

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | WEDNESDAY 4 | NOVEMBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 33°C  
**Min:** 23°C  
**Rainfall:** 2 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Aippasi 19  
**Tithi:** Chaturthi  
**Star:** Mrigashirsham  
**Rahukalam:**  
12 noon to 1.30 pm  
**Yamagadam:**  
7.30 am to 9 am

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 4.50 am  
**Zohar:** 11.58 am  
**Asar:** 3.13 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5.43 pm  
**Isha:** 6.55 pm

**SUNSET TODAY** 5.42 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 6.04 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 8.34 PM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 9.48 AM

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+43,751)	(+440)
83,10,665	1,23,579

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,435 )  
TN: 7,31,942 11,214

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

4,76,06,137

### DEATHS

12,15,485

COUNTRIES,  
AREAS WITH  
CASES 216

worldometers.info

## Top IPS officers shuffled

**Chennai:** In a shakeup at the high echelons of the state police, Director General of Police, Railways, Chennai, C. Sylendra Babu, has been given full additional charge of Director General of Police Civil Supplies CID, a post hitherto held by M. S. Jaffar Sait, who has been shifted to Fire and Rescue Services. Deputy Inspector General of Police A. T. Durai Kumar, who was on repatriation from Central deputation, has been appointed as DIG, Administration, Chennai.

## H'bad man murdered in US, family requests govt help

**Hyderabad:** A 37-year old man from Hyderabad has allegedly been murdered in Georgia in the United States on Sunday night, his family members said here. Mohammed Arif Mohiuddin from Chanchalguda area here, who was running a grocery store in Georgia, was stabbed to death by some persons, they said on Tuesday. In a letter addressed to external affairs minister S. Jaishankar, the man's wife requested him to ask the Indian Embassy in the US to inquire into the reasons of the murder. She also requested for making necessary arrangements through the US Consulate in Hyderabad to issue an emergency visa for her and her father-in-law to enable them to fly to Georgia to attend the final rites of her husband.

## Govt blocks 12 pro-Khalistani websites

**New Delhi:** The government has ordered to block 12 websites linked to pro-Khalistani outfits, a source aware of the development said on Tuesday. Some of the blocked websites were being directly operated by outlawed organisation Sikhs for Justice (SFJ).

## COUNTER POINT



According to this online survey, 30% support Republicans, 31% Democrats, 28% JD(U), 25% RJD...

## CITY | 2

**Tributes pour in for violin maestro T.N. Krishnan**



## WORLD | 5

**Trump claims Harris wants to be President**



## SPORT | 8

**Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Mumbai by 10 wickets**



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# Nitish faces onion attack as he talks about employment

**NAYEAR AZAD | DC**  
PATNA, NOV. 3

Onions were thrown at Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar by some protesters while he was addressing a public meeting in Madhubani which goes to polls in the third phase of Assembly elections on November 7.

Mr Kumar was talking about the state's development and the employment issue when onions and stones came flying at him at the rally in support of his party nominee Sudhanshu Shekhar at Gangaur village ground in Hariakhi Assembly constituency. The onions thrown from a distance fell before reaching the stage.

According to reports from Madhubani, a group of youth present at the rally got angry with Mr Kumar's comments and started throwing onions and stones at him. This is probably the first time that stones and onions were thrown at Bihar CM during an election campaign.

"Khub feko, khub feko, khube feko (keep throwing)... You can keep throwing stones at me. But I ask you to beware of such people who have been promising 10 Lakh jobs as they don't know anything about governance. I can tell you that they have no knowledge about the ABC of governance and cannot do anything. I also ask you not to indulge in all these anti-social activities otherwise nobody will be able to save you," Mr Kumar told the protestors and urged the security men not to pay attention to them.

## PROXY WRITER IN ASSAM JEE MAIN ARRESTED

**MANOJ ANAND | DC**  
GUWAHATI, NOV. 3

In a significant breakthrough in the investigation, police arrested the proxy writer in the Joint Entrance Examination (Mains) scam but the National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducted the Joint Entrance Examination (Main), is yet to respond to the communication made by Guwahati police in connection with the scam.

Informing that proxy writer Bhargav Deka, the owner of a city-based coaching institute Global Edu Light, has been arrested, sources said the police has requested the NTA to give details about the procedures used in the examination and the possible ways that might have been used by the proxy candidate to appear in the examination on behalf of Neel Nakshyatra Das, who topped the exam in the state.

## 53 per cent voting in Bihar's second phase

**NAYEAR AZAD | DC**  
**WITH AGENCY INPUTS**  
PATNA, NOV. 3

Over 53 per cent of voting was recorded in the second phase of Bihar Assembly elections on Tuesday as voting took place in 94 constituencies across 17 districts. The voting percentage figure is likely to go up as voting continued beyond schedule in several places, the Election Commission said.

The second phase is crucial for both the NDA as well as the Opposition alliance being led by the Rashtriya Janata Dal. For one, it will decide the fate of RJD leader and grand alliance's chief ministerial face Tejashwi Yadav. In this phase the

JD(U) has fielded candidates on 43 seats, the BJP on 46. From the Grand Alliance, the RJD fielded candidates on 52 seats, Congress on 24 and three Left parties on 14 seats.

The RJD is locked in a direct fight with the BJP on 28 seats and with the JD(U) in 24 seats.

The Congress is contesting 12 seats each against the BJP and JD(U).

While reports suggest that Tejashwi Yadav has the support of don turned politician Rama Singh from his seat, his elder brother Tej Pratap, who had won from Mahua seat in 2015, and is now contesting from Hasanpur, is locked in a tough battle against two-time sitting JD(U) MLA Raj Kumar Rai.

## Cong has not even 100 MPs, says PM

**NAYEAR AZAD | DC**  
PATNA, NOV. 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday mocked at the shrinking numbers of the Congress in both Houses of Parliament. "Even if they combine the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, they won't find even 100 MPs," the Prime Minister said, addressing election rallies in two places Bihar.

■ **Full report on P4**

## Modi, Nitish looted Bihar, says Rahul

**Katihar (Bihar), Nov. 3:** Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged they have "looted" Bihar, and claimed that people have decided to vote them out of power.

Addressing a poll rally here, Mr Gandhi criticised the government over demonetisation, migrant crisis, GST, handling of Covid-19.

■ **Report on P4**

# Punjab CM to hold protest against Prez

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 3

Protesting over President Ram Nath Kovind's refusal to meet him over the Centre's new farm laws, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh will lead a "relay dharna" of Congress MLAs from his state at Rajghat in the capital on Wednesday.

Mr Singh had sought an appointment with the President to seek his assent to the agriculture

### FARM BILLS

Bills passed by the Punjab Assembly which, if passed would negate the Centre's farm laws.

But the state government said that the Rashtrapati Bhavan has declined his request for an appointment.

Following this, the Chief Minister decided to hold a relay dharna at Rajghat.

He said since Section 144 of the CrPC – which prohibits assembly of more

than four people – is in force in the national capital, MLAs will go from Delhi's Punjab Bhawan to Mahatma Gandhi's samadhi in groups of four to hold a relay protest.

Mr Singh will lead the first batch at 10.30 am.

The chief minister has urged Punjab legislators from other parties to participate as well.

He said the protest in Delhi will highlight the sit-

uation in the state because of the suspension of goods trains by the Centre.

Railways has stopped running trains to Punjab, saying farmers protesting the farm laws are blocking the tracks. However, the Punjab government claimed that the farmers have eased the blockade and are allowing goods trains to run. Thermal power plants are shutting down in the state because of lack of coal, the Punjab government said.

# Terror convict kills 4 in Vienna, shot dead

**Vienna, Nov. 3:** Five people died, including an assailant, and 17 others were wounded in a shooting in the heart of Vienna hours before a coronavirus lockdown started, Austrian authorities said on Tuesday.

The dead attacker was a 20-year-old Austrian-North Macedonian dual national who had a previous terror conviction.

Two men and two women died from their injuries in

the attack Monday evening, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said. The suspected attacker was shot and killed by police.

Vienna's hospital service said seven people were in life-threatening condition on Tuesday after the attack, the Austrian news agency APA reported. In total, 17 people were being treated in hospitals, with gunshot wounds but also cuts. "It is now confirmed that yester-

● **People were urged to stay at home if possible on Tuesday and children did not have to go to school**

day's attack was clearly an Islamist terror attack," Mr Kurz said.

"It was an attack out of hatred — hatred for our fundamental values, hatred for our way of life, hatred for

our democracy in which all people have equal rights and dignity."

Interior Minister Karl Nehammer later told APA that the dead assailant, who had roots in the Balkan nation of North Macedonia, had a previous conviction under a law that punishes membership in terrorist organisations. The attacker, named as Kujtim Fejzulai, was sentenced to 22 months in prison in April 2019

because he had tried to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State group. He was granted early release in December under juvenile law.

Authorities were trying to determine whether further attackers may be on the run. People were urged to stay at home if possible on Tuesday and children did not have to go to school. Some 1,000 police officers were on duty in Vienna on Tuesday morning. — AP

## MISTY MORNING



Chennai has been witnessing misty mornings for the last few days. As the met department had predicted, NE monsoon showers began lashing the city late Tuesday night. . ■ **Report on P2**

— DC

## China confirms meet on Ladakh as 'Malabar' begins

**DC ORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 3

India and three other 'Quad' countries — US, Japan and Australia — on Tuesday started the naval exercise 'Malabar' in Bay of Bengal even as China confirmed to another round of Corps Commanders meeting on Ladakh standoff and a mutual agreeable date is being worked out. The 8th round of Corps Commanders level meeting is now likely to be held on Friday, said sources.

It will be first meeting under the new commander of Leh based 14 Corps also known as 'Fire & Fury Corps' Lt Gen PGK Menon.

While India is trying to peacefully resolve the six month military standoff with China through negotiations, it is also forming up strategic alliances with other nations. This is reflected by India's invitation to Australia to participate in Malabar naval exercise and signing Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) with US last week.

■ **Full report on P4**



People offer worship at a temple at Thulasendrapuram near Mannargudi for the victory of Kamala Harris on Tuesday. ■ **Reports on P3 and P5**

— DC



## SHORT TAKES

## NE monsoon to gather momentum

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Northeast monsoon is likely to pick up pace and bring widespread rainfall to the city, coastal belt and interior districts from Wednesday, as per reports. Chennai is expected to receive rains late in the night or early in the mornings from Wednesday.

The India Meteorological Department officials said due to cyclonic circulation that is closer to Tamil Nadu coast and southwest Bay of Bengal, the interior districts of Tamil Nadu will receive rains during the day starting November 4. Weather enthusiasts have also forecast that while this spell is likely to continue till November 8, the remnants of Cyclone Goni, which recently hit the Philippines, will bring more rains with it.

Private weather blogger Pradeep John, who goes by the name Tamil Nadu Weatherman, said that monsoon will be active throughout November and most of December and that the next round of rains will likely be around November 10 when the Goni's remnants arrive with rain-bearing clouds.

Meanwhile, weather watchers said MJO or Madden Julian Oscillation, a climate phenomenon, likely entering phase 2-3 could act in favour of the monsoon and help bring stronger weather systems possibly in the second half of November.

## Customs team seize gold, one arrested

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

The Chennai airport customs seized gold weighing 1.11 kg worth ₹58.6 lakhs and arrested a smuggler.

On Tuesday, the officials stopped Shahul Hameed (40, of Pasipattinam, Tamil Nadu who arrived from Dubai by Indigo Flight No. 6E 66 on suspicion of carrying gold. four packet of gold paste weighing 850 grams were recovered from his hand bag. On extraction 740 grams of gold of 24K purity valued at ₹38.9 lakhs was recovered and seized under Customs Act. He was arrested by the department.

In a case reported on Monday, Mohamed Sajamkhan Kalandar Ayubkhan (23) of Ramanathapuram, who arrived from Dubai by Indigo flight No 6E-66 was intercepted at exit. On questioning he confessed of carrying gold paste bundles concealed in rectum. On personal search 5 bundles of gold paste weighing 437 grams were recovered from rectum.

Total 375 grams of gold valued at 19.70 lakhs was recovered. A total of 1.11 kg gold of 24K purity valued at ₹ 58.6 lakhs was recovered and the same was seized under Customs Act 1962. Further investigation is under progress.

**On extraction 740 grams of gold of 24K purity valued at ₹38.9 lakhs was recovered and seized under Customs Act. He was arrested by the department**

Lift cracker ban, association urges Rajasthan government  
Crackers non-toxic, in compliance with SC ruling, say manufacturersA. ARUL PALANI | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

More than 70 per cent of firecracker manufacturers in Sivakasi, Virudhunagar district, have switched over to making safe, green firecrackers as mandated by the Supreme Court. The Tamil Nadu Fireworks and Amorcres Manufacturers' Association (TANFAMA), Sivakasi, are raising awareness among firecracker manufacturers about 'green firecrackers', and the remaining 30 per cent units also would produce 'green firecrackers' shortly.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, P. Ganeshan, president, TANFAMA, said, "After the verdict passed by the Supreme Court last year, TANFAMA is engaged in raising awareness among the manufacturers and workers. Now, most units are producing green crackers for this Deepavali. Soon the remaining companies, mostly small units, will also follow suit."

Sivakasi and neighbouring areas roughly house 1,070 fire cracker manufac-

## Alagiri bats for green crackers of Sivakasi

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

TNCC president K. S. Alagiri has urged Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot to reconsider the blanket ban on sales of fireworks for Deepavali in that state and permit the sales and use of Sivakasi made 'green crackers' that an environment-friendly.

The Supreme Court driven Green Innovation, guided by the CSIR-NEERI and ratified by the

turing units and over three lakh workers depend directly on the units for livelihood, and nearly five lakh others depend on allied works. The companies register sales of Rs 2,000 crore every year. Due to the pandemic, sales have been slow now. However, 70 to 80 per cent of



Central Pollution Control Board, has led to launch of a whole new range of fireworks in which a new chemical agent Barium

firecrackers have been dispatched to all other states.

Ganeshan said, cracker units do not use any banned substance in making crackers. Hence, crackers made in Tamil Nadu are safe and do not emit dangerous gases during explosions. Meanwhile, TANFAMA is

Nitrate was being used instead of sulphur in light-emitting crackers, Alagiri explained in his letter to Gehlot.

He said the MSME units at Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district together employed 60 lakh people, who are poor and hail from the marginalized local communities. Besides, the industry had created a supply chain that involved small traders, transporters and wholesalers throughout the country, he said.

pained to note that firecrackers have been banned in Rajasthan due to the pandemic. The association has urged the Rajasthan government to lift the ban. In a tweet, DMK president MK Stalin also stated that the Rajasthan government's decision to ban the sale of

**More than eight lakh workers are dependent directly and indirectly on fire cracker units in Sivakasi and surrounding villages for their survival. The ban by the Rajasthan government will be disastrous for the fireworks industry and the livelihood of nearly eight lakh workers and other people involved in the business is under threat now. This will result in total closure of the industry in Sivakasi**

firecrackers is adding misery to the lives of millions of workers in the fireworks industry who are already struggling for survival due to Covid-19. To safeguard their livelihood, I urge the Rajasthan Chief Minister to reconsider & revoke the ban."

Expressing their gratitude to DMK president MK Stalin for opposing the ban, TANFAMA said, "We thank you for your continuous support to the fireworks industry all these years, and now, we plead your help in revoking the ban imposed by the Rajasthan government in the sale of crackers. The fireworks industry in Sivakasi is now facing a threat of closure.

The Rajasthan government had banned the use

and sale of fireworks for this Deepavali citing corona as the reason. TANFAMA pointed out that crackers release mainly nitrogen gas only, which is inert, harmless, non-toxic and constitutes 78 per cent of atmospheric air we breathe. Hence, they do not pose a threat to the environment.

The crackers are manufactured as per Supreme Court guidelines with very low emissions and do not contain any poisonous or banned chemicals. Also these formulations have been recommended by CSIR-NEERI and also approved by the Central pollution control board (CPCB) and Union Ministry of Environment and Forest Climatic Change.

## Waterbodies get lifeline



A view of restored Jayachandran Nagar pond in Zone 14.

## 33 ponds, 7 community wells inaugurated after restoration

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Minister for municipal administration S.P. Velumani on Tuesday inaugurated as many as 33 restored ponds and renovated seven community wells by the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), at a cost of ₹23.90 crore.

According to officials, the ponds including Padavattamman Koil street pond in M a d h a v a r a m , Manjambakkam pond in

Manali, Pari Nagar tank in Ambattur, Vanagaram main road pond and Anjanaiyar Koil pond in Valasaravakkam were renovated under various schemes like 'Chennai Mega City Development Mission Fund', 'Smart City Mission Fund' and other funds donated by companies under corporate social responsibility.

The restoration process involved clearing up of bushes, establishment of concrete bunds and desilting covering about 4.43 lakh sq.mts. The civic

body had identified 210 ponds and 35 community wells for restoration and re-designing.

The rest of them are still under work.

The concept of community wells was implemented by the GCC after being inspired by designs of wells in Kerala.

The civic body designed them as watermelon slices, boats, tea cups for aesthetic appeal. They also created draining points that would enable excess street water to percolate into them.

## Prior to theatres re-opening, owners want issues solved

T. SUDHEESH | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Even as the government issued standard operating procedures (SOP) for opening cinemas, theatre owners now look to resolve the long-standing virtual print fee (VPF) issue, as it reopened for the quick revival of the industry which has been shut for the last eight months.

Tiruppur Subramaniam, president, Tamil Nadu Theatre and Multiplex Owners' Association, said that they were eager to get back to business as the government has given nod to open it with SOPs.

"We are happy to open cinema theatres. There is no question on the safety of film lovers as we are going to run the show with all government-mandated safety measures. If you go to the market and shopping centres, people are now going without any fear. Likewise, people will flow naturally to the

cinemas once it is opened," he added.

Members of the Tamil Film Active Producers' Association (TFAPA) have raised some long standing issues including abolishing the virtual print fee (VPF) that is to be resolved before opening of theatres.

TFAPA has placed three main demands including abolition of the virtual print fee (VPF), re-negotiation for theatrical revenue-sharing formula and a share in the revenue made via online ticketing. VPF is a charge paid by the producer to digital service providers to screen movies in theatres.

TFAPA vice-president and producer G. Dhananjayan told DC that they were determined in the issue of VPF. "We have called a meeting on Wednesday to discuss the matter. We are optimistic in arriving at an amicable solution. If there is no solution, there will be no

new release of cinemas. We look forward to avoiding such a situation especially during this pandemic period," he said.

Meanwhile, DNC Elangovan, treasurer, Tamil Nadu Theatre and Multiplex Owners' Association, said that the issues will be resolved through dialogue. We hope to resume business as usual within a couple of months once theatres are opened. We plan to re-release old films in the first phase, after which producers will come forward to release new movies," he told DC.

According to TFAPA, they are being forced to pay VPF charges while Hollywood is exempted from it. Theatre owners argue that the cost of equipment is even higher in India because of the 35 per cent import duties in the country, not just for the equipment, but also for all spares and consumables.

## Three tonnes of sea cucumber worth ₹1 crore seized in TN

**Rameswaram (TN), Nov 3:** Sea cucumber weighing three tonnes and meant to be smuggled to Sri Lanka was seized from Vethalai near here on Tuesday, police said.

Two people were arrested in this connection.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of police and forest personnel seized sea cucumber weighing 3,000

**Acting on a tip-off, a team of police and forest personnel seized sea cucumber weighing 3,000 kg and a van used to transport**

kg and a van used to transport it from a farm in Vethalai near Mandapam. The value of the seized sea cucumber in the international market was over

## Medical rank list on November 16

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

The rank list for the medical and dental courses in the state will be released on Nov 16 and counselling for the admissions would start a couple of days after that, health minister C. Vijayabaskar said on Tuesday.

At least 304 of the total 4043 seats in the medical colleges would definitely go to students who studied in government schools this year, thanks to 7.5 reservation brought in by the state government, Vijayabaskar said while speaking to the media at the coronavirus control room at the DMS premises in Chennai.

Though continuous monitoring of the coronavirus spread had brought the positivity rate down, a fear of a second surge loomed over the state in view of the coming festival and winter seasons, he said, urging the people to be careful and cooperate with the government by adhering to safety norms.

At least or another three months people would have to wear masks and maintain social distancing in public places as the coming days could be challenging, he said.

Though the government was strict on implementation of safety norms and had collected Rs eight crore fine for not wearing facemasks and failure to maintain social distancing in public places, the Minister said that people had to be more responsible in preventing a second surge.

Compared to many other states, Tamil Nadu had done well in controlling the spread of the virus by conducting one crore RT-PCR tests so far, the minister said. Test results were made available in 10 hours in the state when it took three to four days for the results to be announced even in many Western countries, he said. The state had 203 labs doing the Covid-19 tests and most of them were government-run, he said. Also there were 1,39,000 beds for coronavirus patients in the state, which had brought down the daily death rate from 129 at one point of time to 30 a day now, he said.

**At least or another three months people would have to wear masks and maintain social distancing in public places as the coming days could be challenging, he said**

Rs 1 crore, officials said.

The sea cucumber is classified as endangered species and covered under the Wildlife Protection Act and their harvest prohibited.

The marine species is in demand in Sri Lanka and other South East Asian countries for use as a delicacy and in preparing medicines. —PTI

## TNK: A perfect accompanist preferred by senior artistes

B. VIJAYALAKSHMI | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Tributes poured in for eminent violinist T. N. Krishnan, who died on Monday night at the age of 92, with Prime Minister Modi, CM Palaniswami and Carnatic musicians mourning the maestro's demise and recalling his rich contributions. Considered one of the violin trinity along with Lalgudi Jayaraman and M. S. Gopalakrishnan, T. N. Krishnan had accompanied several veterans like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar and Madurai Mani Iyer, before becoming a solo performer enthralling his rasikas.

A recipient of numerous awards, including Padma Vibhushan and Sangita Kalanidhi, TNK had stints as teacher with Music College here and School of Music and Fine Arts at University of Delhi.

With the passing away of the violin doyen, the carnatic music world has lost one of the last links to the golden era of the 20th century. Recalling about professor T. N. Krishnan, Padma



Bhushan and Sangita Kalanidhi Trichur V. Ramachandran said, "My guru G.N. Balasubramaniam spotted the talent of young player TNK. He accompanied him in hundreds of concerts. He supported GNB in a very big way with constant bowing and tonal value which was a great boon during mikeless days. He never overdid as an accompanist and during his turn he played compact raga *alapana*s and *swara prasthara*s without overshadowing the vocal artiste. He was a perfect accompanist preferred by all the senior artistes of the bygone era. I had the good fortune of learning violin from him at the Music College in the

early 70s. He encouraged me during my vocal concert in 1971 during the December music season. He offered to play for me in the afternoon sub-senior slot. It was a magnanimous gesture on his part and I won the first prize. He had played many concerts with me."

Musician Charumathi Ramachandran, disciple of M. L. Vasanthakumari, said Krishnan was known as 'Master' Krishnan, a prodigy, as he started playing major concerts at the age of seven. He had played for stalwarts like Chembai, Ariyakudi, Semmangudi, GNB, Madurai Mani, Madurai Somasundaram, Sathur Subramaniam and Alathur brothers in his 85-

Trichur V. Ramachandran accompanied by T.N.Krishnan on the violin and Vellore Ramabhadran on the mridangam at a concert.

— Photo by special arrangement.

year-long concert career, both as accompanist and a soloist. GNB loved Krishnan like a brother and they enjoyed having Chinese food at restaurants, she added.

"His music will live forever and guide musicians like me," said vocalist Papanasam Ashok Ramani.

Prime Minister Modi condoled Krishnan's death, saying his demise has left a "big void" in the world of music. "The demise of noted violinist Shri TN Krishnan leaves a big void in the world of music. His works beautifully encapsulated a wide range of emotions and strands of our culture. He was also an outstanding mentor to young musicians. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om

Shanti," he said in a tweet.

Chief Minister K. Palaniswami hailed Krishnan as a humble and affable person. "His death is a great loss to the world of music and culture," he said in a statement. Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said he was "distressed to learn about the passing away of a legendary violinist." Sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan described Krishnan as a rare musical gem. Amit Shah said as a gifted musician, Krishnan captured the imagination of several generations with his 'breathtaking' compositions. Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit said Krishnan's contributions to Carnatic music will be remembered forever. "His demise is an irreparable loss to the people of India, particularly to all the Carnatic music lovers across the globe," he said in his message. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, BJP president J.P. Nadda, minister of state for external affairs V. Muraleetharan and several musicians condoled the demise of Krishnan.

— With agency inputs

## Lure of Marina sands



Families enjoying the evening at Marina beach. Most of them take the Nochikuppam route to reach Marina sands as police have banned entry.

— DC



## SHORT TAKES

## Floating ganja bundles in sea recovered

DC CORRESPONDENT  
PUDUKKOTTAI, NOV. 3

The coastal security police recovered ganja bundles weighing 104 kgs allegedly meant for smuggling to Sri Lanka, floating on the sea water off shore Kottaipatnam in Pudukkottai district late on Monday night. Police said the ganja bundles were recovered from the sea by three different fishermen who were engaged in fishing, and they informed the coastal security police about it. Police recovered the same and are investigating.

## Origin of Deepavali temple festivities

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THANJAVUR, NOV. 3

The origin of celebration of deepavali festival in temples dates back to the 16th century, said Dr Kudavayil Balasubramanian, temple researcher and epigraphist. In a press release issued here on Tuesday, he said that Tamil inscriptions in Tirumala Tirupati temple and a copper plate found in Tiruvavur district, corroborate this. The inscription in Tirumala temple was inscribed in 1542. "It reveals the message of contribution as 'deepavali naal adhirasap padi erandu' which means adhirasams were offered to the Lord on Deepavali festival, 478 years ago. Similarly, a copper plate found in Tiruvavur district speaks about special ablutions performed at Ponvaithanathar temple at Sithaimur on Deepavali day by villagers and government officials jointly from donations from their salary, known as 'Cooley pichai'. These two evidences reveal the origin of deepavali celebrations in temples, said Balasubramanian.

## 1 more succumbs to corona in Pondy, toll rises to 596

Puducherry, Nov. 3: Puducherry logged one more death on Tuesday due to Covid-19, pushing the toll to 596 while 149 new cases were registered, raising the tally to 35,325.

The fresh cases were identified at the end of examination of 4,004 samples today.

Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said the fatality and recovery rates were 1.69 percent and 91.39 percent respectively.

He said 457 patients were discharged during the last 24 hours.

Of the 3.17 lakh samples tested so far, 2.79 lakh were found to be negative and the result of examination of remaining samples was awaited.

The Director said of the total 35,325 coronavirus cases 2,445 were active, 32,284 patients recovered and were discharged.

Of the 149 fresh cases reported today, Puducherry region accounted for 92 cases followed by Mahe 37, Karaikal 13 and Yanam seven. The person who died of the viral infection was 76 year old and had severe covid pneumonia.

— PTI

## Complacency setting in?



People flock to Big Bazaar street for festive shopping throwing caution to the winds in Coimbatore. — DC

## DMK for action against offending posters

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Drawing the attention of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Satyabrata Sahoo to the posters comparing DMK president M. K. Stalin with Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami that were put up all over the state, the DMK demanded action against those who were behind that illegal act.

Besides presenting a representation to the CEO, DMK representatives R. S. Bharathi and others also stressed on the need for conducting free and fair elections at the all party meeting called on Tuesday to brief the parties on the work relating to the special summary revision of electoral rolls for 2021.

The DMK called the appearance of posters as a 'blatant abuse of authority' and said the lack of details on the identity of the person or the printing press were in violation of 153 IPC, Section 3 of the Registration of the Books (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act 1857



and Section 4 of the Tamil Nadu Open Places Act 1953.

The meeting was attended by representatives of various political parties. AIADMK's Pollachi Jayaraman said that applicants had been received from 10 lakh voters for making changes in the electoral rolls, like address change and son. Of them 80 per cent of the applications had been received online.

He said special camps would be conducted on four days to help voters update their details on the electoral rolls and added that the Election Commission had agreed to increase the number of polling booths in the coming election in view of the pandemic.

DMDK representative Parthasarathy said a

demand was made to enable people to cast their votes from their homes but the Commission had made the arrangement for those above 80 years of age. He also wanted voter identity cards to be issued to those who enrolled afresh or made changes immediately, adding that as of now it was taking a long time.

Bharathi referred to the case of many names missing from the electoral rolls in the last elections, referring to an instance of several thousands of people being not able to vote in Kanyakumari district.

He said names should not be deleted without informing the local booth agents, who would be able to ascertain if the particular voter was not in that address or not. He said that he had information of an MP giving out a list of names to be deleted and such incidents should not happen. Those making changes online were from affluent homes, he said adding that measures should be taken to enable the common people, too, do it without effort.

## Puja in ancestral village for Kamala Harris' poll win

G. SRINIVASAN | DC  
THANJAVUR, NOV. 3

The US election 2020 had its echo in a nondescript village near Mannargudi, on Tuesday. Pujas were performed by people of Painkanadu village near Mannargudi, the place where the ancestors of US vice-president candidate of Indian-origin Kamala Harris of the Democratic party belong. They offered prayers for the victory of Kamala Harris at the temple at Thulasendrapuram, which is said to be the temple worshipped by her

grandparents.

Annadhanam was also organised in which Kamala's favourite food item like idli was served along with vada and rice for villagers.

Sudhakar of Painkanadu said the family of Kamala Harris has been donating till date to the Dharماشasta temple at Thulasendrapuram. Her name is also found in an epigraph in the temple. People of Painkanadu and Thulasendrapuram are happy that Kamala had risen to such a level to contest the US election as the vice-president candi-

date of the Democrats.

"We organised this worship for her victory. We hope she will win, and our wish is that she should visit this temple and offer worship after her victory," said Sudhakar.

Painkanadu and Thulasendrapuram hogged the limelight after Kamala was announced vice-president candidate. Though her ancestors left the place many years back, their link with the temple continues and people of the village recall her roots, and proudly proclaim that her ancestors lived there.

## BJP confident of taking out Vetrivel yatra

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

State BJP president L. Murugan exuded confidence on the state government giving permission to the proposed one month Vetrivel yatra from November 6, which would be attended by the party national leaders including the chief J. P. Nadda.

Speaking to the media at the party headquarters on Tuesday after a meeting with Governor Banwarilal Purohit, the state president said all arrangements were being made to take out the yatra, which would be used to highlight the achievement of the Narendra Modi government at the Centre.

Political opponents of the BJP were shaken by the prospect of the yatra getting public support that they were opposing it, he said, adding that the apprehensions raised over the yatra disturbing public peace and harmony were unfounded.

Those who are opposed to the yatra were the ones who really wanted to foment trouble, Murugan said. A Ramar yatra taken out two years back in the state was peaceful, he said.



BJP president L. Murugan meets Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and thanks him for bringing the bill providing 7.5 per cent quota for government school students in medical courses.

— DC

He said that he met the Governor in the morning to thank him for giving his approval for the Bill providing for 7.5 per cent reservation for government school students in medical courses and meet the Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami personally and thank him

for bringing in the Bill.

Clarifying that the BJP was still in the AIADMK-led alliance, Murugan appreciated Palaniswami for the good work done by his government, particularly on the Covid-19 management.

Asked about the seat-sharing for the 2021 elec-

tions, he said the BJP would make a demand for seats based on its electoral strength.

In the last election the BJP was the deciding factor in 90 seats and came second in 35 seats when it contested the Assembly elections alone, Murugan claimed.

## Two women among four killed in accidents

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUTHURAIPONDI, NOV.3

Four persons including two women were killed in two accidents in Tiruvavur and Tiruchy districts, on Tuesday.

Police said three persons including two women were killed in Melamaruthur village near Thiruthuraipondi. The deceased were identified as Kamala (50) and Vijayalakshmi (55). The two had taken shelter under a concrete pillar of the ongoing construction work of the railway overbridge between Thiruthuraipondi and Agasthiyampalli. Meanwhile, the driver of a minivan engaged in the construction works lost control of the vehicle and fatally knocked down the women, before capsizing into a nearby irrigation canal.

Neighbours rescued the driver Thangapandiyan (25) to the government hospital, Thiruthuraipondi, where he died. Thiruthuraipondi police are investigating.

In another accident, a 28-year-old private company employee was fatally knocked down along with his two-wheeler by a speeding lorry near Gundur on the Tiruchy-Pudukkottai national highway in Tiruchy district, on Tuesday.

## School teachers stunned as students turn up for classes

ZAKEER HUSSAIN | DC  
SALEM, NOV. 3

School teachers in the government school in Kattur village here were in for a surprise as a few students, thinking that the school had re-opened, came in to attend classes along with their lunch boxes.

The amazed teachers sent back the children home, stating that the

school had not re-opened after the pandemic.

Work on distributing textbooks and uniforms for the second term for school children from class-1 to class-7 were underway at the panchayat union elementary school, Kattur village, in Salem district.

The teachers had informed parents about this, and had asked them to collect the books and

uniforms from the school.

Mistaking this, over 20 students came to the school with lunch on Tuesday, under the assumption that the school had re-opened.

The teachers sent the children home. Before leaving for their houses, the children had their lunch at school, sitting in the usual lunch area in school.



State transport minister M.R. Vijayabaskar addresses the media about Deepavali special buses. — DC

## Promotion or appointment can never be claimed as a matter of right, says HC

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Holding that promotion or appointment can never be claimed as a matter of right, the Madras high court has said an amendment issued by the employer in respect of the educational qualifications will not construe any legal right for the employees so as to challenge the same on the ground that they should be given promotion or appointment based on the old educational qualifications prescribed in pre-amendment rules.



Justice S.M. Subramaniam gave the ruling while dismissing a petition from S. Meenakshi, a group-IV

employee of Tangedco, challenging the amendments to Regulation 94 of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board Service Regulations issued by Tangedco dated May 24, 2014, (enhancing the educational qualification from SSLC to that of a degree to the post of junior assistant) and consequently direct the authorities to promote her to the post of junior assistant (accounts) on par with her junior with all attendant and monetary benefits.

The judge said in a developing nation, change in educational qualifications and

other criteria or enhancing the qualifications is certainly imminent to provide constant progress in respect of the development of our great nation. Advancement of educational qualifications, verification of antecedents, transparency and equal opportunity are the essential characters for the purpose of undertaking the process of appointment or promotions. The improvements in the service conditions are certainly required not only for the development of the organization, but also to provide effective public

administration by the state as well as by the Union. This court is of an undoubted opinion that consistent and constant review of all these factors are certainly required and a periodical review will be of more effect in respect of the development of our great nation. "It is desirable that an expert committee, by the state or state owned organizations is to be constituted for the purpose of developing and improving not only the service conditions, but also the other rules in this regard", the judge added.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

The state transport department has made elaborate arrangements to operate 14,757 special buses across the state during Deepavali festival for the benefit of the people, said transport minister M.R. Vijayabaskar. The special buses would be operated from for three days from November 11.

Similarly, 16,026 special buses will be operated from various parts of the state after Deepavali for four days from November 15 to enable the commuters to return from native places. The minister has made the announcement after reviewing the arrangement in a meeting in the Secretariat on Tuesday.

The buses bound for Uthukottai, Khalahasthi, Thirupathi, Nellore and towards Andhra Pradesh will be operated from Madhavaram new bus stand

Tiruchy to other parts of the state.

For the benefit of passengers proceeding to other parts of state from Chennai, the department has set up special bus stops at five places — Madhavaram, MTC bus depot at KK Nagar, MPEZ at Tambaram and Tambaram Railway station, Poonamallee bus depot and Koyambedu CMBT.

The buses bound for Uthukottai, Khalahasthi, Thirupathi, Nellore and towards Andhra Pradesh will be operated from Madhavaram new bus stand.

The buses proceeding to Puducherry, Cuddalore, Chidambaram via ECR will leave from KK Nagar MTC bus depo.

Buses bound for

Tindivanam, Panruti, Kumbakonam and Tanjore will leave from Arignar Anna Bus stand at MPEZ, Tambaram.

Buses proceeding towards Tindivanam, Neyveli, Tiruvannamalai, Gingee, Cuddalore and Chidambaram will leave from Tambaram Railway station. Buses proceeding towards Vellore, Arani, Hosur, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Kancheepuram and Tirutani will leave from Poonamallee bus depot.

Buses proceeding to places other than the above and Tiruchy, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Thoothukudi, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Dindugal, Salem, Ramanathapuram and towards Andhra Pradesh will leave from CMBT, Koyambedu.

The MTC management will operate shuttle service between these make shift bus depots. Reservation counters will function at CMBT, MPEZ and Poonamallee bus depot.

## Woman electrocuted, kin protest

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, NOV. 3

Tension prevailed for some time in front of Pallavaram police station in the city when family members of a 68-year-old woman who had died of an electric shock from a loosely hanging electric wire, staged a protest on Tuesday.

The deceased has been identified as Fathima, from

Kayalpattinam village in Thoothukudi. Fathima arrived at the city on Monday to attend the memorial service of her relative in Chromepet who died recently. Police said, while she was doing some chores, she touched an electric wire hanging loosely at a low level. She suffered burns and was rushed to the Kilpauk medical college hospital, however she died

on the way.

Irrked by the negligence of the electricity board officials, the family members of the deceased and some locals gathered in front of the Pallavaram police station and held a protest. They staged a protest demanding justice for the deceased.

The villagers alleged that Fathima had died due to negligence of the electrici-

ty department. They said though many power lines through fields hang at low levels, officials did not address the issue, which caused her death. Mount DC Prabhakaran arrived at the spot and held a talk with the protestors. The agitators called off the protest after getting assurances from officials. Pallavaram police have registered a case.



## IN BRIEF

SC UNHAPPY  
WITH PENDENCY  
OF PETITION

From Page 1

It asked counsel to apprise the court as to how it can request the Governor to take decision and what are the laws on the issue.

The top court then asked advocate Balaji Srinivasan, appearing for Tamil Nadu, as to why the state government cannot request the Governor to pass order without any specific order from the court.

Srinivasan said that Governor had sought report of the MDMA.

The bench then told assistant solicitor general K.M. Nataraj, appearing for Centre, as to whether any request has been made by the state to send the report of MDMA.

He replied that the larger conspiracy probe is going on and the investigation is spread over various countries like in United Kingdom and Sri Lanka.

The bench told the ASG that the larger conspiracy theory is to find out if any other person, besides those convicted in the matter, are involved in this.

"It is not with respect to those who are convicted and are in jail. You look at it," the bench told Nataraj, adding that the larger conspiracy probe is pending for almost 20 years.

It said that even after almost two decades of probe in the larger conspiracy aspect, the Centre is saying that it is in the process of getting response for Letter Rogatories (letters of request from a court to a foreign court for some type of judicial assistance) sent to various countries.

"You (Nataraj) look at it and tell us," the bench said, while posting the matter for further hearing on November 23.

The state government had earlier told the top court that that the Cabinet has already passed a resolution on September 9, 2018 and recommended to the Governor for the premature release of all seven convicts in the case.

On January 21, the apex court had asked the state government to inform whether a decision has been taken by it on a pardon petition of a convict in the case.

Perarivalan's counsel had earlier said his role was only limited to procuring nine-volt batteries, which were allegedly used in the improvised explosive device (IED) that had killed Gandhi.

The top court had earlier dismissed a plea of Perarivalan seeking recall of the May 11, 1999, verdict upholding his conviction.

The CBI had earlier submitted that Perarivalan had even visited Jaffna in Sri Lanka in the first week of June 1990, besides attending a public meeting along with other conspirators which was addressed by former Prime Minister V P Singh on May 7, 1991 in Tamil Nadu.

Perarivalan's counsel had submitted that he was just a 19-year-old when the incident took place and had no knowledge of what he was doing and for what purpose the batteries were purchased. — PTI

BJP MLA FOR  
ACTION AGAINST  
BACHCHANBHAGWAN PARAB | DC  
MUMBAI, NOV. 3

The *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (KBC) show on the Sony TV has courted yet another controversy. A Maharashtra BJP MLA has accused veteran actor Amitabh Bachchan and the makers of the popular TV show of allegedly hurting Hindu sentiments.

Abhimanyu Pawar, BJP legislator from Ausa in Latur district, on Tuesday filed a complaint at Latur police seeking action against Mr Bachchan and Sony Entertainment Television, the makers of KBC, for a question about religious text Manusmriti.

On October 30, in the Karamveer special episode of KBC, Mr Bachchan, the host of the show, had asked contestants activist Bezawada Wilson and actor Anup Soni: "On 25th December 1927, Dr BR Ambedkar and his followers burned copies of which scripture?" The options given to the contestants were: Vishnu Purana, Bhagavad Gita, Rigveda and Manusmriti.

Mr Bachchan said the answer was Manusmriti and then explained Ambedkar's actions. The BJP MLA said that all the four options of the question pertained to the Hindu religion. "It is clear that the motive behind this question was to hurt the sentiments of Hindus," he alleged.

## Record 89.8 p.c vote in Nagaland

Moderate to high voting in bypolls for 54 Assembly seats across 10 states

**Lucknow/Ahmedabad, Nov. 3:** Moderate to high polling was recorded on Tuesday in by-elections to 54 assembly constituencies in 10 states despite the shadow of Covid-19 pandemic. Polling was by and large peaceful as voters, wearing masks and gloves, queued up at polling booths where election staff in personal protective equipment (PPE) suits assisted them during the first pan-India electoral exercise in the pandemic.

While Pungro-Kiphire seat in Nagaland saw the highest voting of 89.8 per cent, the turnout was the poorest in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Karnataka at 39.15 per cent, according to figures from officials of respective states.

In most of the other seats the polling figure was above 50 per cent.

**UTTAR PRADESH:** An average of over 53 per cent voters exercised their franchise in seven seats in Uttar Pradesh, where 88 candidates were in the fray, according to state election officials.

**GUJARAT:** Bypolls to eight Assembly seats in Gujarat witnessed 58.58 per cent voter turnout, officials said.

**HARYANA:** Nearly 68 percent voters exercised their franchise in Baroda seat in Haryana which had recorded 69.43 per cent polling in the 2019 assembly polls. There were 14 candidates, including Olympian wrestler and BJP nominee Yogeshwar Dutt, in the fray for the seat, which has around 1.81 lakh registered voters.

**KARNATAKA:** Poor voter turnout was recorded in Raja-rajeshwari Nagar bypoll in Karnataka at 39.15 per cent, while 77.34 percent of voters exercised their franchise till 5 pm in Sira constituency.

**CHHATTISGARH:** A high voter turnout of 77 percent was recorded in the bypoll to Marwahi Assembly constituency in Chhattisgarh. The death of former chief minister and JCC(J) legislator Ajit Jogi necessitated the by-election in the seat.

**JHARKHAND:** Around 62.51 per cent of total 5.63 lakh voters cast their ballots in the by-elections to two assembly seats in Jharkhand. The voter turnout was 65.27 per cent for Dumka reserved seat and 60.30 per cent for Bermo seat in Bokaro district, the Chief Electoral



Voters stand in long queues to cast their votes at a polling station during the second phase of Assembly elections at Diyara in Danapur on Tuesday.

— PTI

Officers office said. Chief Minister Hemant Soren's younger brother Basant Soren of the JMM is pitted against former cabinet minister Lois Marandi of the BJP in Dumka.

**NAGALAND:** A total of 84.41 per cent votes were cast in the 22 polling stations under Southern Angami-I constituency in Kohima district while Pungro-Kiphire segment which has 77 polling stations saw a turnout of 89.8 per cent in Nagaland.

There were complaints from both Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party and Naga Peoples Front under Southern Angami-I seat but it didn't disturb the polling, officials said.

**ORISSA:** The bypolls for two Assembly constituencies in Odisha passed off peacefully on Tuesday, barring a few stray incidents of attempt to influence and bribe voters. The Election Commission of India said at least 70.45 percent of voters turned out to cast their ballots by 6 pm.

— PTI

Where are the jobs,  
Rahul asks Nitish

Katiyar (Bihar), Nov. 3:

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged they have "looted" Bihar, and claimed that people have decided to vote them out of power.

Addressing a poll rally here, the former Congress president criticised the NDA government over demonetisation, migrant crisis, GST, handling of the coronavirus pandemic and the three new farm laws.

He said neither Mr Modi nor Mr Kumar did anything to help migrant labourers when they were walking thousands of kilometres to return homes during the coronavirus lockdown.

"The Congress had arranged buses for the

movement of migrant workers. We are not in power so we could not do it for millions, but we helped as many people as we could," he said.

Mr Gandhi also claimed the PM and the Bihar CM have failed to fulfil promises on development and job creation.

"I want to ask all the youth who are here that Modi ji had said he will give two crore jobs every year, Nitish ji said the same, but where are the jobs? Why are the youth unemployed today?" he said. He also alleged farmers are angry with Mr Modi over the three recently enacted agricultural laws. "And that is why farmers in Punjab burnt the effigies of Narendra Modi, Ambani and Adani on Dusshera," he said. — PTI

Cong does not have  
even 100 MPs: PMNAYEAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, NOV. 3

While Bihar voted for the second phase of polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed rallies in Araria and Saharsa and urged voters to "choose the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the overall development of the state".

During his speech at both the rallies, he also dismissed speculations about anti-incumbency against Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his government and said that "last decade was spent in meeting the needs of the people. In the next the NDA will fulfil all the aspirations of people".

He also used the occasion to mock at the shrinking tally of the

Congress party in both the houses of parliament. He said that the current state of Congress shows how people have rejected the party.

"Look at the condition of the Congress today. Even if they combine the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha they won't find even 100 MPs. They are in such a state because people are not happy with them. Now they are trying to save the party by tagging with others," Modi said at a rally in Forbesganj.

During his meetings, he also reminded people of the "jungle raj" and poor law and order scenario during the 1990s when the RJD was in power. He said that the turnout during the ongoing elections shows the mood of the voters in Bihar.

## More people susceptible, fears government

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 3

Central government officials on Tuesday said that a steady decline in daily fresh cases in India has been noted but a large part of the country's population is still susceptible to the coronavirus infection. On Tuesday, 38,310 new cases were detected which was lowest after over 100 days.

The national Covid-19 recovery rate is now 91.96 per cent.

"It is satisfying that there is an improvement in overall cases and there is a consistent decline in active cases. However, in some states it is a reverse trend and there is a rise in fresh cases," said NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V.K. Paul.

In Kerala, West Bengal, Delhi and Manipur we are noticing rise in cases. In neighbouring cities of Delhi – Gurgaon and Faridabad – there is a sharp increase in new cases, he said.

**TS numbers rise again:** New Covid-19 cases in Telangana state have shot back up to their pre-week-end low testing levels with the health department saying on Tuesday that the state found 1,536 more people infected by the Coronavirus on Monday. On Sunday, on account of very low number of tests, the number of new cases reported was 922. While 24,643 tests were conducted on Sunday, the number of tests rose to 45,021 on Monday.

**2,849 cases in AP:** Andhra Pradesh registered 2,849 new Covid-19 cases rising tally to 8,30,731 and 15 deaths taking the toll to 6,734 in the last 24 hours in the state. As many as 84,534 samples were tested and the state has 21,672 active cases now.

**K'taka reports 2,756 cases:** With 2,756 fresh cases and 26 more deaths, Karnataka's Covid-19 tally and cumulative fatalities reached 8,32,396 and 11,247 respectively on Tuesday,

the health department said. The state has been showing a steady decline in cases and mortalities in recent days from an alarming over 10,000 infections and around 200 fatalities a day about a month ago.

**Kerala cases to touch 4.5 lakh:** Kerala's Covid-19 caseload is inching towards the 4.50 lakh mark, as it recorded 6,862 cases with recoveries touching 8,802 on Tuesday, while the toll mounted to 1,559 with 26 fatalities.

## CRUCIAL | MOVE

China confirms another round of Corps Commanders meeting on Ladakh issue

## India, US, Japan, Aus kickstart Malabar exercise

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 3

India and three other 'Quad' countries — US, Japan and Australia — on Tuesday started the naval exercise 'Malabar' in Bay of Bengal. Meanwhile, China confirmed another round of Corps Commanders meeting on Ladakh standoff and a mutual agreeable date is being worked out.

While India is trying to peacefully resolve the six month military stand-off with China through negotiations, it is also forming up strategic alliances with other nations.

This is reflected by India's invitation to Australia to participate in Malabar Naval exercise and signing Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Co-operation with the US last week.

This is a signal to China that India will not bow down to any pressure, even as it wants peace in the region.

The Indian Navy, United States Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force, and Royal Australian Navy on Tuesday carried out anti submarine warfare operations, cross deck landings and seamanship manoeuvres at sea.

Indian Navy ships Ranvijay, Shivalik, Shakti, Sukanya, and submarine Sindhuraj are exercising with USS John S McCain, HMAS Ballarat, and JMSDF Ship JS Onami.

China said on Tuesday that it hoped that the quadrilateral Malabar exercise would be conducive to the regional peace and stability instead of the contrary.

"We hope that relevant countries' military opera-

tions will be conducive to peace and stability in the region instead of the contrary," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin.

India, US, Japan and Australia are part of the 'Quad' alliance, which Beijing considers as an anti-China grouping.

While Australia wanted to be part of the Malabar exercise for some time now, India had been hesitant to invite it to avoid any angry reaction from China.

During the 7th round of Corps Commanders meeting, India and China on October 12 had agreed not to turn differences into disputes and jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the border areas.

Both sides had agreed to maintain dialogue and communication through military and diplomatic channels.



The four-day-long first phase of the Malabar naval exercise is seen as a prelude to future military cooperation among the member nations of the Quad Coalition.

DO NOT FEED  
AADHAAR  
DATA INTO  
DHARANI: HCVUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA  
| DC  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 3

Telangana High Court on Tuesday directed the state government not to insist that persons possessing agricultural or non-agricultural lands provide their Aadhaar details.

Further, no such information must be fed into the Dharani Portal and whatever data already gathered and uploaded on the portal must be kept safe, secure and out of reach of third parties.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayen Reddy prima facie felt Telangana government collecting information from property owners about agricultural lands and non-agricultural property, apart from Aadhaar and caste details, for feeding into Dharani Portal is not backed by any law.

The division bench directed the government to file its counter affidavits by November 17 and adjourned the case to November 20 for further hearing. It ordered that till such time, the information cited should not be sought from the citizens.

The bench was hearing three petitions and similar pleas on the issue. Saketha Kasibathla, Advocate, and I. Gopala Sharma filed two public interest

litigations aggrieved by action of Telangana government in obtaining various details including caste for uploading into Dharani Portal. Another petition filed by Karre Anand Kumar sought direction to TS government not to collect such information from people.

While adjudicating the cases, the Chief Justice pointed to a news report in Deccan Chronicle on November 3, 2020, that the Dharani Portal had been hacked, which shows that adequate preventive measures have not been taken to protect data of citizens.

Advocate general B.S. Prasad, however, contended that the state has taken adequate measures and built fire walls to prevent such instances.

Senior counsel Desai Prakash Reddy, appearing for I. Gopal Sharma, informed the bench that there is no provision in the Act of Telangana government that says details of Aadhaar could be collected. When that is so, he asked, how can government declare that any citizen who does not declare such details cannot sell or buy even an inch of land?

After hearing contentions of the AG, the Chief Justice observed that prima facie, the Dharani Portal makes it mandatory that Aadhaar number must be given, though such requirement is not backed by any law.





The incumbent president, who is supposed to hold the elections, says this is the most-rigged US election throughout history. His opponent says Trump intends to widely cheat. This is American democracy.

— AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI, Iran's supreme leader



I certainly won't do that (comment on vote) one day before the election in the United States. You know that simply because of my education as a physicist I naturally attribute great weight to scientific advice, and make use of it myself

— ANGELA MERKEL, German Chancellor

# US votes: Long lines seen outside polling stations

## Mail-in votes count to take time; result not out soon

Washington, Nov. 3: Americans were voting in large numbers on Tuesday in one of the most divisive bitter presidential elections in decades in which incumbent Republican Donald Trump is challenged by Democrat Joe Biden.

Amidst a resurgent Covid-19 pandemic, nearly 100 million people have already cast their ballots in early voting, putting the country on course for its highest turnout in a century. Some 239 million people are eligible to vote this year. The mail-in ballots

could take days or weeks to be counted in some states — meaning a winner might not be declared in the hours after polls close on Tuesday. There is an estimated four million Indian-American population of which about 2.5 million are potential voters in the November 2020 presidential elections.

Over 1.3 million Indian-Americans are voters in key battleground states, including Texas, Michigan, Florida and Pennsylvania. The timing of the start of the polling differs

from State to State, mainly due to the different time zones. People mostly in the East coast started trickling down to the polling stations as many States opened up the polling stations at around 6 am (4.30 pm IST). These States include Virginia, New York, New Jersey, and Maine. Polling in California starts at 7 am (8.30 pm IST).

Initial reports indicated an early large turnout. In the battleground State of Pennsylvania, hundreds of people were seen outside polling booths even before

the start of the polling. Trump who returned from campaigning in the wee hours of Tuesday urged Americans to vote for him. "VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!" Trump said in a tweet with a short video of him dancing at election rallies.

"Vote like your freedoms, your livelihood, and our future depends on it... Because they do!" said Trump, who is seeking to avoid becoming the first incumbent president to lose a re-election since George H.W. Bush in 1992. Biden also tweeted urging

people to vote. "It's Election Day. Go vote, America!" he tweeted.

"In 2008 and 2012, you placed your trust in me to help lead this country alongside Barack Obama. Today, I'm asking for your trust once again this time, in Kamala and me. We can heal the soul of this nation — I promise we won't let you down," Biden tweeted. His running mate, Kamala Harris, urged voters to not to "allow anything to come between you and your vote".

— PTI

### ELECTION FIGURES FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

## 100m

1 Americans had already cast ballots by Tuesday



1 6 crore likely to vote on the real election day on Tuesday

1 16 crore casting votes in a presidential election is a record in itself in terms of turnout after 1900

1 23.9 crore people are eligible to vote, according to the US Election Project

1 90 per cent of their 2016 turnout has been crossed by North Carolina, Georgia, New Mexico, Nevada and Tennessee

### WHAT'S 270? THE MATH GAME BEHIND POLL

Washington, Nov. 3: What's all this hubbub about 270? It's not about the 270 whales stranded this fall on Australia's island state of Tasmania. It's not about congestion on Interstate 270 feeding commuters into Washington, D.C. It's about who's going to sit in the White House for the next four years.

#### IT'S THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Nearly 2.9 million more people voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, but she still lost. Donald Trump won because he took the Electoral College, under a system set up in the US Constitution and refined through the centuries. This is where the magic number comes into play. To win the White House, a candidate must win at least 270 electoral votes. That's a majority of the 538 that are up for grabs in the 50 states.

**THE NUMBERS:** Each state is allotted a different number of electoral votes, based on how many representatives it has in the House, plus its two senators. California has the most electoral votes with 55. Texas is next with 38 electoral votes. The candidate who wins New York or Florida can pocket 29 electoral votes toward the race to get 270. Illinois and Pennsylvania each have 20. Rounding out the top 10 list of states with the most electoral votes is Ohio with 18.

**TRUMP'S BEST PATH:** Trump has several paths to 270, but his best route hinges on winning Florida and Pennsylvania. If he wins both states and holds onto North Carolina and Arizona, which he narrowly carried in 2016, and also Georgia and Ohio, which he won in 2016 but is now competitive, he will win. With 29 electoral votes, Florida is arguably the most crucial state for Trump.



Alkent Pozhegu works on an image of Joe Biden made with grain and seed in Gjakova, Kosovo.

**WHAT BIDEN NEEDS:** Democrat Joe Biden's campaign is laser-focused on the states in the Midwest and close by that Trump flipped in 2016 - Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. He's also making a big play for Arizona, a state that hasn't backed a Democratic presidential candidate since 1996. Biden is also redoubling his focus on Florida, the biggest prize among the perennial battles.

— AFP

## SECURITY UPPED AS RETAILERS BOARD UP THEIR STORES

Washington/New York, Nov. 3: Security has been tightened at the White House and major commercial avenues across the US, with retailers boarding up their stores to head off any damages as America braced for possible unrest and violence in a bitter and divisive presidential race.

Vital government installations are on high alert while the Secret Service has fortified the White House. A "non-scalable" wall has been temporarily erected around the sprawling presidential complex ahead of the voting on Tuesday. About 600 National Guard troops have also been designated to help respond to protests around the country if requested. On election eve, contractors were seen busy boarding up major stores and businesses from New York and Boston in the north to southern Houston to Washington DC and Chicago in the east to San Francisco in the West.

Stores along the posh 5th Avenue in Manhattan as well as across the New York City boarded up and workers were seen drilling plywood onto the stores' facade amid fears that Election Day could bring violence, looting and clashes like during protests over the death of George Floyd. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said he has spoken with Police Commissioner Dermot Shea and there is no specific report or threat of violence.

— PTI

## KEEPING TRADITION: 2 NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWNS CAST VOTES AFTER MIDNIGHT

Dixville Notch (US), Nov. 3: Two tiny New Hampshire communities that vote for president just after the stroke of midnight on Election Day have cast their ballots, with one of them marking 60 years since the tradition began.

The results in Dixville Notch, near the Canadian border, were a sweep for former Vice President Joe Biden who won the town's five votes. In Millsfield, 12 miles (20 kilometers) to the south, President Donald Trump won 16 votes to Biden's five. Normally, there

would be a big food spread and a lot of media crammed into a small space to watch the voting, Tom Tillotson, town moderator in Dixville Notch, said last week. But that's no longer possible because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

It's also hard to observe the 60th anniversary of the tradition, which started in November 1960. "Sixty years — and unfortunately, we can't celebrate it," he said. A third community with midnight voting, Hart's Location, suspended the tradition this election.

— AP

## AMERICA CANNOT AFFORD FOUR MORE YEARS OF TRUMP, ASSERTS HARRIS

Washington, Nov. 3: Attacking Donald Trump on the eve of the US presidential election, Democratic vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris said that the president has failed to lead the country and America can no longer afford four more years of him. "We've seen who we are. The country we love. And that is why I know

that tomorrow we are going to elect Joe Biden to be the next President of the United States!" Harris said. Biden, the Democratic Party's nominee is challenging Trump, a Republican, in Tuesday's presidential election. "America, we cannot afford four more years of Donald Trump," Harris said.

— PTI

77-year-old rival campaigned in Pennsylvania and Ohio, urging Americans to back them in the race for the White House.

"To all of our supporters: Thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have been there from the beginning,

and I will never let you down. Your hopes are my hopes, your dreams are my dreams, and your future is what I am fighting for every single day!" Trump tweeted past mid-night.

"A vote for Sleepy Joe Biden is a vote to give con-

trol of government over to Globalists, Communists, Socialists, and Wealthy Liberal Hypocrites who want to silence, censor, cancel, and punish you. Get out and VOTE #MAGA tomorrow!" the president wrote in another tweet, attacking Biden.

The Republican Party in a tweet said, "Let's Make America Great Again and re-elect our fantastic president!" "We made history together four years ago, and tomorrow we're going to make history once again," the ruling party said. Biden, the former US vice president, said he was "running as a proud Democrat, but I will govern as an American president."

"I will work with Democrats and Republicans, and I'll work as hard for those who don't support me as for those who do."

— PTI



Voters check in with election officials before receiving their ballots at Ballard High School in Louisville, United States on Tuesday.

— AFP

## Dems back mail ballot delivery

Philadelphia, Nov. 3: Down to the wire with the threat of court battles looming, supporters of former US vice president Joe Biden scrambled on Monday to rally swing-state voters to drop off ballots, visit precincts in person and ensure that their votes are counted.

As months of President Donald Trump undercutting the legitimacy of mail-in votes gave way to promises he would challenge them in court, both sides made a final push to ensure their supporters turned out, even with the lingering threat of lawsuits aimed at invalidating ballots.

"Do not put ballots in the mail. Hand-deliver

your mail ballot to your county election office, satellite election office or other designated drop box or drop-off location," Pennsylvania's top election official, Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar, a Democrat, said. "Do it today. Do not wait."

With about 700,000 of some 31 lakh requested mail ballots in Pennsylvania still outstanding, some voters like 57-year-old Daniel Pigott took the warning to heart. Pigott stood in a line of dozens of voters, waiting to cast his vote after being alerted that there was a problem with his mail-in ballot. "In a normal election, would I do all this?" asked Pigott.

— AP

## TRUMP CLAIMS HARRIS WANTS TO BE PRESIDENT

Washington, Nov. 3: Claiming that Democratic vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris wants to be the first woman president of the United States, President Donald Trump told his supporters that this is one "good reason" not to vote for his challenger Joe Biden.

"This wonderful woman, she wants to be your first female president. I don't think so. You know, that's a good reason not to vote for sleepy Joe too, right? You don't want to do that," Trump, a Republican, said at a political rally in Kenosha in Wisconsin, a key battleground state on the eve of Tuesday's presidential election. "Biden and Kamala! Does anybody know who Kamala is?" Trump said.

Trump said this in almost all of his election rallies on the last day of his campaigning for the Tuesday presidential elections.

The President has been claiming that if 77-year-old Biden wins Tuesday's elections, his running mate Harris will take over as president in a month's time.

— PTI

## Khamenei mocks US election

Tehran, Nov. 3: Iran's supreme leader mocked America's presidential election Tuesday in a televised address, quoting President Donald Trump's own baseless claims about voter fraud to criticize the vote as Tehran marked the 1979 US Embassy hostage crisis.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei reiterated a long-standing Iranian position that it didn't matter whether Trump or Joe Biden wins the vote, but the stakes couldn't be higher for the

Islamic Republic. Another four years could see Trump's maximum-pressure campaigns further expand as it crushes the Iranian economy and stops Tehran from openly selling its crude oil abroad. Biden meanwhile has said he would consider re-entering Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, providing possible relief to the beleaguered Iranian rial.

"If you look at their own situation, it's lovely to watch. The incumbent

president, who is supposed to hold the elections, says this is the most-rigged US election throughout history," Khamenei said, not acknowledging that individual US states run the vote. "Who says this? The sitting president who is arranging the elections himself. His opponent says Trump intends to widely cheat. This is American democracy," Khamenei added that the result of the vote "is none of our business".

— AP

### ISLAMIST | TERROR

As precaution, UK raises terror threat level from 'substantial' to 'severe' after attacks in Austria, France

## 5 dead in Vienna attack; assailant had previous conviction

Vienna, Nov. 3: Five people died, including an assailant, and 17 others were wounded in a shooting in the heart of Vienna hours before a coronavirus lockdown started. Austrian authorities said Tuesday. The dead attacker was a 20-year-old Austrian-North Macedonian dual national who had a previous terror conviction.

The UK's terror threat level was raised from "substantial" to "severe" on Tuesday, the second-highest alert level which means an attack is now judged to be "highly likely". UK Home

Secretary Priti Patel described the action as a "precautionary measure" following terror attacks in France last week and in Austria this week.

Two men and two women died from their injuries in the attack Monday evening, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said. The suspected attacker was shot and killed by police. Vienna's hospital service said seven people were in life-threatening condition Tuesday after the attack, the Austrian news agency APA reported. In total, 17 people were

being treated in hospitals, with gunshot wounds but also cuts. "It is now confirmed that yesterday's attack was clearly an Islamist terror attack," Kurz said. "It was an attack out of hatred — hatred for our fundamental values, hatred for our way of life, hatred for our democracy in which all people have equal rights and dignity."

Interior Minister Karl Nehammer later told APA that the dead assailant, who had roots in the Balkan nation of North Macedonia, had a previous conviction

under a law that punishes membership in terrorist organisations. The attacker, named as Kujtim Fejzulaj, was sentenced to 22 months in prison in April 2019 because he had tried to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State group.

He was granted early release in December under juvenile law. Fifteen house searches have taken place and several people have been arrested, he added. The attacker, he said, "was equipped with a fake explosive vest and an automatic rifle, a handgun and a

machete to carry out this repugnant attack on innocent citizens."

Authorities were still trying to determine whether further attackers may be on the run. People in Vienna were urged to stay at home if possible on Tuesday and children did not have to go to school. Some 1,000 police officers were on duty in Vienna on Tuesday morning. Among those wounded in the attack was a police officer, said Nehammer.

The 28-year-old officer was in the hospital but was no longer in a life-threatening

condition. The shooting began shortly after 8 p.m. (1900 GMT) Monday near Vienna's main synagogue as many people were enjoying a last night of open restaurants and bars before a month-long Coronavirus lockdown, which started at midnight. Vienna police chief Gerhard Puerstl said the attacker was killed at 8:09 p.m.

Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said that "we are victims of a despicable terror attack in the federal capital."

— AP



Armed police arrive at the first district near the state opera in central Vienna following a shooting.

— AFP



## DECCAN Chronicle

4 NOVEMBER 2020

### Need to reform mindset of politicians and judges

The nation got a rude jolt, and deservedly so, when Attorney-General of India K.K. Venugopal stood up in the Supreme Court on Monday and told a three-member bench that judges in the trial courts and high courts must be sensitised on gender justice and the judgments of the apex court in this regard must be taught in judicial academies. Judges should be educated on the necessity of focusing on facts when imposing bail conditions in sexual harassment cases. The country's top law officer made the plainspeak before the bench hearing an appeal against a Madhya Pradesh high court order granting bail to an accused in a molestation case on the condition that he requested the victim to tie a "rakhi" on his wrist. The A-G was unequivocal in condemning the ritual as "drama" in that context.

Every civilised society revisits the way sexual assaults are treated in such a way that women's rights and gender sensitivity take precedence. That this awakening is not reflected in the judiciary is the point the A-G was trying to make. We have judges who think such offences are compoundable; some even direct the marriage between the perpetrator of the crime and the victim, thus sentencing the latter to life-long trauma. As the A-G was speaking in the apex court, the Kerala high court was forced to defer the trial in the actor assault case after the victim complained that the trial court was biased, hostile and partisan. The silver lining in the whole episode is that the A-G's words carried sufficient weight that the bench assured him that gender sensitisation will be part of its order.

It is not just the judiciary or officialdom that is at fault when it comes to gender sensitivity. The political class is equally or more guilty. It is not long before Kamal Nath, Congress leader, former chief minister and a Union minister for several terms called a woman minister an "item". The latest in this series has come from Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president Mullappally Ramachandran who said women who have been raped should either commit suicide or avoid circumstances that can lead to the repeat of the crime. Both the suggestions of Mr Ramachandran a six-time Lok Sabha member and a former Union minister of state for home and agriculture, carry trouble: if he thinks that a woman can avoid the circumstances that lead to the crime, then the former junior home minister displays criminal ignorance of our social realities. And if he thinks a rape victim must commit suicide, then his insensitivity is nothing less than criminal. For rape is a crime which takes no mitigating circumstances. Anyone who thinks that the blame, or part of it, can be shifted to the victim is an apologist for the crime and a potential rapist, and must be treated accordingly.

It was a rare moment in our history that the A-G spoke up on the need to reform the judicial mindset, and one hopes for action to follow. The political class, too, must feel the heat, and take early steps to reform itself.

### A win for diversity

She is no longer a Chennaite, nor a Keralite, neither an Indian. Ernakulam native Priyanka Radhakrishnan holds a New Zealand passport only. Yet the elevation of the left-leaning Labour Party leader to the post of minister for diversity, inclusion and ethnic communities in the new Jacinda Ardern government, which also placed its first Maori woman in the shape of foreign minister Nanaia Mahuta as well as half-Maldivian Ayesha Verrall, gladdens Indian hearts. It is the magic of democracy manifest in the brave, new post-globalised world.

Old-timers like to see the 41-year-old Radhakrishnan as a chip off the old block. Her maternal great grandfather, C.R. Krishna Pillai, was a doctor and a communist. He helped shape the political and cultural sensibilities of the people of Kerala and contributed to the formation of the Kerala state. Born to an IIT Kanpur alumnus and a cardiologist, both high achievers, Ms Radhakrishnan went to school in Singapore and proceeded to New Zealand to get her master's degree in development studies from Wellington's Victoria University. She joined politics while in university and stayed on to pursue it, proving her commitment to the welfare of her adoptive community. After entering the Labour Party in 2006, she became an MP first in 2017, then in 2020, from Maungakiekie constituency, entering the New Zealand parliament via the mixed member proportional representative system. She went on to serve as private secretary to Jenny Salesa, former ethnic communities minister. Ms Radhakrishnan's current portfolios also include youth, and community and voluntary sector. She is associate minister for social development and employment.

Ms Radhakrishnan has spent her public life advocating the cause of those whose voices often go unheard — migrant workers and victims of domestic violence in Indian-origin families. She is a votary of gender, race and income equality and community-based decision-making. The trust and responsibility vested in her by the people of her country of choice is a win for diversity and defeat for atavism and narrow identity politics. Welcome the newest kid on the desi diasporic block.

Subhani



## Will Biden win in US, but Trump still be President?



Mohan Guruswamy

The American presidential election is possibly the most widely and closely watched electoral contest in the world. Like Americans, most of the US President is the most powerful person in the world. A good part of that notion is attributable to the authority conferred by what is generally believed to be a free and fairly won mandate. But American presidential elections are not without controversy. It is widely believed the 1960 elections that saw John F. Kennedy getting elected by a plurality of less than 100,000 votes was because Chicago mayor Richard Daley, an old-fashioned Democratic party boss, with a wide network of friends in the labour unions and organised crime "stole" the election by ballot stuffing. A popular cry in Chicago in those days was "vote early and vote again and again".

Closer to our times George W. Bush is generally believed to have won in 2000 when a combination of voter fraud, deliberate miscounting and judicial intervention giving him the state of Florida by 537 votes. The state's secretary of state, Kathleen Harris, who was responsible for oversight of the state's elections and certification of the results, had also served as a co-chair of the Bush campaign in Florida. Further, Florida governor Jeb Bush was George W. Bush's brother. Between them they ensured that over 12,000 voters were excluded from the voter list on the grounds that they were all ex-felons. When the Florida Supreme Court ordered a recount in all 67 counties, a conservative leaning US Supreme Court overrode that order and ordered the election be declared. That gave Florida's 25 electoral votes to George W. Bush, winning him the presi-

dency in the Electoral College 271 to 266. This did not become a point of contention though the popular vote was with Al Gore, who got 48.4 per cent while Mr Bush received 47.9 per cent, losing by over 540,000 votes. America's Presidents are, however, are chosen by the Electoral College, a system in which "electoral votes" are assigned to states based on their population and then awarded as a lump sum to the winner of the popular vote in that state — currently, it takes 270 electoral votes to win. In 2016 Democrat Hillary Clinton took the popular vote by almost 2.9 million votes, with 65,844,954 (48.2 per cent) to Mr Trump's 62,979,879 (46.1 per cent), but Mr Trump won the Electoral College votes 306 to 232.

That is why the US Senate's approval of Amy Coney Barret as a Supreme Court judge and tilting the balance heavily towards the conservatives 6-3 is significant. In 2016, under similar circumstances, the Republican-dominated Senate blocked the appointment of Merrick Garland, Barack Obama's nominee, a full 10 months before his term ended. Republican majority leader Senator Mitch McConnell then argued the elections were close and the people must decide. This time he argued just the opposite. Most observers believe like Bush vs Gore, this year's elections will also end up before the

**In 2016 Democrat Hillary Clinton took the popular vote, but Mr Trump won the Electoral College votes. That is why the US Senate's approval of Amy C. Barret as a Supreme Court judge is significant.**

**The likely outcome that worries observers is this: That the voting boxes and machines may reveal an early Trump lead, but as the postal ballots keep getting counted that lead will start whittling away**

Supreme Court over challenges by a losing President Trump to the huge numbers of postal ballots. Mr Trump has not hidden his views on postal ballots. Time and again he has called them "very dangerous for our country" and "a catastrophe", even calling 2020 the "greatest rigged election in history". The US has about 240 million eligible voters. As of Sunday, over 91 million Americans had already cast their ballots. Surveys have also revealed that almost 60 per cent of Democrats prefer to vote by postal ballot, while in sharp contrast only about a quarter of Republicans were willing to do so.

The likely November 3 outcome that worries observers is this: That the voting boxes and machines may very likely reveal an early Trump lead, but as the postal ballots keep getting counted that lead will start whittling away. This will be keenly watched in borderline states like Texas, Georgia and Florida, which had favoured Mr Trump in 2016. The Trump operatives are expected to scrutinise each and every postal ballot and challenge many. It is estimated that close to 1.3 per cent of postal ballots are rejected on various technicalities. This suggests nearly 110,000 rejected postal ballots. Remember, in Florida in 2000, just 537 votes decided the outcome by requiring the Florida electoral votes to go to George W. Bush. This time, hundreds of Trump lawyer operatives have fanned out and the electoral process can expect to get slowed down by the sheer weight of challenges. Mr Trump has been quite blatantly signalling his troops to hobble the postal ballot count.

Postal ballots will have plenty of flaws for the Trump lawyers to seize upon. For instance, if a voter gives a different address, or a different version of his name such as Joe for Joseph or Richie for Richard, or if there is a variation in signature, any one of them can become a ground for dispute. Now here comes the catch. The states are required to finalise the appointment of the 538 Electoral College members by December 8. The Electoral College has to formally meet by December 14 to "elect" the President. The big question now is what next?

The US and even the world is accustomed to choosing the Electoral College by popular vote, but nothing in the US Constitution says it has to be that way. Article II, Section 1 states: "Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress."

Republicans control the governorships and state legislatures in Texas, Georgia and Florida. Thus, these states can, in the absence of a popular vote, appoint the electors. If that happens, given the predicted "red" states voting for him, Donald Trump might very well be deemed to have been elected, or decide he is still the elected US President. The matter will almost certainly have to be resolved by the Supreme Court. But its tendencies are well understood.

Whatever be the Supreme Court's final decision, that is unlikely to come in time before January 20, 2021 when the US traditionally swears in the new President on the steps of the Capitol in Washington D.C. If that doesn't happen, the world will have to live with President Donald Trump for some more time.

*The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.*

### LETTERS

#### BOLD DECISION

The decision of MNM president Kamal Haasan that his party would not have any ties with Dravidian parties in the forthcoming Tamil Nadu assembly elections in 2021 is welcome and bold. This decision is different as others will usually clinch an alliance with parties who have a high votebank. The vote share of MNM in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections was 3.72% (in seats it contested). This could go up in the assembly elections as people seem to opt for a change. It is a known fact that *Maatram ondrae maaraathathu* (Change is the only constant).

**M.C. Vijay Shankar, Chennai**

#### PROUD MOMENT FOR INDIA

**APROPPOS YOUR** report *Chennai-born Priyanka enters New Zealand's new ministry* (Nov. 3). It's really overwhelming to learn that, for the first time, a person of Indian origin has made huge headlines across the globe in entering a new ministry under the Labour Party in New Zealand. Her portfolios comprise heading three ministerial departments in the New Zealand's Parliament such as minister for diversity, inclusion and ethnic communities, minister for community and voluntary sector and minister for youth & associate minister for social development and employment. As a minister in New Zealand's cabinet it makes us Indians feel so proud and astounding for this significant achievement.

**Jacqueline Netto, Chennai**

#### 2G CASE

**DO OUR** law courts secure equal justice to all in corruption cases? (*2G case: Firm director seeks govt to place docus relating to CBI appeal*, Nov. 3). While they dispense quick justice in cases where a low division clerk of the government of India accepts a small bribe of ₹2,000 or more, they often dither in deciding high profile cases like 2G. For the low paid public servant can't afford to employ highly paid lawyers to wriggle out of the case. Firm director Rajiv Agarwal's petition challenging the government's approval to the CBI to appeal against his acquittal by the Delhi high court is one such. The common man is baffled why courts are proceeding at snail's pace in the 2G case where the first chargesheet was filed by the CBI on April 21, 2011. While the CAG says that the loss to the exchequer in 2G allocation is a mind-boggling ₹1,79,000 crore, Trai asserts that there is no such revenue loss. The courts that are supposed to ensure justice for all must adjudicate the case without further delay and bring the culprits to book.

**Kangayam R. Narasimhan Chennai**

**Mail your letters to editor@deccanmail.com**

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Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



### Crunch time for officials preparing Budget 2021

The countdown to the annual Budget for 2021-22 has started amid the urgency to push economic growth badly mauled by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is already talk of a third stimulus soon, going by the recent utterances of the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman. The Budget-making babus led by finance secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey have their work cut out.

Sources say that the first meeting of the budget preparing exercise took place with officials of the department of financial services as well as MSME, housing, steel and power ministries in attendance. The almost one-month long exercise to finalize the Revised Estimate (RE) for 2020-21 and Budget Estimate for 2021-22 will conclude on November 12 after the expenditure secretary, T.V. Somanathan, completes discussions with other secretaries and

financial advisors.

This year, however, due to Covid, the number of participants for the pre-budget meetings may be restricted to a maximum of 5 officers for each meeting from a ministry/department, not below the rank of director.

For the Modi sarkar, the next Budget will be crucial since it will have to deal with the impact of the pandemic on revenue collection, disinvestment, expenditure, export and food prices. The indications are gloomy with the IMF forecasting that the economy will shrink by 10.3 per cent. Even the Reserve Bank of India has similarly opined that it will shrink by 9.5 per cent. The Budget will have to address critical issues pertaining to growth contraction and subdued revenue collection due to the pandemic.

**MAHARASHTRA'S BIG IPS MUDDLE**

As many as 36 IPS officers in Maharashtra are awaiting new postings and the unprecedented delay has given the Opposition BJP a handle to criticise the state chief minister Uddhav Thackeray. Among the officers on the "wait" list are 15 SP-rank officers besides high-profile top cop Deven Bharti.

Mr Bharti, a 1994-batch officer has not been assigned a new posting but continues as ADG (Anti-Terrorism Squad) since he has not been relieved despite being transferred!

Sources say that this situation has created unease in the force, since the state government's refusal to clear the air, has only led to more rumours. It is well-known by now that Mr Thackeray wasn't too pleased with the transfer of cops effected by the Mumbai Police Commissioner in July when he reshuffled 10-DCP rank officers in consultation with the government.

Later, the transfers were put on hold.

Clearly, there is uncertainty and perhaps sharp differences on the issue within the government, even as the wait grows longer. The government says the "exercise" will be completed soon, but that may be little relief to the cops forced to cool their heels waiting for a decision.

#### IAS VS OTHERS IN HARYANA

The tussle between the IAS and other services is a constant factor in any government. The resignation of Jagdeep Dhandha, president of the Haryana Civil Service Officers' Association, has blown the lid off the resentment among a section of Haryana IAS officers. They feel that the Manohar Khattar government is allowing the "usurping" of IAS cadre posts by other services. Sources inform that Mr Dhandha resigned to express his resentment over the appointment

of HCS officers in the state transport department.

This feeling has peaked after the latest round of transfers issued by the state government. While an IPS officer was posted as the principal secretary and another was given the charge of managing director of one of the two power utilities in the state, an IFS officer was also posted as the principal secretary. Further, the state government has posted DSPs and employment officers against the post of district transport officers (DTOs), causing heartburn among officers of the state civil services.

Apparently, after confabulations, a senior officer has been deputed to write to the chief minister on posting officers of other services against IAS cadre posts.

*Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.*







## SHORT TAKES

## Zimbabwe beat Pak in super over

**Rawalpindi, Pakistan:** Paceman Blessing Muzarabani took career best figures of 5-49 as Zimbabwe beat Pakistan in a thrilling super over finish in the third and final one-day international on Tuesday. The actual match finished in a tie after Pakistan skipper Babar Azam hit the final delivery of the 50th over from Richard Ngarava for a boundary to level the scores at 278. But man-of-the-match Muzarabani dismissed Iftikhar Ahmed and Khushdil Shah for two runs on four balls in the super over which Zimbabwe scored off just three balls without any loss.

Despite the defeat Pakistan won the three-match series 2-1. Azam, who finished with a run-a-ball 125 with 13 boundaries and a six, led Pakistan's fight-back and stood firm after Pakistan were set a daunting 279-run target. He added a match turning 100 for the seventh wicket with Wahab Riaz who made 52. — *AFP*

**Brief scores:** Zimbabwe 278/6 (Williams 118\*, Taylor 56, Hasnain 5-26) tied with Pakistan 278/9 (Azam 125, Riaz 52, Muzarabani 5-49)

**Super Over:** Zimbabwe 3 beat Pakistan 2

## Maradona shows sign of depression

**Buenos Aires:** Diego Maradona was admitted to a hospital with signs of depression, three days after his 60th birthday. A Maradona staffer told The Associated Press the former footballer's health condition is "not serious." He requested anonymity because he was not authorised to speak about the issue. "He has been very sad for a week, didn't want to eat," the staffer said, adding that Maradona's personal doctor Leopoldo Luque took the former footballer to a hospital so he could undergo health checks.

The captain of Argentina's 1986 World Cup winning team was admitted to a private clinic in La Plata, about 40 kilometers south of Buenos Aires. Maradona has lived there since the end of last year, when he took over as coach of first division team Gimnasia y Esgrima. Maradona turned 60 on Friday and showed up that night for Gimnasia's national championship match against Patronato, which his team won 3-0. He left before the end of the first half, which raised questions about his health. — *AP*

## Covid-19 scare in archery camp

**Pune:** A support staff member of the Indian archery team training at the Army Sports Institute (ASI) here has tested positive for Covid-19 but the camp resumed after a two-day break, the Sports Authority of India said on Tuesday. The SAI said it is getting RT-PCR test conducted for all national campers as per the protocol. The support staff member, who tested positive for the virus on October 30, is undergoing treatment at a special Covid-care hospital in Pune outside the premises of ASI. Following the Covid-19 positive case, the training camp was suspended for two days — October 31 and November 1 — but resumed on Monday. — *PTI*

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

**IPL Women's T20 Challenge:** Supernovas vs Velocity from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**Women's Big Bash League:** Perth Scorchers vs Sydney Thunder from 9 am on Sony Six

## TENNIS

**ATP Paris Masters:** Day 3 action from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

## FOOTBALL

**Champions League:** Istanbul Basaksehir vs Manchester United from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Barcelona vs Dynamo Kyiv from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1; Ferencváros vs Juventus from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 2; Chelsea vs Rennes from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Six; RB Leipzig vs Paris Saint Germain from 1.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 3

## WWE

**NXT:** Bouts from 6.30 am (Thursday) on Sony Ten 1

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## Sun shines bright

## Hyderabad save best for the last to qualify for playoffs

**Sharjah, Nov. 3:** Sunrisers Hyderabad defeated Mumbai Indians by 10 wickets in a must-win match to qualify for the play-offs of the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday.

Chasing 150, openers David Warner (85 not out) and Wriddhiman Saha (58 not out) were enough to help Hyderabad cruise past the target in just 17.1 overs. Captain Warner's 58-ball knock was studded with 10 fours and a six while Saha struck seven fours and a six en route home.

Earlier, Hyderabad bowlers also played their part in a must-win game by restricting Mumbai Indians to 149 for eight.

MI would have ended up with much less if it wasn't for Kieron Pollard, who ensured his team put up a fighting total on a slow surface with an entertaining 41 off 25 balls. The defending champions collected 51 runs off the last five overs.

Needing a victory to make the play-offs, SRH bowlers made merry on a helping surface after their skipper David Warner decided to put the opposition in to bat.

MI skipper Rohit Sharma (4), who missed the last four games due to a hamstring injury, made a surprise return in his team's

## SCORECARD

**Mumbai Indians:** Rohit Sharma c Warner b Sandeep Sharma 4, Quinton de Kock b Sandeep Sharma 25, Suryakumar Yadav st Saha b Nadeem 36, Ishan Kishan b Sandeep Sharma 33, Krunal Pandya c Williamson b Nadeem 0, Saurabh Tiwary c Saha b Rashid Khan 1, Kieron Pollard b Holder 41, Nathan Coulter-Nile c Garg b Holder 1, James Pattinson (not out) 4, Dhawal Kulkarni (not out) 3. Extras (lb-1) 1. **Total (for 8 wickets, in 20 overs) 149.**

**FoW:** 1-12, 2-39, 3-81, 4-81, 5-82, 6-115, 7-116, 8-145. **Bowling:** Sandeep Sharma 4-0-34-3, Jason Holder 4-0-25-2, Shahbaz Nadeem 4-0-19-2, T. Natarajan 4-0-38-0, Rashid Khan 4-0-32-1.

**Sunrisers Hyderabad:** Warner not out 85, Saha not out 58. Extras (w-8) 8. **Total (for no loss in 17.1 overs) 151.** **Bowling:** Dhawal Kulkarni 3-0-22-0, Nathan Coulter-Nile 4-0-27-0, James Pattinson 3-0-29-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-36-0, Krunal Pandya 3.1-0-37-0.

last game ahead of the play-offs. However, he lasted for only seven balls as pacer Sandeep Sharma (3/34) had him caught at mid-off with a well-disguised knuckle ball.

Sandeep also found the stumps of Rohit's opening partner Quinton de Kock (36 off 29) who played on after smashing the SRH pacer for couple of sixes and a boundary. — *PTI*

IPL POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	14	9	5	0	18	+1.107
Delhi Capitals	14	8	6	0	16	-0.109
Sunrisers Hyderabad	14	7	7	0	14	+0.608
Royal Challengers Bangalore	14	7	7	0	14	-0.172
Kolkata Knight Riders	14	7	7	0	14	-0.214
Kings XI Punjab	14	6	8	0	12	-0.162
Chennai Super Kings	14	6	8	0	12	-0.455
Rajasthan Royals	14	6	8	0	12	-0.569

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

## I feel crazily lucky to live out dream: Watto

**Sydney, Nov. 3:** Top Australian all-rounder Shane Watson on Tuesday retired from competitive cricket following his team Chennai Super Kings' exit from the Indian Premier League, calling himself "ridiculously fortunate" to have enjoyed a career spanning 20 years.

The 39-year-old retired from international cricket in 2016 and bid adieu to the Australian Big Bash league last year.

"It all started as a dream as a young kid saying to my Mum, as I watched a Test match, that I want to play for Australia. Now as I officially announce my retirement from all cricket I feel crazily lucky to live out my dream," Watson said on his YouTube channel, a link of which was posted on his Twitter handle.

"It really does feel like the right time. Knowing



that I've played my last game of cricket ever, for my beloved CSK, who've been so incredibly good to me over the last three years.

"To think that I'm finishing up my playing days as a 39-year-old after all of my injury setbacks that I've had along the way, I feel so ridiculously fortunate."

In his spectacular international career, Watson played 59 Tests,

190 ODIs and 58 T20Is, scoring 10,950 runs and taking 291 wickets for Australia.

A sought-after player in the T20 format, Watson also has 3,874 runs in 145 IPL games with four hundreds and 21 fifties. Watson scored 299 runs in CSK's IPL campaign this year which ended on Sunday with the side failing to qualify for the playoffs for the first time. — *PTI*



David Warner of Sunrisers Hyderabad plays a shot against Mumbai Indians in an IPL match at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. — *BCCI*

## BCCI WILL DO ITS BEST TO GET ROHIT ON FIELD

**New Delhi, Nov. 3:** BCCI president Sourav Ganguly wants injured senior opener Rohit Sharma to tread cautiously while deciding on competing for his IPL team Mumbai Indians in the play-offs as he risks aggravating the hamstring tear that led to his exclusion from the Australia-bound India squad.

Rohit has been out of action since the second leg fixture against KXIP due to a left hamstring tear and has been left out of the Indian squad for Australia tour starting later this month.

The BCCI president said that the board will do everything possible to get an "asset like Rohit" back in the park as that's their job. MI are scheduled to take on Delhi Capitals on Thursday in the playoffs.

"Rohit is injured at the moment. Otherwise, why would we leave out a player like him. He is the vice-captain of the national

(limited-overs) team," Ganguly said.

"We will have to assess him. I don't know (when he can come back). He hasn't played so far since the time he has got injured. We want him to recover. It's the BCCI's job to get their best players on the park. If he recovers, he plays."

When asked about the videos put out by MI where Rohit is seen batting at the nets, Ganguly struck a note of caution for the senior player.

"Yeah, you don't want him to get injured again. He has a hamstringing tear and it will get ruptured again. It will then get longer for him to come back. But yes, there are people working with him."

"The Mumbai Indians physio is working with him. The Indian physio (Nitin Patel) is there. Rohit himself knows that he has got a long career ahead and its not just this IPL or next series for him." — *PTI*

## Make helmets must for batsmen: Sachin

**New Delhi, Nov. 3:** Concerned about safety of the players, Indian batting legend Sachin Tendulkar on Tuesday urged the International Cricket Council (ICC) to make it mandatory for batsmen to wear helmets while playing at the professional level.

Tendulkar shared a video of Sunrisers Hyderabad all-rounder Vijay Shankar getting hit on the head when Kings XI Punjab fielder Nicholas Pooran threw the ball towards the striker's end, attempting to run out the batsman.

In the video, originally posted by the official website of the Indian Premier League, Shankar is seen falling on the ground after taking the hit as physios rushed to check on him. Fortunately the 29-year-old was wearing a helmet.

"The game has become faster but is it getting safer? Recently we witnessed an incident which could've been nasty. Be it a spinner or pacer, wearing a HELMET should be MANDATORY for batsmen at professional levels. Request @icc to take this up on priority," Tendulkar tweeted.

The tragic death of young Australian batsman Phillip Hughes after being hit by a Sean Abbott bouncer during a domestic match in November 2014 had triggered a debate on players' safety.

The 25-year-old was hit on the neck, just below the helmet. It forced the manufacturers to redesign the helmets to enhance safety



Vijay Shankar (left) of Sunrisers Hyderabad is hit on the helmet by the returning ball during an IPL match against Kings XI Punjab in Dubai on October 24. — *BCCI*

of the batsmen.

Tendulkar also tagged all the cricket boards including the BCCI, Cricket Australia and England and Wales Cricket Board.

In another tweet he tagged Ravi Shastri, recalling an incident when the India head coach got hit by a full-toss bowled by Sunil Gavaskar during an exhibition match.

"This also reminded me of the time when you got hit after top-edging a full toss bowled by Mr Gavaskar during an exhibition game. That could've been a grave injury too but thankfully wasn't!" — *PTI*

## WOMEN'S T20 CHALLENGE

## Supernovas target third straight title

**Sharjah, Nov. 3:** The best of Indian women's cricket will combine with and also go up against stars from countries like England, South Africa, and the West Indies when the third edition of the Women's T20 Challenge gets underway here on Wednesday.

The four-match tournament will have three teams — defending champions Supernovas, last year's runners-up Velocity and Trailblazers — competing against each other once before the summit clash on November 9. Cricketers from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and New Zealand will also participate.

The Supernovas, led by Harmanpreet Kaur, have been invincible so far winning all the previous two editions. They will kick-start the tournament taking on Mithali Raj's Velocity in a repeat of last year's final eyeing a third title on the trot.

Harmanpreet was in top form in the last edition scoring two half-centuries in three matches and in the final, her blistering 37-ball 51 sealed a second win for them. India's T20 captain will look to return to her majestic form, overcoming a patchy show in the World T20 in Australia earlier this year.

She had a forgettable out-

● **The four-match tournament will have three teams — defending champions Supernovas, last year's runners-up Velocity and Trailblazers — competing against each other once before the summit clash on Nov. 9.**

ing averaging a dismal 6.00 from five matches that cost India quite dearly in the tournament where they finished runners-up, after being bowled out for 99, chasing 185.

There will also be Jemimah Rodrigues to watch out for. The Mumbai cricketer was the top run-getter (123 runs at an average of 61.50) in their triumphant campaign last season. She was adjudged the 'Player of the Series'.

The opposition camp features Mithali, who will be keen to lead from the front and avenge their 2019 defeat when they lost by four wickets in a last over thriller. Velocity will rely heavily on 16-year-old Indian sensation Shafali Verma who grabbed eye-balls by hitting most sixes (nine) in the World T20 and finished as the fifth highest run-scorer. — *PTI*

## Leicester power into second place

**London, Nov. 3:** Leicester swept into second place in the Premier League with an impressive 4-1 victory at Leeds, while Fulham beat West Bromwich Albion 2-0 to finally clinch their first win of the season on Monday.

Brendan Rodgers' side are just one point behind leaders Liverpool after winning five of their first seven games in a top-flight season for the first time in their history.

Harvey Barnes and Youri Tielemans put Leicester two up before half-time at Elland Road.

Stuart Dallas got one back for Leeds but Jamie Vardy's eighth goal of the season and a late Tielemans penalty wrapped up Leicester's fourth successive away league win.

After the disappointment of missing out on a place in the Champions League last term, Leicester have shown they

## THE RESULTS

Fulham (Decordova-Reid 26, Aina 30)	2
West Brom	0
Leeds (Dallas 48)	1
Leicester (Barnes 3, Tielemans 21, 90-pen, Vardy 76)	4

are capable of mounting another challenge to make it to top four.

Even a title push might not be impossible given they have already thrashed Manchester City 5-2.

"We were technically brilliant. We had the quality to play when we had the opportunities. I thought we were amazing right across the team," Rodgers said. — *AFP*

## Shuttlers return home after testing -ve

**New Delhi, Nov. 3:** Forced to pull out of the SaarLorLux Open in Germany and stay in quarantine there because of Covid-19 fears, an Indian badminton contingent, including defending champion Lakshya Sen, on Tuesday returned to the country after testing negative for the infection.

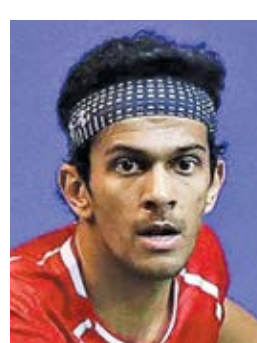
Lakshya's dreams of defending the title had come crashing down when he had to withdraw from the tournament after his father-cum-coach D.K. Sen tested Covid-19 positive. He, however, had no symptoms. Two other Indian shuttlers — former world number 13 Ajay Jayaram and 2018 winner Subhankar Dey, who had arranged funds to participate in the German tourney after the Denmark Open, also had to withdraw owing



Lakshya Sen



Subhankar Dey



Ajay Jayaram

to contact with senior Sen. Lakshya, Jayaram, Dey and physio Abhishek Wagh had tested negative ahead of the tournament.

The Indian contingent, however, had to spend five days in quarantine before fresh test results found them to be negative, clearing their return to the country following the ordeal.

"We reached Bangalore at home this morning

around 5am. We all are fine and healthy," a relieved D.K. Sen said.

"We were in quarantine since my first Test came positive. The German official did the second Covid Test for all five of us on November 1 and thankfully the reports came negative, so we immediately returned home."

While Lakshya, his father and physio reached Bangalore, Dey

and Jayaram took a flight from Frankfurt to Delhi.

Lakshya, who claimed five titles in the senior circuit last year including two BWF World Tour Super 100 top honours, had received a bye in the opening round of the event along with Dey. Jayaram, on the other hand, had won his opening-round clash but the Covid concerns brought an unfortunate end to

India's campaign at the tournament.

"... This situation prevented the players from competing in the event and local authorities putting them in isolation," the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, where Lakshya is a regular, said in a statement.

"The timely intervention of Badminton Association of India, German Badminton Association and Badminton World Federation ensured that after 5 days of isolation, all of them were again put through a Covid test on Sunday which turned out negative."

"This helped the players, coach and physio to return back to India. Earlier the local authorities in Saarbrücken insisted on all the players and support staff to remain in isolation till the 10th of November 2020." — *PTI*