure that your inherent vitality, good spirits and optimism will help you cope with the dangerous virus." British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, also sent well wishes. "My best wishes to President Trump and the First Lady. Hope they both have a speedy recovery from Coronavirus," Johnson tweeted. —PTI

Jinping wishes Trump, Melania speedy recovery

Beijing, Oct. 3: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday sent a message of sympathy to President Donald Trump and his wife Melania, wishing they would recover from the COVID-19 illness, state media reported. "He sincerely hoped that they would recover as soon as possible," the Korean Central News Agency reported.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Saturday sent a message of sympathy to President Donald Trump and his wife Melania, wishing they would recover from the COVID-19 illness, state media reported.

Trump's age, health woes raise his risk for Covid-19

Washington, Oct. 3: President Donald Trump has several strikes against him — age, obesity, elevated cholesterol and being male — that could put him at greater risk of becoming seriously ill from the Coronavirus infection he disclosed early Friday. Here's what experts say about Trump's outlook and next steps. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS: Infection causes mild or no symptoms in about 80 per cent of cases. About 15 per cent of people become seriously ill and 5 per cent get critical-

ly ill. Symptoms, when they do occur, usually appear two to 14 days after infection and can include loss of smell or taste, coughing, a sore throat, trouble breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea and fever. Up to half of patients who are hospitalised don't have a fever when admitted but nearly all develop one. How people fare varies widely — some seem to be recovering and then suddenly worsen. Pneumonia, often with a specific appearance on X-rays, some-

Killings of at least 30 transgender or non-gender conforming people documented in 2020

Sexual, gender minorities more likely to be crime victims

Phoenix, Oct. 3: The first study of its kind found that people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or gender non-conforming are nearly four times as likely to be victims of violent crime than those outside such communities. Although other research has long shown that LGBTQ people and gender minorities are disproportionately affected by crime, the study published in *Science Advances*, a multidisciplinary journal, on Friday looked at data that has only been collected since 2016, making for the

first comprehensive and national study to examine the issue. It found that members of such communities, referred to as sexual and gender minorities, experienced a rate of 71.1 violent victimisations per 1,000 persons a year, compared with 19.2 per 1,000 a year among non-sexual and gender minorities. But it was the fact that sexual and gender minorities are victims of such a variety of crimes at such disparate rates — and who they're victimised by — that surprised researchers, said lead author Andrew R. Flores, an assistant profes-

sor at American University. For example, researchers found that such a population is much more likely to be victimised by someone they know well than a person who is a non-sexual and gender minority. The fact that sexual and gender minorities are victimised by people close to them at such higher rates "does kind of raise questions hopefully future research can address about the nature of these incidents and the nature of these relationships," Flores said. "There are certain socialisations that goes in that. I think many people are so-

THE STUDY also found that sexual and gender minorities are burglarized at twice the rate of other households, and that they're more likely to be victims of other types of property theft.

cialised and have a certain disdain for trans and queer people," said Tori Cooper of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a national organisation that advocates for the LGBTQ community. Cooper is the director of community engagement for the organisatio-

2 US SENATORS, TRUMP EX-AIDE TEST VIRUS +VE

Washington, Oct. 3: Two US Senators, a former adviser to President Donald Trump, his campaign manager and three White House journalists have tested positive for Covid-19, joining several officials working at the presidential palace to have contracted the infection. Republican Senators Thom Tillis from North Carolina, and Mike Lee from Utah confirmed they have been tested positive for Coronavirus.

"Over the last few months, I've been routinely tested for Covid-19, including testing negative last Saturday, but tonight my rapid antigen test came back positive," Tillis said. Hope Hicks, 31, is the closest aide of the President to have tested positive. Former White House counsellor Kellyanne Conway also announced on Twitter that she has been tested positive. Trump Campaign Manager Bill Stepien tested positive as well. The White House Correspondents Association confirmed that three member journalists have tested positive. —PTI

PENCE-HARRIS DEBATE ON

Washington, Oct. 3: The vice presidential debate between Mike Pence and Kamala Harris next week will go on as scheduled after President Donald Trump tested positive for the Coronavirus on Friday. An official with the Commission on Presidential Debates confirmed that no changes are anticipated to the Wednesday night debate in Salt Lake City. Both Pence and Harris underwent tests for the Coronavirus on Friday and tested negative. Pence's physician said in a memo that the vice president was not considered a "close contact" of anyone infected with Covid-19. —AP

Azerbaijan Prez criticises mediators; fighting rages on

Baku, Oct. 3: Heavy fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan continued Saturday in their conflict over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, while Azerbaijan's president criticised the international mediators who have tried for decades to resolve the dispute. Fighting that started September 27 is the worst to afflict Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas since the 1994 end of a war that left the region in Azerbaijan under the control of ethnic Armenian local forces backed by Armenia. Shushan Stepanian, a spokeswoman for the Armenian Defence Ministry, said that "intensive fighting is taking place along the entire front line," and claimed that Armenian forces had shot down three planes. Azerbaijan's defence ministry did not respond to the claim of planes being shot down, but said Armenian forces had shelled civilian territory within Azerbaijan, including the city of Terter. Nagorno-Karabakh officials have said more than 150 servicemen on their side have been killed so far. Azerbaijani authorities haven't given details on their military casual-

ties but said 19 civilians have been killed and 55 more wounded. Nagorno-Karabakh was a designated autonomous region within Azerbaijan during the Soviet era. It claimed independence from Azerbaijan in 1991, about three months before the Soviet Union's collapse. Full-scale war that broke out in 1992 killed an estimated 30,000 people. By the time it ended in 1994, Armenian forces not only held Nagorno-Karabakh itself but substantial areas outside the territory's formal borders. Several United Nations Security Council resolutions have called for withdrawal from those areas, which the Armenian forces have disregarded. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said in a television interview that the forces must withdraw from those areas before fighting can stop. In the interview with al-Jazeera, a transcript of which was distributed Saturday by the presidential press office, Aliyev criticised the so-called Minsk Group of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has tried to mediate a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. —AP

Belarus: No foreign media credentials

Kyiv, Oct. 3: Belarus, rocked by weeks of protests against its authoritarian president and Western condemnation over a crackdown on dissent, on Friday rescinded the accreditation of all journalists working for foreign news outlets and said they must apply for new ones in a process that could take a week or more. The action was the latest by Belarusian authorities against journalists and news media amid the wave of large protests that have occurred almost daily since the country's authoritarian president won a sixth term in a disputed Aug. 9 election. "In the current situation, we are forced to exercise our sovereign right and apply the necessary protective measures, including in the form of new provisions of the regulations,"

the Belarus Foreign Ministry said in a statement announcing the move. The ministry said that journalists working for foreign media can apply for new credentials beginning Monday; temporary accreditation applications will be considered within five days, and permanent within 30 days. The largest protests against President Alexander Lukashenko have taken place on Sundays. Earlier this week, authorities in Belarus suspended for three months the credentials of the popular independent news website tut.by, which has covered the protests. Some credentialled foreign journalists were deported in August, including two from AP, and the credentials of two Belarusian nationals working for AP were revoked. —AP

Take legal step to bring Nawaz: Imran

Islamabad, Oct. 3: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked his party leaders to devise a legal strategy to bring back former premier Nawaz Sharif from the United Kingdom as in the absence of an extradition treaty between the two countries it would be difficult to get him extradited, according to a media report. Presiding over the first meeting of a committee recently formed to counter the Opposition, Prime Minister Khan on Friday asked Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders to foil all moves of the Opposition aimed at destabilising the government and "maliciously" the Army, the *Dawn News* reported. The government had

earlier sent a request to the British government for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader's repatriation to ensure that he faces the corruption cases pending against him in the courts. Sharif has been living in London since November last year when he was allowed to go there for medical treatment. A source privy to the meeting told *Dawn* that the prime minister was committed to bringing back Sharif from London and directed the committee members to devise a legal strategy because in the absence of an extradition treaty between Pakistan and the UK, it would become difficult to get him extradited. —PTI



SHORT TAKES

IPL player reports corrupt approach

New Delhi: A cricketer, competing in the Indian Premier League in the UAE, has "reported a corrupt approach", putting BCCI's anti-corruption unit (ACU) on a high alert. The 13th edition of the IPL in being held in the UAE in a bio-secure environment, which has significantly reduced the chance for persons with dubious credentials approaching the player directly. The threat though still remains by and large due to the online network of corruptors. BCCI ACU chief Ajit Singh confirmed the development to PTI. "Yes (a player has reported approach)," Singh, the former DGP of Rajasthan Police confirmed the news. "We are tracking him. It will take some time," he said when asked if the alleged corruptor or "person of interest" has been nabbed. As per anti-corruption protocols, the name of the player (Indian or overseas) or franchise is not revealed for confidentiality purposes. — PTI

Tsitsipas through to fourth round

Paris: Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to the fourth round of the French Open on Saturday after his opponent Aljaz Bedene retired with an ankle injury while trailing 6-1, 6-2, 3-1. Slovenian Bedene, who defeated Tsitsipas in straight sets when they met at Rotterdam earlier this year, first called for the physiotherapist on Court Suzanne Lenglen to get treatment on his right ankle after going down 5-0 in the opening set. After returning to court Bedene won the first game to get on the scoreboard and then got his ankle strapped before the start of the second set. Tsitsipas, the reigning ATP Finals champion, kept his focus and went about his business smoothly, hitting 28 winners and breaking the 56th-ranked Bedene's serve five times before he decided he could no longer continue. — Agencies

Neymar sizzles in PSG's big win

Paris: Neymar scored his first goals of the season to help Paris Saint-Germain make up some lost ground in the French league with a 6-1 rout of visiting Angers. PSG moved up to second in the sixth round after winning four games straight. The defending champions started with two defeats. Kylian Mbappe, who also scored, had the first big chance at Parc des Princes in the fifth minute saved by the quick reacting Angers goalkeeper Paul Bernardoni. But the home side did not have to wait long for the breakthrough, a fine goal from Alessandro Florenzi in the seventh minute. The Italian defender lifted the ball over an opponent with his fist touch, then lobbed it over another defender inside the far post with his next. — AP

Union Berlin rout Mainz 4-0

Berlin: Former Germany striker Max Kruse launched Union Berlin to a 4-0 rout of Mainz for their biggest ever Bundesliga win and their first of the season. Finland forward Joel Pohjanpalo also scored, just seconds after coming on for his debut, to wrap up an unhappy start for new Mainz coach Jan-Moritz Lichte. Former assistant coach Lichte took over Mainz on an interim basis on Monday when the club fired Achim Beierlorzer after losing their first two games and players boycotted a training session in support of a demoted player, Adam Szalai. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Mumbai Indians vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 3.30 pm; Kings XI Punjab vs Chennai Super Kings from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

TENNIS

French Open: Matches from 2.30 pm on Star Sports, Select 2

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Leicester City vs West Ham from 4.30 pm; Arsenal vs Sheffield United from 6.30 pm; Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur from 9 pm; Aston Villa vs Liverpool from 11.30 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Italian League: Atalanta vs Cagliari from 4 pm; Lazio vs Inter Milan from 6.30 pm; AC Milan vs Spezia from 9.30 pm; Juventus vs Napoli from 12.15 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

BASKETBALL

NBA Finals (Game 3 of best-of-7): Los Angeles Lakers vs Miami Heat from 5 am (Monday) on Sony Six, HD

DELHI DHAMAKA

Shreyas leads from front as DC down KKR in run-feast

Sharjah, Oct. 3: Shreyas Iyer showed his class with a captain's knock and pacer Anrich Nortje honoured his skipper's heroics by bowling a splendid penultimate over in Delhi Capitals' 18-run victory over Kolkata Knight Riders in a thrilling IPL match here on Saturday.

Iyer's (88 no off 38 balls) magnificent power-hitting after Prithvi Shaw's opening act propelled Delhi Capitals to an impressive 228 for four after being put into bat first by Dinesh Karthik.

If Iyer and Shaw weren't not enough, Rishabh Pant (38 off 17 balls) dusted off his rustiness with a quickfire knock.

The target was difficult but not impossible but Delhi produced the best effort by a pace bowling unit on a placid track with KKR finishing at 210 for 8.

Harshal Patel, as Ishant Sharma's replacement, did well enough to finish with 2 for 34 in 4 overs while the ever-improving Nortje (3/33 in 4 overs) was also

SCORECARD

Delhi Capitals: P. Shaw c Shubman Gill b Nagarkoti 66, S. Dhawan c Morgan b Varun 26, S. Iyer (not out) 88, R. Pant c Shivam Mavi b Russell 38, M. Stoinis c Varun b Russell 1, S. Hetmyer (not out) 7. **Extras (w 2) 2. Total (for four wickets in 20 overs) 228.** **FoW:** 1-56, 2-129, 3-201, 4-221. **Bowling:** Cummins 4-0-49-0, S. Mavi 3-0-40-0, C. Varun 4-0-49-1, S. Narine 2-0-26-0, A. Russell 4-0-29-2, K. Nagarkoti 3-0-35-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Shubman Gill c Pant b Mishra 28, S. Narine b Nortje 3, N.

Rana c sub (AR Patel) b HV Patel 58, A. Russell c Nortje b Rabada 13, D. Karthik c Dhawan b HV Patel 6, E. Morgan c Hetmyer b Nortje 44, P. Cummins c HV Patel b Nortje 5, R. Tripathi b Stoinis 36, K. Nagarkoti (not out) 3, Shivam Mavi (not out) 1. **Extras (b 4, lb 2, nb 2, w 5) 13. Total (for eight wickets in 20 overs) 210.** **FoW:** 1-8, 2-72, 3-94, 4-117, 5-117, 6-122, 7-200, 8-207. **Bowling:** K. Rabada 4-0-51-1, Nortje 4-0-33-3, R. Ashwin 2-0-26-0, M. Stoinis 4-0-46-1, H. Patel 4-0-34-2, A. Mishra 2-0-14-1.

impressive.

However, it was Kagiso Rabada (1/51 in 4 overs), who dismissed the dangerous Andre Russell (13) cheaply, was taken to task by Eoin Morgan (44 from 18 balls) and Rahul Tripathi (36 off 16 balls) in

the 18th over that got KKR 23 runs.

With 31 to get from 12 balls, Nortje bowled a superb 19th over getting rid of Morgan and only giving five runs in the process.

With 26 needed off the last over,



SHREYAS IYER			
R	B	6s	4s
88	38	6	7

Delhi skipper Shreyas Iyer in action against KKR. — BCCI

Upbeat Sunrisers take on MI

Sharjah, Oct. 3: Boasting an explosive batting line-up that complements their effective death bowling, Mumbai Indians will have their nose ahead in the IPL match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Sunday.

To add to SRH's worry, doubts remained over lead seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar's participation in the match. Bhuvneshwar picked up an injury on Friday night and was unable to complete his final over in the game against Chennai Super Kings. He walked off the field with the help of the team physio.

In the event the experienced seamer misses out, table-toppers Mumbai will fancy their chances more at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium, whose boundaries are much shorter than Dubai and Abu Dhabi and have been a paradise for power-hitters.

The defending champions, having humbled a strong Kings XI Punjab in their last game, are unlikely to make any



Sunrisers Hyderabad's Priyam Garg (left) and Abhishek Sharma. — BCCI

changes to the winning combination. Skipper Rohit Sharma is in sublime form and he can pummel any attack into submission on his day. Rohit has scored 170 runs from four games this season.

While the poor form of Quinton De Kock is worrisome, the prolific Suryakumar Yadav would be more than keen to convert his starts. The

biggest positive for the defending champions is that their middle-order has finally delivered with Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard launching into opposition attacks with their big-hitting prowess. Young Kishan has been the find for MI, after his blistering yet responsible knock against Royal Challengers Bangalore. — PTI

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 13
- SRH won: 7
- Mumbai: 6

MEETING IN 2019

- Mumbai beat Sunrisers by 40 runs at Hyderabad.
- Mumbai beat Sunrisers in Super Over at Mumbai.

FOR THE RECORD

- David Warner holds the record for the most number of 50+ scores in IPL. He has made 48 fifty plus scores (four hundreds and 44 fifties) in 130 innings.

- Trent Boult who has played 99 matches since 2009 will complete his century of matches in T20.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

Hopefully, this year shows these kids what they're capable of.

— DAVID WARNER
SRH captain on performance of youngsters Priyam Garg and Abhishek Sharma

CHENNAI SEEK TURNAROUND IN CLASH OF KINGS

Dubai, Oct. 3: Hit hard by a start that least defines them, Chennai Super Kings would be desperate to find answers to their predicament when they take on Kings XI Punjab in an IPL match here on Sunday.

So used to be on top of their game in the previous editions, sitting at the bottom of the points table now with three losses in four matches is an unknown territory for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led side.

Nothing has worked for them despite having the resources. They even made three changes to their playing XI against Sunrisers Hyderabad but neither comeback of Ambati Rayudu nor the presence of Dwayne Bravo could lift the gloom. A misfiring top-order, save Fav du Plessis, combined with inadequate run-flow in the middle overs and the habit of leaving way too much for the climax, proved to be their bane. — PTI



Kohli back in form, RCB win

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 3: Captain Virat Kohli roared back to form with an unbeaten 72 and stitched a 99-run stand with Devdutt Padikkal (63) to power Royal Challengers Bangalore to a comfortable eight-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here on Saturday.

This was after wrist spinner Yuzvendra Chahal snared three wickets in an impressive bowling show that helped them restrict RR to 154 for 6.

Kohli's knock came off 53 balls with seven fours and two sixes. It was RCB's third win in four matches.

Padikkal yet again produced an impressive innings before he was dismissed by Jofra Archer in the 16th over, after hitting six fours and one six.

Padikkal allowed his captain to get in and settle down before Kohli produced some of his trademark shots later on to accelerate.

The RCB needed 31 runs after Padikkal's dismissal and another in-form batsman AB de Villiers (12 not out) ensured that his side reached the target with five balls to spare.

Having failed to score big in his earlier three innings

SCORECARD

Rajasthan Royals: Jos Buttler c Padikkal b Saini 22, Steve Smith b Udana 5, Sanju Samson c & b Chahal 4, Robin Uthappa c Udana b Chahal 17, Mahipal Lomror c Padikkal b Chahal 47, Riyan Parag c Finch b Udana 16, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 24, Jofra Archer (not out) 16. **Extras (LB-1, NB-1, W-1) 3. Total (for six wickets in 20 overs) 154.** **FoW:** 1-27, 2-31, 3-31, 4-70, 5-105, 6-114. **Bowling:** I. Udana 4-0-41-2, Washington 4-0-20-0, N. Saini 4-1-37-1, Y. Chahal 4-0-24-3, A. Zampa 3-0-27-0, S. Dube 1-0-4-0.

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Devdutt Padikkal b Archer 63, Aaron Finch lbw b Gopal 8, Virat Kohli (not out) 72, AB de Villiers (not out) 12. **Extras (B-1, W-2) 5. Total (for 2 wickets in 19.1 overs) 158.** **FoW:** 1-25, 2-124. **Bowling:** J. Archer 4-0-18-1, J. Unadkat 3-0-31-0, S. Gopal 4-0-27-1, T. Curran 3-1-0-40-0, R. Tewatia 4-0-28-0, R. Parag 1-0-13-0.

(14, 1, 3), Kohli took time to settle down and scored mostly in ones and twos initially.

Padikkal continued his good form with another 54 runs knock. Earlier, Chahal returned with figures of 3/24 from his four overs to restrict RR to 154 for 6. — PTI

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	4	3	1	0	6	+0.588
Royal Challengers Bangalore	4	3	1	0	6	-0.954
Mumbai Indians	4	2	2	0	4	+1.094
Sunrisers Hyderabad	4	2	2	0	4	-0.084
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	2	2	0	4	-0.121
Rajasthan Royals	4	2	2	0	4	-0.317
Kings XI Punjab	4	1	3	0	2	+0.521
Chennai Super Kings	4	1	3	0	2	-0.719

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

NUMBERS GAME — CSK vs KXIP

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 22
- CSK won: 13
- Punjab won: 9

MEETING IN 2019

- Chennai Super Kings defeated Kings XI Punjab by 22 runs at Chennai.
- Kings XI Punjab beat Chennai Super Kings by six wickets at Mohali

FOR THE RECORD

- Mohammed Shami who has taken eight wickets at an average of 14.75 in four innings is the joint highest wicket-taker this edition.

- M.S. Dhoni who has smashed 299 sixes in 287 innings of 321 matches needs just one more to become the 21st batsman to complete a triple century of sixes in T20 cricket

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

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Young guns manifest the richness of Indian cricket



Ayaz Memon
Over The Top

Insane hitting by batsmen, especially in the death overs, has been one of the major talking points of the IPL's second week. Power-hitters like Rohit, Rahul and Samson from the top order, and Pollard and Hardik Pandya as finishers, have peppered the grounds with sixes galore.

Then there is Rahul Tewatia, who hit five sixes in an over to transform defeat into victory for Rajasthan over Punjab, making a Himalayan tar-

get of 223 look like a stroll in the park. And Watson, Warner, Russell, Bairstow, Morgan and Pant — who binge on sixes — haven't yet got into full throttle!

Interestingly, while flat pitches, fast outfielders and small grounds (Sharjah) have enabled several scores of 200+ plus already, apart from two stirring Super Over finishes, bowlers haven't exactly been rendered inconsequential.

Shami, Cummins, Rabada among pacemen

and Chahal and Rashid among spinners have been quite superb. If they've sometimes still finished on the losing side, it is because their batsmen failed them.

For India's superstars, it's been a mixed bag so far. Rohit has hit splendid form and, after losing the first match, has inspired Mumbai to the top of the table as much with his batting as tactical nous in crunch situations.

M.S. Dhoni was able to lift his batting form against Sunrisers yet is still short of the vigour of old that would help him win matches off his own bat. His problems are compounded by the fact that CSK are also bottom of the points table currently. That RCB were able to

clinch a thrilling Super Over climax against Mumbai Indians, and he hit the winning shot, is only small redemption for Virat Kohli. He's otherwise had three batting failures in a row, and despite two victories, RCB still look undercooked.

The highlight of the past week for me, however has been the performance of young Indian players, manifesting the richness of cricket talent in the country as well as the role played by the IPL in exposing them to the world.

Take the match between CSK and SRH on Friday. While Warner and Rashid played big roles in the team's success, it was the rollicking partnership between 19-year-old Priyam Garg and 20-year-

old Abhishek Sharma which turned things around.

All looked lost when Warner and Williamson were dismissed off successive deliveries before Garg and Sharma played with great intrepidity to break CSK's stranglehold. SRH's young bowlers Natarajan, Khaleel and Samad played their part splendidly too.

This is not an isolated example where India's youngsters have shone. KKR, who have invested in Shubman Gill, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Shivam Mavi and Varun Chakravarthy have started reaping rewards already.

Gill is becoming widely regarded as India's best young batsman. Coach Ravi Shastri, who I spoke to, thinks very highly of

him and sees him as someone who should be a "regular fixture for India in all formats."

Leg spinners Ravi Bishnoi (Punjab) and Rahul Chahar (Mumbai) have caught the eye too even if they haven't claimed as many wickets as Chahal or Rashid.

Getting into a slightly older age group, there is Navdeep Saini, Sanju Samson, Prithvi Shaw, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer who are also serving their teams with great efficiency, some of them with excellence.

A bulk of these players have come from the under-19 teams, but the IPL showcases their talent to India's selectors, coaches and captain whose business it is to track performances of

players, especially youngsters. The importance of the IPL in fast-tracking players into the Indian team is evident from what's happened in the past 12 years: R. Ashwin, Rahane, Jadeja, Rahul, even Rohit and Kohli to an extent have benefited from playing in the league.

Of course, not everybody who has excelled in the IPL has made it to the India team or been able to sustain a place, as the examples of Paul Valthaty, Manpreet Gony, Pawan Negi and several others highlight.

Having got the platform and the attention, it is still up to the player to make the most of the opportunity. An India career does not come free, whatever the earnings in the IPL.