

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | SATURDAY | 24 OCTOBER 2020



NATION | 4

Mufti wants Art. 370 to be restored



WORLD | 5

India, China, Russia 'filthy', says Trump

SPORTS | 8

Chennai suffer another defeat



deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

Vol. 22 No. 45 Established 1938 | 16 PAGES | ₹6.00

WEATHER

Max: 31.0°C
Min: 16°C
RH: 79%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 31/16 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+54,280)	(+632)
78,10,486	1,17,909

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,421)	(+6)
TS: 2,29,001	1,298
(+3,765)	(+20)
AP: 8,00,684	6,544

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,22,73,813

DEATHS

11,46,224

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana

Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Shuddha Saptami till 6.58 am

Star: Uttarashada till 1.30 am (Saturday)

Varjyam: 9.10 am to 10.48 am; 5.41 am to 7.22 am (Saturday)

Durmuhurtam: 8.33 am to 9.19 am; 12.23 pm to 1.09 pm

Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

HJRI CALENDAR

Rabbi-ul Awwal 5, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.31 am

Zohar: 12.26 pm

Asar: 4.28 pm

Maghrib: 6.05 pm

Isha: 7.21 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM

SUNSET TODAY 6.25 PM

MOONSET 9.38 PM

MOONRISE 10.55 AM

COUNTER POINT

Hope it's not a promise like achhe din!

SHORT TAKES

Need white paper on note ban: Cong

New Delhi: Ahead of the 4th anniversary of demonetisation, the Congress on Friday demanded that the government bring a white paper on the benefits of its decision to ban notes of higher denomination. Congress spokesperson Gourav Vallabh asked why is the government afraid to make public the names of entities involved in scams, the details of defaulters and transaction trails, since the Income Tax Department was probing all those with undisclosed incomes. "In the next couple of weeks, when we will be commemorating the 4th anniversary, we demand that the government should come out with a white paper highlighting the cost and benefits of this 'Tughlaqi decree'," he said at a press conference. The Congress leader said the government should answer how many such alleged defaulters has the Income Tax Department probed and what is the undisclosed income unearthed.

INSIDE

STATE... PAGE 2

Many wait in vain to meet Central team

NATION... PAGE 4

US confirms 'close' watch on India-China border row

Bharat Bio's Covaxin gets P3 nod, vaccine by June '21

KANIZA GARARI | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

Phase 3 clinical trials on humans for Covaxin, the ingeniously developed Covid-19 vaccine, have been approved by the Drugs Controller General of India on 26,000 participants in 25 centres.

The tests will be carried out in hospitals in major cities. Symptomatic patients of Covid-19 with confirmed CT scan and chest X-ray and who are under treatment will be given the vaccine dose.

The dose is 0.5 ml on day zero and day 28, according to sources. An expert committee of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) evaluated the safety and efficacy data of Phase 1 and Phase 2 trials of Covid-19 before giving the final approval.

Bharat Biotech, which has developed Covaxin in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology, said on Friday that it has got approval for Phase 3 trials from Drugs Controller

● **THE DOSE** is 0.5 ml on day zero and day 28, according to sources.

● **AN EXPERT** committee of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) evaluated the safety and efficacy data of Phase 1 and Phase 2 trials of Covid-19 before giving the final approval.

General of India (DCGI). Sai Prasad, executive director of Bharat Biotech, has stated that if everything goes well there is a possibility of Covaxin being available by June 2021.

The expert committee meeting of CDSCO was held on October 5 where the data of Phase 1 and 2 was evaluated. It discussed the efficacy of the inactivated Coronavirus vaccine BBV152 along with the proposal to conduct event-driven Phase 3 trials to assess the efficacy of the vaccine.

The committee instructed that symptomatic cases who will be given the dose must have symptoms of

breathlessness, oxygen saturation levels less than 94, vomiting, nausea, diarrhoea and severe cases and must be in intensive care treatment.

Bharat Biotech had on October 2 sought the DCGI's permission to conduct Phase 3 randomised double-blind placebo-controlled multicentre trial of its Covid-19 vaccine. It was asked to submit the complete safety and immunogenicity data of the Phase 2 trial besides providing some clarifications before proceeding to the next stage.

Trials of about 100 vaccine candidates are being conducted worldwide. In India, Zydus Cadila Ltd is in Phase 2 of human clinical trials. The Serum Institute of India is holding Phase 2 and 3 human clinical trials of AstraZeneca's Oxford vaccine. One of the volunteers of this trial died in Brazil but the trials are going ahead.

Russia is testing its Sputnik vaccine and China also as several candidate vaccines under testing.

1990s order let realtors build on smaller lakes

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

The death knell for the city's lakes was sounded in the 1990s when the then government issued a notification stating that water bodies smaller than 10 acres could be used to build residential and commercial purposes.

As a result, more than 3,000 water bodies within the city limits disappeared by mid-2000s which also saw a real estate boom.

There are now a mere 185 lakes in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits.

What is even more alarming is that as many as 10 lakes in the city are on the verge of disappearance, with four lakes already disappearing.

The full tank level of 25 waterbodies under the Himayatsagar alone has reduced to about 1,222 hectares from 2,081 hectares.

A study has also revealed that combined water spread under the basins of three lakes, which served as major watersheds for Hyderabad and surrounding areas, has come down by 40 per cent between

● **AS MANY** as 399 lakes disappeared in the last 10 years, 14 of them in Saroornagar mandal.

● **TWO ARE** in process of disappearing and another 10 lakes are in the verge of extinction

1978 and 2013. A technical report, 'Documenting disappearing water bodies of Hyderabad city', prepared by the Society for Participatory Development revealed that 27 lakes and kuntas under Himayatsagar, Umdasagar and Miralam tank systems have totally disappeared during this period.

The impact has been manifold, with aquatic life deteriorating, groundwater levels declining, and waterlogging and flash floods becoming common during heavy rains.

The government finally formed the lake protection committee comprising officials from the irrigation and revenue departments, GHMC and the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority.

■ **Page 2: Records not translated from Urdu**

UPA wasted 10 years of Nitish rule, says PM

Era of lantern is over, says Modi taking dig at RJD

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, OCT. 23

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched his campaign for Bihar Assembly elections with three back-to-back rallies in Sasaram, Gaya and Bhagalpur where he castigated the Opposition over its stand on repeal of Article 370 and reminded people of the 15-year reign of "crime" and "loot" under the RJD.

In Sasaram, Mr Modi began his speech by paying tribute to veteran Dalit leader and LJP founder Ram Vilas Paswan and socialist leader Raghuvansh Prasad Singh who passed away recently due to prolonged illness. Blaming the Opposition parties for "creating hurdles" in the progress of Bihar, Mr Modi said that "people have decided to stop all those who have a history of making Bihar a BIMARU state".

"They were so angry over being defeated by the NDA that they tried every possible way to sabotage the development of Bihar. I as Gujarat CM and Nitish Kumar from Bihar used to attend Central meetings regularly and I used to see him requesting them to stop the development of Bihar. They wasted 10 years of Nitish Kumar as CM," Mr Modi said. The RJD-led grand alliance has emerged as the main challenger to the JD(U)-BJP alliance in the state where polling is scheduled to begin in three phases from



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a gathering during an election rally, at Gandhi Maidan in Gaya on Friday. — PTI

October 28. Mr Modi, who is to address 12 public meetings across the state ahead of Bihar polls, sought votes for another term of the NDA government in Bihar, saying that he has been working with Mr Nitish Kumar only for the last three-four years and the state has progressed during this period. He also spoke of the poor law and order scenario during 15 years of RJD rule.

"The era of the lantern is over... people are now using electricity everywhere in the state. I don't have to remind you about the condition of Bihar before NDA, led by Nitish Kumar, came to power in

Bihar. Earlier life would come to a standstill after sunset, but today roads and electricity are there. People live without fear in the present time," he said. "The people who were once in power have greed in their eyes for Bihar which is now developing. People of the state must not forget the condition of Bihar when they were in power and how they pushed the state towards backwardness," the Prime Minister added.

He also raised the Galwan valley clash, Article 370 and Pulwama terrorist attack in his speeches. "I bow my head at the feet of brave soldiers who were martyred in

Galwan to save the honour of our motherland and the tricolour. In Pulwama also Bihar jawans were martyred," he said.

Mr Modi slammed the Opposition parties for demanding restoration of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir and asserted that the country will not go back on its decision. He also lashed out at the opposition for protesting farm laws and accused them of standing in support of "brokers and middlemen".

Exuding confidence that the NDA will return to power, he said, "Even before the polls are overall survey reports are saying that NDA will win and form the government".

Future Tank Bund



An artist's impression of how the Tank Bund road in Hyderabad will look after the ongoing ₹13 crore facelift project is completed. ■ **Report on Page 4**

NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING TO BE UP BY OCT. 2022

New Delhi, Oct. 23: Construction of a new Parliament building will begin in December this year and is likely to be completed by October 2022, while necessary measures have been put in place to ensure that Parliament sessions can be held uninterrupted during this period in the existing buildings, Lok Sabha Secretariat said on Friday.

In the new building, the Lok Sabha chamber will have a seating capacity for 888 members, while Rajya Sabha will have 384 seats for the upper house members, sources said after a review meeting. It will also have a grand Constitution Hall, a lounge for members of Parliament, a library, multiple committee rooms, dining areas and parking.

— PTI

ALL IS WELL | World Cup winning cricket captain on road to recovery, may be discharged in next couple of days

Kapil Dev suffers heart attack, undergoes angioplasty

New Delhi, Oct. 23: India's first World Cup-winning cricket captain Kapil Dev underwent an angioplasty after suffering a heart attack here on Friday but is "well on the road to recovery" and likely to be discharged in the next couple of days.

The 61-year-old, who is based in Delhi's Sundar Nagar area, complained of chest pain on Thursday following which he was taken to Fortis Escorts Heart Institute emergency department in Okhla. "Kapil Dev suffered a heart attack. He was evaluated and an emergency coronary angioplasty was performed in

the middle of night," the hospital said in an updated health bulletin after only mentioning chest pain in its initial statement. "Currently, he is admitted in ICU and under close supervision of Dr Atul Mathur and his team. Kapil Dev is stable now and he is expected to get discharged in a couple of days."

Angioplasty is a procedure to open blocked arteries and restore normal blood flow to the heart. Later in the day, a short statement on his instagram account expressed gratitude for the concern and support extended to his



family. "Thank you everyone for all the love and concern. I am overwhelmed with the good wishes and well on the road to recovery," the statement read. The 1983 World Cup-winning legendary all-rounder

was wished a speedy recovery by many on social media, including India's current captain Virat Kohli and Sachin Tendulkar among others.

"Praying for your speedy recovery. Get well soon paaji," Kohli said. "Take care @therealkapildev! Praying for your quick recovery. Get well soon Paaji," wished Tendulkar.

Also wishing him good health were India batsman Shikhar Dhawan and badminton player Saina Nehwal. "Wishing the @therealkapildev a swift recovery. The nation is well aware of his grit and spirit and we are very sure

he will be out of the hospital soon," said the BCCI. Kapil's former teammate Madan Lal said he has conveyed some of the concern of his well-wishers to the Chandigarh-born legend's family. "To those who have called to inquire your prayers and wishes are conveyed to the family and received with gratitude. Good health and strength kaps," read a tweet from Kapil's former teammate Madan Lal. "Kapil was taken to the hospital in time as he complained of uneasiness. As per the doctors the procedure has been successful and he will be home soon," he added.

One of India's greatest cricketers, Kapil played 131 Tests and 225 ODIs.

The imposing former player, who also tried his hand at golf after retiring from cricket, is the only player to claim over 400 wickets (434) and accumulate more than 5000 runs in Tests. He also served as India's national coach between 1999 and 2000. Kapil was inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in 2010.

"The big hearted #Kapildev our captain, with a never say die attitude, has recovered. For this mighty giant of Indian

cricket nothing is impossible," tweeted Kirti Azad, also a former teammate of Kapil. "Kapil The invincible @therealkapildev is a great friend and super human being. Captain. Looking forward for a meal together soon," he added.

Another World Cup-winning former India cricketer Yuvraj Singh said, "Dear paaji. Praying for your speedy recovery! Get well soon please ...after cricket I still need some golfing lessons."

Nicknamed the 'Haryana Hurricane', Kapil is also a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Territorial Army.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

AIG DONATES
₹50L FOR RELIEF
RAIN-HIT AREASDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

The Asian Institute of Gastroenterology has donated ₹50 lakh as assistance to the measures taken by the state government in the rain and flood-affected areas in Hyderabad.

Asian Institute of Gastroenterology managing director Dr Nageswar Reddy said that the financial assistance was extended to support measures taken by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao for the relief and rehabilitation of the people in the affected areas.

GOVT TEACHERS
DISMISS ROW
OVER DONATIONDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

The Government Teachers' Association has decided to contribute one day's salary towards the Chief Minister Relief Fund to help farmers who were affected by the recent floods. A representation of government teachers stated their willingness in this regard to education minister Sabitha Indira Reddy on Wednesday.

The association stated that the decision was taken with consent of all teachers and that opposition from some panchayat raj teachers unions towards the cause was uncalled for.

CM ORDERS ₹10K
RELIEF TO BE PAID
BEFORE FESTIVALS.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has instructed officials to ensure that the ₹10,000 immediate financial assistance sanctioned by the government is distributed to every flood-affected family before the Dasara festival.

While reviewing the relief and rehabilitation measures in the city with senior officers, Rao instructed officers to complete the process on a war footing. "Due to inundation of houses in many parts of the city, people are not in a position to even cook their meals. Hence, we have decided to extend ₹10,000 to each family as immediate financial assistance. This programme should be done actively," he said. Raghuma Reddy, managing director, Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Ltd (TSSPDCL) managing director, explained that due to heavy rains and floods, 33/11 KV substations were damaged at 15 places and they had been repaired.

Besides, 11KV feeders were damaged in 1,080 places and had also been restored. Of the 1,215 transformers damaged, 1,207 had been restored and the remaining eight were submerged in water, said Raghuma Reddy.

Kishan Reddy offers support



Union minister G. Kishan Reddy speaks to the families who were affected by the heavy rains in Nagammakunta on Friday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Kishan thanks Gadkari for funds

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy, expressed his gratitude to Nitin Gadkari, Union minister of road transport and highways, for the release of ₹202 crore to the state.

The money is meant to carry out repair work on 868 km of eight national highways. The proposals have been pending for

long, and Kishan Reddy had held several meetings to get clearance.

The sanction of funds comes at a time when roads are ravaged by heavy rains and floods. It will be used by the state roads and buildings (national highways) division of the state government to carry out maintenance works, said Kishan Reddy. The amount is more than 85 per cent of the claim sub-

mitted by the state.

Kishan Reddy reiterated that the state would get the maximum possible support from the Centre to undertake rescue repair and rehabilitation activity.

On Friday the minister held a review meeting with five members of the Central team at the Dilkusha guest house here. The minister said that the state government was yet to give a

detailed report about the damage caused by floods.

He appealed to the government to submit a report early and said the Centre would be able to release funds after receiving the report.

Kishan Reddy suggested that the government utilise the State Disaster Relief Fund to take up relief work. The minister visited flood-affected areas at LB Nagar, and Musheerabad.

Resident's slab over nala adds
to woes of Trimulgherry localsSANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

Heavy rains, flooded Trimulgherry lake, and an overflowing nala have made life miserable for people living Indian Airlines Colony, Padmanabha Colony, Malani Enclave Colony and Surya Avenue. To make matters worse, a retired mandal revenue officer (MRO) has put a concrete slab over a nala adjacent to his house just to park his cars. The slab has been obstructing free flow of water in the nala, which made matters worse during last week's record rains.

The resident welfare associations have complained to both the Secunderabad Cantonment Board and the GHMC. But nothing has happened.

Whenever a rain starts, fear literally engulfs Dr Jayashree, a resident of Indian Airlines Colony since past 27 years. Her house had got flooded last year too. But the October rains have been virtually hell. "There is more than four feet of water in my house. We have shifted to the first



A concrete slab laid over a nala is stopping the free flow of stormwater in Airlines Colony, Trimulgherry. One side retaining wall is broken. — GANDHI

floor, but we have lost lakhs due to flooding of our ground floor," she said.

A B-school professor, Dr Jayashree points to the nala whose free flow has been obstructed because of the concrete slab. "Whenever there is heavy rain, the nala overflows and water stagnates in the colony. This year, the area is flooded because of the heavy rains," she points out.

Residents of colonies in the area say Trim-

ulgherry Lake is highly neglected. Though the lake is spread over eight acres, authorities have not bothered about it. People have been dumping garbage in it. Anti-social elements also gather around the lake, said P. Bala Showry, secretary of Malani Enclave Residents' Association, where more than 50 families live.

Indian Airlines Colony Residents' Welfare Association president Kylasa Balaraju, said, "Since the

area falls under the Cantonment Board, we have brought our precarious situation to the attention of the board. We have also informed the GHMC about it.

Balaraju alleged that a resident of Surya Avenue, B. Krupakar, a retired MRO, constructed the concrete slab over the nala to park his cars. "That slab is obstructing the free flow of the water, due to which the area has got flooded," Balaraju underlined.

Many wait in vain to
meet Central teamMADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

The Central teams, which visited the city, had no time on the second day to interact with flood victims in several places, though they did so in others. They did not even collect the representation given by residents who were lined up during the inspection.

The teams just inspected the sites which they were asked to visit by GHMC officials. Civic body officials had a busy time as both Central teams and Union minister G. Kishan Reddy were inspecting different areas at the same time.

T. Sudheer, a resident of Ayyappanagar, said that the major problem that the residents are facing is not the lake, which has been overflowing with sewage water continuously since 10 days but the water that is raising a stink and making it difficult for the residents to step out. When they tried to convey the same to Central

teams, the latter were in a hurry. The area, including Ayyappa Colony, Malikarjunanagar, and others, have flood water mixed with sewage water from the adjoining areas.

The teams did not inspect Venkatramana Colony, Sai Nagar Colony in Nagole, Green Park in Lingojiguda (Karmanghat), P&T Colony, Kamalanagar, Vivekanandanagar in Saroornagar, Singareni Colony in Saidabad, Kodandaram Nagar, Sisalbasti in Gaddiannaram, Banjara Colony, Ambedkarnagar and Ranganayakagutta in Hayathnagar which are still submerged.

The civic body released a statement in which it said Central team leader Praveen Vashista, R.B. Kaul of the finance ministry's department of expenditure, Dr K. Manoharan, director, department of agriculture, Hyderabad were apprised about the relief activities. The team inspected Nagole, Bandlaguda Cheruvu over-

flowing through nalas and inundated areas and interacted with people.

In LB Nagar zone, the team visited Hayathnagar circle and Nagole Rajarajeshwari Colony, inspected the areas under inundation where the affected people informed that the water flow was about six feet high. State irrigation and GHMC officials informed the team that a consultant had been appointed to draft designs for a permanent solution like alignment of lakes into Musi River to prevent further inundation.

Further, the team visited Meerpet Nala in Karmanghat and Bairamalguda Nala where water inundated Udaynagar, Malreddy Rangareddy Nagar, Tapovan Colony where nearly 2,000 houses were submerged. Later the team inspected Saroornagar Cheruvu. The team also visited Nadeem Colony where Shatham Cheruvu flood water entered the colony.

GUDUR DEMANDS
TRANSPARENCY
OVER FLOOD
FUNDSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

State Congress treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy on Friday demanded that the government be transparent in distributing financial aid to flood-affected people in Hyderabad.

In a statement, he said that though the government had announced a relief package of ₹550 crore, he was doubtful about the proper distribution of the money.

He said that many times in the past, whenever the people faced natural calamities, relief has not reached all the affected persons. The distribution process has been used for the publicity of the ruling party.

The TPCC treasurer demanded that the GHMC should open a website and upload the details of financial aid for transparency.

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS
ADILABAD, OCT. 23

The state government has clarified in regards to the implementation of LRS and revenue acts in agency areas.

The clarification, through the memo NO:822/TWLTR/2020 was communicated on October 22, to the district collectors of Adilabad, Asifabad and Mancherla by Somesh Kumar, Chief Secretary, Telangana.

The memo states that the matter brought to the notice of the government has been examined and clarified.

Regulation of layouts and plots in Scheduled V area under the Telangana Regulation of unapproved and illegal Layout Rules, 2020 shall be taken up strictly in accordance with the Telangana Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959 as amended by Regulation 1 of 1970.

Action to issue any property passbook etc. consequent

● THE ADIVASIS had staged protests opposing the implementation of the LRS, property survey and the new revenue act in the agency areas. They had alleged that the acts are violating 1/70 and PES Act.

to the exercise for enlisting non-agricultural properties in urban and rural areas shall be done strictly, in accordance with the Telangana Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959 as amended by Regulation 1 of 1970.

The Adivasis had staged protests opposing the implementation of the LRS, property survey and the Telangana New Revenue Act in the agency areas.

They had alleged that the acts and the schemes are violating 1/70 and PES Act.

The collector took note of the Adivasi people's anxiety on the matter and sought clarification from the state.

On top of paycuts, job losses,
onion prices adds to the tearsKANIZA GARARI AND
SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

Pay cuts and half salaries already affected the salaried class and the rising price of onions is another blow especially in the festival season.

Pinky Mehta, a school teacher, said, "The increasing price of vegetables has been a concern since last two months. Now, the onion has again become costly. How is one to survive?"

Those who are getting half salary or no salary from March are not venturing to the vegetable market and are surviving on grams and grains.

M. Siddique, an employee with a private company, said, "We are not using too much onion. Foods which require too much onions are totally skipped as it is not worth buying in these times."

M. Ramesh, a shopkeeper, said, "I have stopped keeping stocks of onions. Most of the stock is soiled."

Small eateries have been affected. William Peter, who runs a catering and food delivery business, at Malkajgiri, said,

"We work with small margins. When onion is ₹100 a kg, we are left with no profit."

Nadigopla Vijay Kumar, who runs a saloon, said, "Onion is compulsory at home.

The price rise hurts the middle class. Our incomes have come down due to the lockdown and this new burden is unbearable."

Renuka and her husband have small jobs. "Onion is a must daily and it is difficult to manage when it costs more."

Kiran Kumar, a kirana shop owner had purchased

PRICES OF ONION TO SHOOT UP BY ₹20

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

Onions, a kitchen essential that under normal circumstances does not retail for more than ₹30 per kg, is being sold at ₹110 due to a shortage in supply after incessant rains and destruction of crops.

Supply at the Kurnool market yard which used to get a daily average of 5,000 tonnes is sliced down to less than 1,000 tonnes.

At Mahboobgunj in Malakpet, supply has gone down to 1.11 lakh quintals from 2.42 lakh quintals last year.

This is not the first time, however. In 2019, onion cost ₹150-₹200 in November while in 2018, at the same time, onion prices went up ₹50 which had created unrest. In December 2017, onions cost ₹48-₹60, a 220 per cent jump since December 2016.

PRICE AT LARGEST WHOLESALE
MARKET IN TWO STATES DROPSATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 23

The average wholesale onion price at Mahboobgunj, the largest wholesale onion market of the Telugu states, has dropped in the past two days. It stood at ₹7,000 per quintal on Friday against ₹8,000 on Wednesday.

In the last few days, the market is abuzz that onion supply in south India is affected because of heavy rains. Many commission

only half the stock that he usually does. "Many people are are finding it very difficult to purchase onions."

● THIS IS not the first time, however. In 2019, onion cost ₹150-₹200 in November while in 2018, at the same time, onion prices went up ₹50 which had created unrest. In December 2017, onions cost ₹48-₹60, a 220 per cent jump since December 2016.

In December 2017, onions cost ₹48-₹60, a 220 per cent jump since December 2016. It is estimated that this year, onion prices will further shoot up by ₹20.

Owners of small shops like the Bombay Chaat House in Secunderabad say that despite the skyrocketing prices, they cannot stop using onions, as it will affect their sales further.

agents could not open shop and supply from Maharashtra was also affected. This has resulted in a rise in wholesale price. An agent in Mahboobgunj said that the onion prices had swung wildly in 20 days, going from about ₹3,500-4,000 to ₹8,000. Second and the third quality onion sold at ₹5,000 and ₹4,000. He said that when prices started to soar, people started hoarding. This disturbed the demand-supply chain.

● THE PRICE rise hurts the middle class.

Farmers reel under losses due to heavy rains

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT 23

Thousands of farmers in the state have been left battered by the incessant rains and floods that hit last week. Hundreds of acres of land and standing crops on them have been destroyed in Khammam and other districts.

Deccan Chronicle spoke to an affected farmer, Yaswanth Chowdary in Chandrapatala village of Khammam district. Chowdary said



Crops damaged as a result of continuous rains.



he and about 500 farmers in his village had lost over an acre of land each and paddy and cotton crop due to the rains. "So far we have not

received any assurance from the government about compensation for this massive loss. It was only today that officers from the agri-

culture department visited the village to take stock of the situation but they did not tell us anything," Chowdary said.

He added that this is not the only issue they are facing as farmers. Farmers in Chowdary's village claim they have not received any benefits under the Rythu Bandhu scheme since last year. "In my mandal alone, there are about 3,000 farmers who are yet to receive money. Imagine how many farmers who have suffered

natural bodies. This is how Mir Jumla Kunta in Talab Katta became Bhavaninagar and Shamalkunta in Ameerpet turned Sundarnagar. The Nawab Saheb Kunta, Bathukamma Kunta, Masab Kunta, Yousufguda Cheruvu and several others vanished.

HUDA had identified 169 lakes as being 10 acres and above, covering approximately 90.56 sq. km. After formation of the HMDA, 501 lakes were identified in 2010 as being under HUDA and 415 lakes under the

the fury of nature may be awaiting help all over the district and the state."

Farmers in Chandrapatala are furious over the small compensation for the land that was acquired in the village. The government took over a large section of the land at low rates for the highway from Suryapet to Devarapalli, which passes through the village. Farmers claim that while the land costs ₹20 lakh per acre, the government has valued it at ₹3 lakh.

When queried, officials said the GHMC has already marked the FTL of 185 lakes and has fenced 53 of them. Encroachments could not be removed as people have been holding pattas and registration certificates. "The issue has been taken to the notice of government, which will take a final call," a senior GHMC official maintained.

Records on lakes not translated from Urdu

From page 1

The government asked the committee to mark the FTLs of the lakes and fence them to stop further encroachments.

Even though records of Hyderabad's lakes from the Nizams' times are safe at the State Archives and Research Institute, the government has not got them translated from Urdu to zero in on encroachments.

Responding to a writ petition, the then Andhra Pradesh High Court during the mid-1990s had asked

● 19 LAKES are being developed under the urban Mission Kakatiya, including Patel Cheruvu, Ambeer Cheruvu, Boin Cheruvu, Malka Cheruvu, Pedda Cheruvu, Cherlapally Tank, Mukkidi Cheruvu, Nallagandla Cheruvu, Oora Cheruvu, Anthangan Kunta, Surram Cheruvu, Maddela Kunta, Mohini Cheruvu, Durgam Cheruvu, Nalla Cheruvu and Fox Sagar.

then Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA) to submit records pertaining to the number of lakes in the city. The authority then came up with the idea of not considering water bodies below 10

acres as lakes and kuntas and that they can be used for residential and commercial purposes. This even led to a government order, which has resulted in disappearance of 3,000 of the 7,000 manmade and

OTHER STORIES

PINK BOLLWORM
RESURFACES IN
JAINAD MANDALDC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, OCT. 23

The pink bollworm has resurfaced in the cotton fields in Bela and Jainad mandals.

The agriculture department officials are visiting the fields where pink bollworm is being reported and have asked farmers to set up 'Linga Akarshana Buttalu' to get rid of the insects.

PANDITAPURAM
CATTLE FAIR
LOSES ₹1.14 CRDC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, OCT. 23

The cattle fair of Panditapuram under Kamepalli mandal lost ₹1.14 crore due to the lockdown in 2020-21. The fair is famous for cattle trade and is throughout the year every Wednesday.

With only five months left, auctioning of the fair took place. Three persons participated in the auction organised amidst tight security.

Bhukya Veeranna won the auction to organise the fair for ₹91.70 lakh.

The fair was auctioned, for ₹2.05 crore in 2019-20.

TWO KILLED
BY UNIDENTIFIED
VEHICLE ON NH 44DC CORRESPONDENT
KAMAREDDY, OCT. 23

A woman and her three-year-old son were killed in a road accident near Kamareddy on National Highway 44 on Friday.

The deceased were Jakka Narsamma, 38, and her three-year-old son Jakka Shankar of Sainipally village in Bijinepally mandal of Nagarkurnool district.

According to sources, Jakka Kurmaiah, husband of the deceased along with wife and two children had gone to Padthur in Maharashtra for road works seven months ago. After completing their work, they were returning to their native places along with other workers in a DCM van.

The van had halted near Kamareddy for them to attend to nature's call. The mother and son were crossing the NH-44 near National Dhaba, when an unidentified vehicle hit them.

The child died on the spot and Narsavva succumbed while undergoing treatment at Government area hospital in Kamareddy. Police registered a case and investigation is on.

● **THE MOTHER** and son were crossing the NH-44 near National Dhaba, when they were hit.

ENGG GRADUATE
SEEKS DATA ON
PENDING CASESDC CORRESPONDENT
KOTHGODEM, OCT. 23

Manideep Nallapu, an engineering graduate, preparing for the civil exams had asked the Department of Justice and the Department of Legal Affairs under the Right to Information Act about the pending cases in all courts including the Supreme Court, High Courts and other courts in the country since Independence.

A resident of Edulla Bayyaram under Pinapaka mandal in Bhadradi district, Manideep has an interest in issues related to court matters and pending cases.

Responding to his letter, the two departments transferred the RTI application to the Supreme Court and other high courts by forwarding the same.

Manideep said, "The Department of Justice transferred the application to its Apex Court for necessary action."

Manideep said that some cases for years are not settled, while other cases are pending even after the birth of the grandchildren of the petitioners. People have to incur heavy losses as their cases in this situation. "Keeping all this in mind, I wrote a letter under the RTI to the above departments," he said.

● **A RESIDENT** of Edulla Bayyaram under Pinapaka mandal in Bhadradi district, Manideep has an interest in issues related to court matters and pending cases. He is presently preparing for the civil exams.

Farmers take out maha rally, march to Jagtial

Seek procurement centres for maize, MSP of ₹2,500 for fine rice

PULI SHARATH
KUMAR | DC
JAGTIAL, OCT. 23

A tense atmosphere prevailed as thousands of farmers from all corners of the district participated in a maha rally organised as part of the 'Chalo Jagtial' call given by the 'Rythu Ikya Vedika,' formed by several farmers unions in Jagtial district on Friday.

After visiting the district headquarters, the farmers staged a sit-in in front of the collectorate and blocked the main road demanding that the government open procurement centres for maize and fix MSP of ₹2,500 per quintal for fine rice.

Farmers had held a rally on October 16 in Jagtial town protesting against the government for not resolving their issues and neglecting their demand to open procurement centres for maize.

The state government's new agriculture policy asked several farmers across the district to cultivate maize as an intercrop in about 20,000 hectares, along with paddy and other crops.

With the produce in their hands, they are now unable to sell it as the government refused to procure their produce and did not open procurement centres for the maize.

When the government did not respond to their demands, they gave a 'Chalo Jagtial' call and tried to seize the collectorate. The Congress also extended its support to the 'Chalo Jagtial' call given by the farmers unions.

The police, who did not give permission for the dharna, imposed section 144. It also arrested some of the main leaders of Rythu Ikya Vedika beforehand on Thursday night and placed several Congress leaders across the district, including senior Congress leader and MLC, T. Jeevan Reddy, under house arrest in the morning.

Establishing check posts at several places, the police intensified check-



Above: Thousands of farmers stag a dharna in front of the Collectorate in Jagtial district on Friday.



Police arrest the farmers

ing and tried to prevent the farmers from reaching the collectorate.

Nevertheless, thousands of farmers, including women farmers, reached the collectorate area and participated in the agitation from 11 am to 4 pm.

The police officials tried to convince the farmers to leave but they continued their protest, raising slogans against the state government.

District superintendent of police, Sindhu Sharma, reached the spot and urged the farmers to withdraw the dharna. She asked four to five farmers to accompany her to submit a memorandum to the district collector G. Ravi. But the farmers demanded that the collector come out and must listen to their problems.

A heated argument took

place between the police and the farmers. The police then arrested the farmers and shifted them to various police stations.

However, farmers reached the collectorate in several batches from every nook and corner of the district and continued the agitation.

The police had to arrest farmers more than three times. As farmers continued to arrive, they stopped arresting them and tried to prevent them from entering the collectorate.

The leaders of the farmers union alleged that the state government is treating the farmers like terrorists and Naxalites and using police force and is trying to arrest them illegally by imposing section 144.

They warned the government of intensifying their

● **CHIEF MINISTER, K. Chandrasekhar Rao, contradicting his own state policy, said that the government informed the farmers not to cultivate maize. Yet they went with maize and are now asking for MPS and procurement centres.**

agitation if it did not resolve their issues.

They demanded that the government open the purchasing centres for maize and fix the minimum support price of ₹2,500 for fine rice along with releasing the arrested farmers unconditionally.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao, contradicting his own state policy, said that the government informed the farmers not to cultivate maize. Yet they went with maize and are now asking for MPS and procurement centres.

Keeping in view the welfare of farmers, the government is ready to face the loss and is going to open procurement centres in the villages and would procure maize at MSP rates by fixing the cost at ₹1,850 per quintal, he announced. Rao blamed the Central government for the drop in maize prices.

Govt closes Rythu Bazaar, may give 'preferred MNC'

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, OCT. 23

Is the Rythu Bazaar (RB) located at the DCC Office on Wyra Road being given to a multi-national company to set up an integrated complex?

The rumour is doing the rounds among the public in Khammam. The farmers as well as customers liked the rythu bazaar. Farmers sell vegetables there directly and get good revenue. The people buy vegetables at reasonable prices.

The officials closed the RB during lockdown and it was not revived after Unlock-4, though other RBs started functioning.

Khammam farm market committee chairperson, Maddineni Venkata Ramana, said that a complex will be coming up at

● **SOURCES** in the government say that an integrated market complex will come up at the site. They hint that the complex will be run by a multinational company.

the site where all products required will be available.

Sources in the government say that an integrated market complex will come up at the site. They hint that the complex will be run by a multinational company. The farmers started an agitation against it after the news spread.

The site is in a prime location and is more than half an acre (2,500 square yards). It is learnt that the land will be given to the

MNC on lease at a nominal fee. The assistant collector's office is located adjacent to the RB and will be shifted.

Three farmers climbed a cell tower at Khanapuram Haveli police station and threatened that they would end their lives by jumping down if the government did not open the RB.

The BJP took up the issue and organised struggles against the move.

Hundreds of BJP activists tried to lay siege to the collectorate. Bharatiya Kisan Morcha state president, K. Sridhar Reddy alleged that minister Jay Kumar connived with the corporate forces to hand over the land to them. "The RB is very helpful to the farmers and people. There is no need to close it and we will not allow it."

Warangal master plan up for changes: Min

ANUDEEP
CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, OCT. 23

Minister Panchayati Raj Rural Development and Rural Water Supply, Errabelli Dayakar Rao said that the master plan for Warangal would undergo further changes to address the issues seen during the heavy rains. He said, "There was no discussion regarding drainage in the master plan."

Speaking during the council meeting of the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) in Hanamkonda on Friday, he said, "We will discuss the issue with municipal and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao, after which a call would be taken."

The state government is developing Warangal on a historic level, with the intent to place it at the forefront in the state."

He remarked that the state is lagging in development due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the recent heavy rains.

Noting that the government is serious about

● **POCHAMPALLY SRINIVAS Reddy said that development is not possible without drainage and rainwater management.**

clearing encroachments over drainage canals in Warangal, he appreciated Wardhannapet MLA Aroori Ramesh for demolishing his own camp office to make way for canal widening.

"Inquiry on the demolition of a house belonging to corporator Damodar will be held under the leadership of the district collector."

All corporators must cooperate in the demolition of encroachments. We will hold a meeting of the corporators with minister K.T. Rama Rao to resolve the issues they face in their respective divisions," he said.

MLC Pochampally Srinivas Reddy said that development is not possible without drainage and rainwater management.

ARRANGEMENTS
MADE FOR SADDULA
BATHUKAMMADC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, OCT. 23

Elaborate arrangements have been made for celebrating Saddula Bathukamma on a grand note under the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation limits, said the city mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao on Friday.

Mr Sunil Rao, accompanied by local corporators, visited the Lower Manair Dam, Pentakamma cheruvu and Mulkunta cheruvu and several other places where Bathukamma ghats are set up and inspected arrangements there.

On the ninth day of the festivities, Saddula Bathukamma is celebrated. Arrangements include road repair works, setting up of high lights at the ghats for smooth conduct of immersion. Several points were identified in various divisions so that women can play Bathukamma.

Later, Mr Sunil inspected the arrangements at the Ambedkar Stadium and directed the municipal staff to keep the surroundings clean. On the occasion of Dasara, a laser show has been organised at the Ambedkar stadium, which will be followed by a Ram Leela programme.

● **ON THE** ninth day of the festivities, Saddula Bathukamma is celebrated. Arrangements include setting up of lights at the ghats for smooth conduct of immersion. Several points were identified in various divisions for women to play Bathukamma.

Minister cautions rice millers

NARENDER
PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 23

Minister for roads and buildings, legislative affairs and housing V. Prashanth Reddy inaugurated a paddy purchasing centres at Komarpally in Velpur mandal and Bheemgal town on Friday.

He warned rice millers not to offer lower prices for paddy. He said, "If miller pay lower prices for paddy on the pretext of higher moisture content, if found flouting this, their rice mills will be

seized. Farmers should be cautious while selling their agricultural produce, as few rice millers try to cheat them."

Farmers should bring their paddy as per the specifications set by the Food Corporation of India (FCI). If the paddy meets the FCI specification, they will get the Minimum Support Price. The minister said, "We will not spare any rice miller trying to cheat the farmers while purchasing paddy. In the last season, we had seized a few rice mills for irregularities."

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao asked the officials to ensure MSP for paddy while ensuring paying the amount within two or three days of procurement.

He said, "We will be setting up 444 paddy purchasing centres in Nizamabad district. The district administration will closely monitor the paddy procurement. Farmers need not worry about MSP for paddy." Additional collector B. Chandrasekhar, MEPMA project director Ram Reddy and others were present.

TRAILER | TROUBLE

Objections to Kumaram Bheem wearing skull cap

'RRR' criticised before its release

PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, OCT. 23

The much-hyped movie 'RRR' being directed by Rajamouli is facing criticism following the release of its trailer two days back.

The reasons for the anger is a scene in which Junior NTR, who is playing the role of the Adivasi legend Kumaram Bheem, is shown wearing a white kurta and a white skull cap.

The movie has been made on icons like Kumaram Bheem and Alluri Seetharama Raju and dwells about the socio-economic conditions during their time.

Some Adivasis have raised objections to Kumaram Bheem wearing a skull cap. He had fought against Nizam's forces for water, jungle and land rights. Ironically, messages on social networking sites are projecting Kumaram Bheem as a 'Kattar Hindu' instead of as an Adivasi or a tribal



Above: The flag bearing Kumaram Bheem's slogan Jal, Jangal, Jameen.

Left: Junior NTR who plays the role of Kumaram Bheem in the RRR movie is showing wearing a skull cap.

and is being given a communal twist by some persons.

Some Adivasis condemned projecting Kumaram Bheem in 'a poor light' though they welcomed a movie on the legendary tribal warrior.

Rajamouli, however, has raised the issue of Kumaram Bheem's fight for 'Jal, Jangal and

the scene and warned Rajamouli of obstruction as the scene was insulting the sentiments of a section of people. He demanded Rajamouli to delete the scene.

In a tweet to Junior NTR, Adivasi youth Pedore Sungu of Adilabad district said there was no 'Muslim role' in the history of Kumaram Bheem. Sungu expressed his displeasure for showing Kumaram Bheem as a Muslim.

'RRR' is not the first movie on Kumaram Bheem and his historic fight. Director Allani Sridhar had made a movie 20 years ago. It won a Nandi award and veteran actor Bhoopal had played the title role. The Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Utnoor extended some financial assistance to Sridhar. It was received very well by Adivasis in particular and people in general.

An Adivasi leader said the new film will help the Kumaram Bheem legend reach a larger audience.



Above: A view of the paddy fields burning. Left: The two farmers set fire to nearly five acres of paddy fields in Lingapur village in Kamareddy district on Friday protesting against the low prices being given for paddy.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Distressed farmers set fire to their paddy fields

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAMAREDDY, OCT. 23

Two farmers, Komireti Narayana and Komireti Anjaneyulu set fire to five acres of their paddy fields in Lingapur village of Kamareddy mandal on Friday.

The act was to protest against the low prices being given for the paddy and officials ignoring the situation.

The incident sent shock waves among farmers in Lingapur village and the neighbouring villages.

The farmers said, "We had sown a superfine vari-

● **DISTRICT IN-CHARGE** agriculture officer Sunitha said, We are inquiring into the incident in Lingapur village. Concerned agriculture officers will visit the field and submit a report.

ety of paddy as per the suggestion of the state government. Insects damaged the paddy, and no agriculture official came forward to guide us.

If we harvest a low yield of this superfine variety

of paddy, we will incur huge losses."

We had no way out other than to set fire to the paddy field, they added. The farmers said that they had spent ₹1 lakh for tilling the land.

"We expected the state government to give us a helping hand, but in vain", they said.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Kamareddy district in-charge agriculture officer Sunitha said, "We are inquiring into the incident in Lingapur village. Concerned agriculture officers will visit the field and submit a report."

SHORT TAKES

CENTRAL AGENCIES
DENY LEAKING SSR
CASE INFORMATIONDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 23

Union government told the Bombay High court on Friday that none of their three agencies — Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) — which are investigating cases related to Sushant Singh Rajput's (SSR) death, have leaked probe information to the media. Last week, the court had pulled up the Union government for sharing probe information to the media.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni was hearing a public interest litigations filed by former IPS officers alleging that some news channels are maligning image of Mumbai police in SSR death case and asked the court to restrain the media coverage. The HC is hearing arguments on whether a statutory mechanism is required to control the TV news content.

On Friday, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Singh filed affidavits before the court on behalf of the CBI, ED and NCB stating they had not leaked any probe related details to the media.

The court was irked when lawyers of news channels, which are party in the PIL, put forth Supreme Court judgments and opposed the idea of statutory regulatory mechanism on news channels. The HC remarked that the media has changed now.

ANTI-BENGALI
RANT: MEGHALAYA
CALLS FOR PEACEMANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, OCT. 23

After a racial campaign by an influential students' body targeting Bengalis ahead of Durga Puja, the Meghalaya government on Friday appealed to all to maintain peace and harmony in Meghalaya. The Khasi Students Union (KSU) had put up posters in Shillong accusing all Bengalis in the state of being "Bangladeshis". The state police has removed the posters and warned of action against those trying to "incite communal disharmony". Police specifically warned the KSU to refrain from such activities or face legal action.

Former Meghalaya governor Tathagata Roy, also a BJP leader in Kolkata, tweeted, "I say this taking full responsibility as ex-governor of Meghalaya: KSU needs to be banned just like HNLC. It is an anti-national terrorist organisation, threatening Indian citizens, some of whom are residents of Meghalaya since British times. Like my family on both sides." The Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council is a banned militant outfit in Meghalaya.

Meghalaya home minister Lahkmen Rymbui said, "Anything we do, we should not vitiate the atmosphere... I request everybody not to give communal colour to any incident."

Sources in the student body indicated that the poster campaign has its roots in the Ichamati incident earlier this year when a KSU member was killed in clashes with non-tribals who were largely Bengalis.

US confirms 'close' watch
on India-China border row

Might discuss situation during the forthcoming Indo-US 2+2 dialogue

SRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

The United States confirmed on Friday that it was 'watching the situation' on the Sino-Indian line of actual control (LAC) 'closely' and that it would probably be discussed during the forthcoming Indo-US 2+2 talks at the foreign and defence ministerial level on October 27 in New Delhi, adding that the (defence pact) 'Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) and other agreements are in the works.'

In response to a question on the forthcoming 2+2 dialogue with India, a

US state department official told reporters via tele-conference. "Certainly, I think the situation on the LAC will be, will probably be, discussed at some point, and we're watching the situation closely. I think both sides have expressed a desire to de-escalate violence." In response to another question, he added, "We're in the process of finalising a lot of the discussions right now, and so I know that BECA and other agreements are in the works."

The US official also said "The 2+2 format is reserved for our closest friends and partners and reflects our belief that the United States and

India are stronger, more secure, and more prosperous when we work together. The 2+2 discussions will focus on global cooperation, on pandemic response, and challenges in the Indo-Pacific: economic space and energy collaboration, people-to-people ties, and defense and security cooperation."

As already reported, United States secretary of state, Michael R. Pompeo, and secretary of defense, Mark T. Esper, will be visiting New Delhi on October 26 and 27 and will hold talks with their Indian counterparts, S. Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh, on October 27 as part of the

Indo-US 2+2 talks. As also reported already, India and the United States could ink the BECA defence pact for 'greater geospatial information-sharing' during the forthcoming Indo-US 2+2 talks.

According to reports, BECA will enable India to use US geospatial intelligence and satellite imagery to improve the accuracy of missiles and drones, a development that might prove crucial in the situation in the Ladakh sector where there is heavy deployment of both Indian and Chinese troops backed by tanks and heavy artillery on both sides. BECA is the third proposed defence pact between the

two countries after the signing of the logistics exchange memorandum of agreement (LEMOA) in 2016 and the communications compatibility and security agreement (COMCASA) in 2018.

Pompeo will also be separately visiting Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia, after New Delhi. Commenting on that forthcoming visit to Indonesia, another US official said, "You've seen Indonesia has pushed back on Chinese ships fishing in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) illegally. And so there are things that we have done, again, that empower these countries to push back."

Top BJP leaders
advised me to
join NCP: KhadseSONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, OCT. 23

Claiming that several senior leaders are unhappy in the BJP and want to quit the party, former Maharashtra minister Eknath Khadse on Friday said that he joined the Sharad Pawar-led party as advised by some senior BJP leaders from Delhi.

Khadse, who has been sulking in the BJP ever since he had stepped down from the Maharashtra cabinet in 2016 after corruption charges, joined the NCP along with his daughter and number of supporters in presence of NCP president Sharad Pawar.

The 68-year-old leader, who was BJP's OBC face in the state along with late Gopinath Munde, said that his supporters as well as his seniors from Delhi wanted him to join the NCP.

While joining the NCP, he said that injustice was meted to him in the BJP and that he was fleeced, insulted and defamed and a false charge like molestation, too, was levelled against him.

"When I discussed the situation with seniors in Delhi, they said Natha Bhau (Khadse) you don't have a future here (in the BJP). I asked what I should do? They asked me to change the party. I asked which one should I join? Then they suggested the NCP," Khadse said.

He also claimed that several leaders in the BJP are fed up and think they should jump the ship but cannot do so as they are apprehensive the ED will be after them. "I am not afraid of anyone. If they send ED after me, I will play a CD," he said.

In his induction ceremony at NCP's office, Khadse showed his influence in the Jalgaon unit of the BJP as his supporters including Jalgaon district general secretary and members of Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti turned out in large numbers.

Targeting the BJP state leadership, Khadse said that after serving 40 years in the BJP, he did not want to leave the party but he was forced to do so as he had been defamed and harassed in the last four years.

Mumbai mall fire mishap



Smoke rises from City Central Mall after a fire broke out in it in Mumbai on Friday. The fire brigade evacuated around 3,500 people residing in a building adjacent to the Mall which caught a huge Level-5 fire on Thursday evening.

— PTI

RAHUL SAYS MODI
LIED ON INTRUSION
AS SOLDIERS DIEDNAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 23

Former Congress president and the party's star campaigner Rahul Gandhi on Friday started his campaign for Bihar Assembly elections by addressing rallies in Hisua and Kahalgao. Addressing the masses in Hisua, Gandhi attacked the NDA government at the centre in general and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in particular over the Galawan valley issue and said, "The Chinese army martyred 20 of our soldiers and took over 1,200 kilometres of our land. When China came inside our territory, why did our Prime Minister, insulting the heroes, say that no one came into our land? He is trying to mislead the people of Bihar by his statements which he should not do and speak instead about his plans to throw the Chinese out of our territory."

Gandhi's statement came in reaction to Modi's speech during his political rally in Sasaram, where he said that "brave soldiers from Bihar were martyred in Galawan to save the honour of our motherland and the tricolour." While addressing his political rally, Gandhi also raised the issue of migrant crisis and blamed the centre for not extending any support to people who were pushed out of other states during lockdown.

Addressing his first rally in poll-bound Bihar, Gandhi said that "people of Bihar were promised two crore jobs during the previous Assembly polls but no one got them."

He also lashed out at the centre for passing the three farm laws. "The three farm laws are not good for farmers. First, they put an end to mandis and MSP in Bihar and now they are trying to do it in other parts of the country," he said.

Stock limits imposed
on onion traders

New Delhi, Oct. 23: To boost domestic supply and provide relief to consumers from rising onion prices, the Centre on Friday imposed stock limits on both retailers and wholesales with immediate effect till December 31.

Now, retailers can stock onion only up to 2 tonne, whereas wholesale traders are allowed to keep up to 25 tonne. This will check hoarding and blackmarketing, it said. Onion prices have shot up sharply to over ₹75 per kg in the past few weeks in the wake of damage to the standing kharif crop in producing areas due to heavy rainfall as well as hoarding.

Addressing media, consumer affairs secretary Leena Nandan said, "This is a decisive step. We have imposed stock limits on onion traders with an immediate effect till December 31 after concerns that traders were releasing their stored stocks slowly, creating artificial price rise situation."

She said the government had to invoke the recently passed Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020, which provides regulation of agri-commodities "only" in the times of extraordinary price rise situation.

"Under this law, normally, we would not be regulating agri-food stuff like cereals and onion. But, in times of extraordinary price rise, we can regulate if the retail price breaches the trigger levels specified in the law," she said.

In case of onion, the average all-India retail price of

onion of ₹55.60 per kg that prevailed on October 21 breached the trigger level as per the formula specified under the EC Amendment Act, she said.

The all-India average retail price of ₹55.60 per kg was higher by 22.12 per cent compared with last year's rates of ₹45.33 per kg and by 114.96 per cent as against average rate that prevailed in past five years. So, the retail price had actually more than doubled and, therefore, decided to impose the stock limits on the commodity, she added.

Later, consumer affairs minister Piyush Goyal tweeted that the Modi government has taken third step to curb hoarding and check prices. Stock limits have been imposed on retailers and wholesale traders of onion.

The government said action under the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, would be taken to prevent any hoarding, black marketing of onions by unscrupulous elements.

Highlighting other measures taken to cool down the spiralling trend in onion prices, the secretary said the government has decided to augment domestic supplies through imports for which state-owned MMTC would soon float a tender for red onions to meet the demand supply gap.

Recently, the government relaxed fumigation and phytosanitary norms for import of onion and activated Indian consulates to facilitate trade, she said.

— PTI

ACTIVE COVID
CASES BELOW
7-LAKH MARKDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

With 54,366 fresh cases, India on Friday registered a total of 77.61 lakh cases of Coronavirus. In the last 24 hours 690 new deaths were recorded taking the country's total death tally to 1.17 lakh.

According to the Union health ministry, India has leaped across a significant milestone in its fight against Covid-19 as active caseload of the country has fallen below 7 lakh for the first time after two months.

The active caseload was below the 7 lakh mark last on August 22.

The total positive cases of the country are 6.95 lakh and they comprise 8.96 per cent of the total cases.

TN MP triggers row
by citing Manusmriti

Chennai, Oct. 23: A row erupted here on Friday over the alleged derogatory remarks of Lok Sabha MP and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) founder Thol. Thirumavalavan about women, with the BJP lashing out at him and demanding an apology.

The allegation against the Chidambaram MP was that he spoke ill of women while citing Manusmriti, a perceived anti-feminist ancient code of conduct. But the VCK leader denied denigrating women and insisted he was working for their emancipation.

A video clip on social media purportedly showed him making some remarks but the leader alleged "communal" forces were creat-

ing a wrong impression that he belittled women. Users on micro-blogging site Twitter debated the issue, with some supporting him and others criticising the MP.

BJP leader Khushbu Sundar hit out at Thirumavalavan and asked him to be careful of what he speaks since he was a political leader.

Addressing reporters at the state BJP headquarters, Kamalalayam, Khushbu said women cannot be objectified and accused the MP of "using religion" against them. Without naming anyone, she said many women family members of political leaders claiming to be followers of rational leader, the late EVR Periyar, "go from temple to temple

and click pictures."

Responding to the charges, Thirumavalavan said he had made no disparaging remarks against women while participating in an online conference recently.

"I said that demeans women. But those with an eye on political mileage, a casteist-communal group is spreading falsehood against me and creating an impression as if I spoke against women," he said in a video uploaded on his Twitter page. "This is completely wrong. We are struggling for women's emancipation and those unable to tolerate this are doing such things to create a flutter in the DMK alliance during (ahead of) elections," he said. — PTI

KASHMIR | ISSUE

PDP chief says she regrets allying with the BJP

Mufti wants restoration of Art. 370

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 23

Renewing her pledge to fight for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status till her last breath, former chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti said on Friday that the Centre had no right or power to abrogate Article 370. She regretted reposing faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi and allying with the BJP.

She said that the bigger issue before her, the PDP and the people of J&K, was to seek a resolution on the Kashmir issue.

"Our fight is not confined to restoration of Article 370, but for the resolution on Kashmir issue as well. Kashmir is an issue and nobody can turn a eye blind to it," she said while addressing a press conference here, her first after her release from a 14-month long detention earlier this month.

Mufti, 61, who looked in a defiant mood, said, "Those who think we will forget Article 370 are living in a fool's paradise. People have made a lot of sacrifices and we won't allow those sacrifices to go waste."

She added "We (the leaders of various political parties who are part of the recently formed People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration) are united and people should also fight it in unison. It is not the fight of Dr Farooq, Sajad Lone or any other leader but of one and all."

She vowed that she will be the first person among the political leaders to give her blood "for this cause in case the need arises".

Accusing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government at the Centre of hurting the sentiments of the people of J&K by snatching from them the special status and taking other "anti-people" decisions, she said, "This is highly regrettable that since the unconstitutional and ille-

gal abrogation of Article 370, the government has left no stone unturned to hurt the sentiments of the people with their anti-people decisions. They don't want people of Jammu and Kashmir, who are expendable for them."

She asserted, "The people of J&K are shell-shocked. They have lost hope. August 5 was loot and theft."

On PDP joining hands with the BJP to cobble up a government in J&K in 2015, she said that she regretted trusting Modi who belonged to a party of which Atal Bihari Vajpayee was also a part.

She, however, claimed that her party did not forge an alliance with the BJP to come to power.

She said, "We didn't ally with the BJP for power. If you remember, my father made a statement on July 28, 2014 wherein he stated that he wants to work for people of Jammu and Kashmir. He knew a Tsunami was coming."

She also asserted that it was not the PDP's alliance with the BJP that led to the abrogation of Article 370. "It was the Parliament that was misused. Parliament had no right to do this," she said.

She said, "These BJP leaders have ruined the Constitution of India. This country will work on the constitution and not as per the BJP manifesto."

She also said that India is economically and at diplomatic level in distress and internally also polarisation is taking its toll due to the wrong policies of the incumbent government.

She said, "Our economy is worse than that of Bangladesh. They have demonised Muslims, Dalits and all downtrodden communities. Kashmir is a problem. You cannot close your eyes to it. PDP always wanted to bring peace to this place. Look at the condition now; China on one side, Pakistan on the other."

COLLEGES TO OPEN
FROM NOV. 17 IN
KARNATAKAVINAY MADHAV | DC
BENGALURU, OCT. 23

After witnessing a downward trend in the number of Covid-19 cases for over a week, the Karnataka government has decided to open the educational institutions starting from November 17.

As the first step, the government would allow opening of degree colleges, along with diploma and engineering colleges. However, decisions on Pre-University and High Schools would be taken after studying the situation for a month.

Karnataka higher education minister Dr Ashwath Narayana said that the idea behind opening of the colleges is to maintain bonding between students and college. It has been seven months since the students have gone to their colleges and they were learning online.

While the government is opening colleges, it would be made optional as the students are free to choose between online coaching and direct teaching in colleges.

Court takes cognisance of
Elgar Parishad chargesheetDC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 23

A Sessions court in Mumbai on Friday took cognisance of the chargesheet filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) against eight persons including Stan Swamy, Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Naulakha in the Elgar Parishad case. The agency claimed that the conspiracy related to the violence against Dalits in Bhima Koregaon on January 1, 2018 was part of a "well chalked-out strategy", and spread across the country and beyond.

The NIA has filed the chargesheet under various sections of IPC, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA). The agency in its charge sheet has claimed that Teltumbde was one of the convenors of 'Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna Abhiyan' and was present for the Elgar

Parishad event on December 31, 2017 and that Navlakha was assigned the task "to unite intellectuals against the government". It also claimed that he was part of some self-proclaimed fact-finding committees and that during the probe his links with ISI also came to the fore.

According to the NIA, Father Stan Swamy, the 83-year-old resident of Ranchi, was a Maoist actively involved in the outfit's activities, and had been receiving its funds. The agency claimed that documents, including propaganda material and literature, were found from his possession. On the other hand a statement by Swamy, two days before his arrest, said that the NIA had allegedly placed several extracts before him implying his connection to Maoist forces, which he claimed were fabrications stealthily put into his computer.

The NIA claimed that the role of various frontal organisations had also emerged. The agency also called Kabir Kala Manch, one such organisation, claiming that its poets and singers, Jagtap, Gorkhe and Gaichor, were trained cadres who attended meetings to organise the Elgar Parishad event.

Another claim made by the NIA is that professor Hany Babu was "instrumental in organising visits" of foreign journalists to Maoist areas, and was instrumental in making efforts for release of convicted accused G.N. Saibaba. He also has links with other banned groups, the agency has claimed.

16 persons have so far been arrested in the case. Two of the accused, in a petition before the Bombay High Court, have said that the transfer of the case from Pune police to NIA this year was "due to malafides and political expediency."

IN BRIEF

Greta urges EU farm bill veto

Brussels: Environmental activists on Friday piled pressure on the European Parliament to vote down the EU's massive farm subsidy bill, saying it fell short of commitments to fight climate change. Leading climate change activist Greta Thunberg told *MEPs* that "this is your chance to turn empty words into action." "The eyes of future generations are upon you," she added. Thunberg has also taken shots at the media for putting under-served attention on a minor aspect of the package — a proposed ban on using the term "veggie burger" for non-meat products. The proposal, pushed by cattle and dairy farmers, was rejected as an amendment by *MEPs* on Friday although a ban on using "yoghurt style" and "cheese substitute" tags on plant-based goods survived.

US drone strike kills 17 jihadists

Beirut: The US army said on Thursday it carried out a drone strike against Al-Qaeda leaders in northwestern Syria near the Turkish border, killing 17 jihadists, according to a war monitor. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said five civilians were also among those killed. "US Forces conducted a strike against a group of Al-Qaeda in Syria (AQ-S) senior leaders meeting near Idlib, Syria," said Major Beth Riordan, the spokeswoman for United States Central Command (CENTCOM). "The removal of these AQ-S leaders will disrupt the terrorist organisation's ability to further plot and carry out global attacks threatening US citizens, our partners and innocent civilians," Riordan said in a statement. She did not specify the number of deaths from the strike.

15 detained after abortion rally ban

Warsaw: Poland's police said Friday they detained 15 people during protests in Warsaw against a court ruling that toughened the nation's strict abortion law and banned abortion of fetuses with congenital defects. Hundreds of people protested on Thursday night in front of the ruling right-wing party offices and the home of its leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, in defiance of a pandemic-related ban on public gatherings. Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. Warsaw police spokesman Sylwester Marczak said on Friday that 14 people remain in detention and 35 have been fined for having broken the ban. They were protesting the ruling by the government-controlled Constitutional Court Thursday that declared abortion of defective fetuses unconstitutional, thus shutting a major loophole in the 1993 abortion law that was a hard-won compromise.

AGEING CHIMPS CHOOSE FRIENDS CAREFULLY

Washington, Oct. 23: When it comes to friendships, people are known to become more selective with age. It turns out the same is true of male chimps, who have fewer yet more genuine pals to ape around with as they get older, according to a study published in the journal *Science* on Thursday.

The research, which was led by animal psychologist Alexandra Rosati at the University of Michigan, was said to provide the first evidence that animals exhibit age-related social selectivity, and could help us understand more about why humans behave as they do.

The authors drew on a huge dataset of 78,000 hours of observations performed at the Kibale National Park in Uganda between 1995 and 2016.

They reported on the social interactions among 21 wild male chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes) ranging in age from 15 to 58 years. Males were chosen because they remain in the communities in which they are born, whereas the majority of females disperse to new groups when they become sexually mature.

Aside from being our closest animal relatives, chimpanzees are an ideal species to compare to humans because they live long lives — sometimes until their 60s — and have a wide-degree of choice in whom they befriend.

Male friends groom one another, hunt and share meat together, collectively patrol the boundaries of their territories, and form alliances to attain and keep high rank in their groups, which in turn leads to more individual reproductive success.

Trump, Biden clash on Covid, racism, climate

Over 47 million Americans have already cast their votes

Washington, Oct. 23: US President Donald Trump and his challenger Joe Biden clashed over Covid-19, immigration, racism and climate change during their final debate, ahead of the November 3 presidential election, presenting Americans with sharply divergent views of where they would lead them over the next four years.

The two leaders traded barbs during the debate that lasted just over 90 minutes, attacking each other's positions on controlling the raging Coronavirus pandemic and curbing the country's world-leading death toll of over 2,23,000.

The prime-time debate in Nashville, Tennessee, was a less acrimonious and more substantive affair than their previous showdown on September 29, which devolved into insults and name-calling. This prompted the debate organisers to put in place muted microphones during the candidates' opening statements on each topic to minimise disruption.

The debate, deftly moderated by NBC's Kristen Welker, saw plenty of personal attacks between 74-year-old Trump, a Republican, and his 77-year-old Democratic rival, Biden, whose mutual dislike was quite evident. Millions of Americans have already made up their minds about the election, with more than 47 million people having cast early ballots by mail or in person due to Covid-19 fears.

The figure exceeds the early vote total in 2016. There are about 230 million eligible voters in total. The Coronavirus dominated the opening minutes of the Trump-Biden face-off with President Trump terming the contagion a "world-wide problem". "This has been a worldwide problem, but I've been congratulated by many countries on what we've been able to do," he said. Trump once again blamed China for the virus and said Beijing failed to prevent the disease from becoming a pandemic. — *PTI*

India, China 'filthy', says Don, rejecting climate talk

Nashville, Oct. 23: US President Donald Trump on Thursday described the air in India and China as "filthy" as he denounced Democratic rival Joe Biden's plans to tackle climate change.

At their second and final presidential debate, Trump renewed his criticism that action on climate change was unfair to the United States.

"Look at China, how filthy it is. Look at Russia, look at India — it's filthy. The air is filthy," Trump said at the debate in Nashville. Trump charged that Biden's climate plan was an "economic disaster" for oil states such as Texas and Oklahoma.

Biden said that climate change is "an existential threat to humanity. We have a moral obligation to deal with it." "We're going to pass the point of no return within the next eight to 10 years," he said.

The planet has already warmed by around one degree Celsius (34 degrees Fahrenheit) from pre-industrial levels, enough to boost the intensity of deadly heat waves, droughts and tropical storms.

Trump has pulled the United States out of the Paris climate accord, which aims to cap global warming "well below" two degrees Celsius.

Trump's remarks come days before Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary Mark Esper visit New Delhi for talks on building the growing US-India partnership.

At the first presidential debate, Trump also spoke critically of India, questioning its coronavirus data amid criticism of his handling of the pandemic.

China's foreign ministry on Friday said Beijing hoped the US would "stop dragging China into its election campaigns." — *AFP*



US President Donald Trump, Democratic Presidential candidate former US vice-president Joe Biden participate in the final presidential debate at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. — *AFP*

TRUMP SAYS HE WILL VOTE IN PERSON

Washington, Oct. 23: President Donald Trump is taking his own advice and plans to vote in person in the presidential election on Saturday in Florida.

Trump is heading to his home state on Friday for campaign rallies at The Villages and in Pensacola. He's scheduled to spend the night at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach and says he'll vote on Saturday before he flies

north for more campaign rallies.

Trump revealed his plans on Thursday after the presidential debate with Democrat Joe Biden. Earlier this year, as Trump pressed unfounded claims about fraud surrounding mail-in and absentee ballots, Trump said people should be required to show up in person at the polls to vote. Trump also has voted by absentee ballot in the past. — *AP*

CEOs OF FB, TWITTER ORDERED TO TESTIFY BY GOP SENATORS

Washington, Oct. 23: The GOP push against Facebook and Twitter accelerated on Thursday after Republican senators threatened the CEOs of the social media companies with subpoenas to force them to address accusations of censorship in the closing weeks of the presidential campaign.

With Democrats boycotting the hearing, the Republican-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee voted to authorise the legal orders if Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Twitter's Jack Dorsey did not agree to testify voluntarily.

The committee wants to hear from them about "the

suppression and/or censorship of two news articles from the New York Post," according to the subpoena document. Senators also want information from the executives about their companies' policies for moderating content "that may interfere" with federal elections.

Representatives of Facebook and Twitter declined comment. The urgency ratcheted higher Thursday as US officials said Russian hackers have targeted the networks of dozens of state and local governments in recent days, stealing data from at least two servers. — *AP*

US gives approval to use remdesivir against Covid

Washington, Oct. 23: US regulators on Thursday approved the first drug to treat Covid-19: remdesivir, an antiviral medicine given through an IV for patients needing hospitalisation. The drug, which California-based Gilead Sciences Inc. is calling Veklury, cut the time to recovery by five days — from 15 days to 10 on average — in a large study led by the US National Institutes of Health.

It had been authorised for use on an emergency basis since spring, and now becomes the first drug to win full Food and Drug Administration approval for treating Covid-19. President Donald Trump received it when he was sickened earlier this month.

Veklury is approved for people at least 12 years old and weighing at least 40 kilograms who need hospitalization for their coronavirus infection. For patients younger than 12, the FDA will still allow the drug's use in certain cases under its previous emergency authorization. The drug works by inhibiting a substance the virus uses to make copies of itself. Certain tests are required before starting patients on it.

And the label warns against using it with the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine, because that can curb its effectiveness. "We now have enough knowledge and a growing set of tools to help fight Covid-19," Gilead's chief medical officer, Dr Merdad Parsey, said in a statement.

The drug is either approved or has temporary authorisation in about 50 countries, he noted. Its price has been controversial, given that no studies have found it improves survival. Last week, a large study led by the World Health Organ-

Pope cautioned on Covid after he met infected Bishop

Canberra, Oct. 23: Pope Francis has been warned of potential exposure to Covid-19 after a Vatican diplomat was infected, Australian media reported on Friday.

Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana, the Holy See's ambassador to Australia, had a face-to-face meeting with Francis at the Vatican on Oct. 6, less than two weeks before testing positive to Covid-19 in Australia, *Nine News* reported.

Australian authorities say a diplomat who flew into Sydney on Oct. 9 had tested positive to the Coronavirus. They won't reveal the diplomat's identity. The diplomat tested positive 10 days after he started quarantining at home in the national capital Canberra, the Australian Capital Territory Health Department said in a statement.

The department said the risk of infection was "low" for the two people who drove the diplomat 300 kilometers (185 miles) from Sydney to Canberra. Australia's Health Department said in a statement on Friday "all relevant international state parties have been notified." The Vatican did not immediately respond to a request for comment. — *AP*

isation found the drug did not help hospitalized Covid-19 patients, but that study did not include a placebo group and was less rigorous than previous ones that found a benefit. Gilead charges \$2,340 for

UN CHIEF URGES G20 TO UNITE, FIGHT PANDEMIC

United Nations, Oct. 23: The UN chief says it's "very frustrating" that leaders of the 20 major industrialised nations didn't come together in March and establish a coordinated response to grapple with the Coronavirus in all countries as he proposed. The result, he says, is every country is taking its own sometimes contradictory actions, and the virus is moving "from east to west, north to south," with second waves of infections now affecting many countries.

Ahead of the Group of 20 summit next month, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in an interview that he hopes the international community now understands "they need to be much more coordinated in fighting the virus." Guterres says the United Nations also will be "strongly advocating" during the G-20 summit for a guarantee that when a vaccine is available, "it becomes indeed available and affordable for everyone, everywhere." — *AP*

Libya rivals sign 'permanent' truce

Geneva, Oct. 23: Libya's two warring factions signed a "permanent" ceasefire agreement on Friday after five days of talks at the United Nations, which hailed the deal as a historic moment following years of turmoil and bloodshed.

"Today is a good day for the Libyan people," said Stephanie Williams, the UN's acting envoy to the troubled North African country, where a UN-recognised government in Tripoli has been battling a rival administration based in the east and dominated by military commander Khalifa Haftar. "The two Libyan delegations... signed a complete, country-wide and permanent ceasefire agreement with immediate effect," she told journalists afterwards.

Williams said the parties agreed that "all military units and armed groups on the front lines shall return to their camps", while "all mercenaries and foreign fighters" must leave within three months.

Analysts have warned that further measures are needed to prevent spoilers undermining the deal in a country wracked by conflict for nearly a decade, since the overthrow and killing of dictator

● **STEPHANIE WILLIAMS**, the UN's acting envoy said the parties agreed that "all military units and armed groups on the front lines shall return to their camps", while "all mercenaries and foreign fighters" must leave within three months.

Moamer Kadhafi in a NATO-backed uprising in 2011.

Since then, it has been dominated by armed groups, riven by local conflicts and divided between the two bitterly-opposed administrations.

Tripoli is held by the internationally recognised Government of National Accord, while a parliament based in the eastern city of Tobruk is backed by Haftar's forces.

But hopes for a solution rose after the two sides separately announced in August that they would cease hostilities.

Ahmed Abu Shahma, who headed the GNA delegation in Geneva, urged Libyans to come together and rebuild a united, stable country.

"We have had enough suffering, enough divisions, enough bloodshed," he said at the signing ceremony. — *AFP*

World's largest fountain opens in Dubai



Dubai Launches the Palm Fountain in a bid to break a Guinness World Record as the world's largest fountain, at Palm Jumeira. Spread over 14,366 square feet of seawater, the fountain's super shooter stands tall at 105 metres and comes alive with over 3,000 LED lights. — *AFP*

SINKING | RISK 1.3 million barrels of crude may spill into water, no water ingress found on vessel by expert team

Caracas, Oct. 23: Trinidad and Tobago said on Thursday that a damaged oil tanker off the island's coast was "stable" after opposition politicians in neighboring Venezuela warned of a potential "environmental catastrophe."

The damaged tanker, which is in the waters separating Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago and is owned by Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA, threatens to spill 1.3 million barrels of crude into the water.

"The ship is straight and stable without any visible

risk of sinking," Energy Minister Franklin Khan said during a video conference in Puerto Espana.

The Nabarima tanker, anchored for several months in the Gulf of Paria, is used to store oil, but video footage shared on October 16 by the Fishermen and Friends of the Sea NGO showed it tilting.

A team of three "experts" boarded the ship on Tuesday, the day after receiving the green light from Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's government, Khan said.

The findings showed that

"there was no water ingress on the vessel visible to the team. Which means the ingress reported in early September no longer exists," the minister said.

According to Khan, the team reported that maintenance tasks were being carried out on the ship, such as repairing and replacing pumps and electric motors if necessary, which the experts described as "quite satisfactory."

Eudis Girot, a Venezuelan oil sector union leader, said the 855-foot (264-meter) ship has had maintenance problems since 2014. But he said

those problems "have been ignored" by PDVSA.

Girot said several PDVSA employees reported on October 12 that the tanker was listing by eight percent while the engine room is flooded and water pumps have broken down.

"If the oil is not transferred, and even if the Nabarima can be stabilized, we risk a permanent environmental catastrophe," Venezuelan opposition legislator Robert Alcala said. The Nabarima is owned by Petrosucre, a company majority owned by PDVSA, with Italian

multinational oil and gas firm Eni holding a 26 percent share.

According to Luis Stefanelli, another opposition legislator, PDVSA has sent two ships to try to unload the Nabarima.

PDVSA on Tuesday started transferring the crude oil stored on the Nabarima with the vessel Icarus, according to the Trinidadian government. However, Khan recommended using a larger vessel, since the Icarus can barely hold a quarter of the tanker's 1.3 million barrel-load. — *AFP*



A video image released by the Fishermen and Friends of the Sea NGO shows the tilted Nabarima oil tanker.

DECCAN Chronicle

24 OCTOBER 2020

Polls before policy? BJP vaccine carrot unethical

The announcement of Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on the Assembly election campaign trail in Bihar on Thursday that the BJP would offer free anti-Covid vaccines to everyone in Bihar is apt to be seen as a con by the people of the state. This is because it is widely understood that the timelines for the arrival of a safe, effective, efficacious vaccine are fuzzy and confusing.

Top labs and top scientists in the world have made contradictory observations on this matter, although some governments, including our own, have chosen the seemingly reassuring way and hinted that we should have the cure in the bag early next year. Here too the basis is purely political, with not a shred of science attaching to it.

The government strategy is clearly to spread a 'feel-good' sentiment. The underlying message is that the government is in control, and that we are in trustworthy hands. Ms Sitharaman's statement appear to attempt to further that strategy, except that she was speaking on an election platform and unveiling her party's election manifesto for the state poll, where free vaccine is point one on the agenda.

There are hosts of problems with such an announcement, especially when it comes from the country's finance minister. Her wearing of the party hat is not relevant here. What's noteworthy is that only the ruling party could have made such a statement, and not its opponents. The Election Commission will therefore be called upon to see if this is a violation of the principle of each party being offered a level playing field. This is as far as elections go, but other questions also arise.

If Bihar is to get the Covid vaccine free, will other states also get it free? Has the cost of this been calculated? If the zero-price favour is only for the state going to the polls, then it is clearly a bribe — a case of the use of political power to influence an election in which the ruling coalition's prospects look less promising than previously. More, there is also the question of all states having equal status in the eyes of the Centre.

If cynical opportunism is what the BJP is playing at in order to defend its electoral position in Bihar, then Bihar can ask about the promise of a "special package" that has been spoken of *ad nauseam* by chief minister Nitish Kumar for more than a decade.

On the Coronavirus front, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had pointed the right way recently when he said that in the distribution of the vaccine the country will have to take the right lessons from the planning of logistics in the process of holding national elections or coping with natural calamities. This would need a national-level conceptualisation and distribution effort. Those at the frontlines of risk, such as health workers, will have to be prioritised, followed by those placed high under a hierarchical gradation of vulnerability, for example elderly people with co-morbidities. The BJP's announcement in Bihar mocks such planning and places narrow politics above the nation.

Pope and family values

Christians live their lives in the perpetual fear of their sins catching up with them as they fight the world, the flesh and the devil but Jesus Christ would not have intended it that way when he built his church on the rock called Peter, the first Pope. The Lord was unequivocal when he said "my yoke is light and my burden is easy", promising to make a break with a believer's life till then, tied to the tough knots of rules, rituals and sets of beliefs. The Church had different ideas about itself. Over the course of history, it built on itself immense structures and then the paraphernalia to protect them. The yoke ceased to be light and the burden grew to be daunting.

Pope Francis, the bag-carrying Franciscan in Jesuit robes who wrote encyclical *fratelli tutti* to drive home the point that all are brothers, now says LGBT persons have the same rights every other who belongs to the species has. *Francesco*, the newly-released documentary on the Pope, has him say this: "Homosexuals have a right to be a part of the family. They're children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out, or be made miserable because of it."

The conservatives say the Pope has only reminded the families of LGBT persons not to throw them out and that it is not an imprimatur for them to start families of their own; the liberals see some fresh thought entering the dogmatic Holy See. The debate could heat up in the coming days, and well, Jesus had seen it happening. "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." We would say amen to that and then wait for the yoke to lighten and the burden to ease at the end of it all.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER

Editor

K. SUBHAKAR

Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patanata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234

Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208

Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904

Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalpalay Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433

Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Buranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580

Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-2225477/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325

Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Feet Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560 095 Ph: 080-43460500; Fax: 080-22960552.

Coimbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph: 0422 2231255

Kochi: No.3-B, 3rd Floor of DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph's Press, TC 15/1040, Cotton Hill, Thycad (PO), Thiruvananthapuram 695 014

Kozhikode: Door No 6/1002 E, First Floor of City Mall, Opp. YMCA, Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001, Fax : 0495 4019 018

Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08

Subhani



The 'perils' of euphoria: Govt messaging flawed

Shashidhar Nanjundaiah

Why are you people not listening?" That might as well have been the central problem for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's seventh Coronavirus-related address to the nation on October 20, when he exhorted us to adhere to the Covid-19 safety norms and not falsely assume that the Coronavirus has gone. The answer to that presumed question, however, lies in his government's political messaging in its health communications.

The problem is by no means exclusive to India. The United States and India now have the most numbers of Covid-19 cases, and arguably, mixed messages have exacerbated the crisis. The 2020 Ig Nobel Prizes for Medical Education — the global satirical "awards" for the worst inventions and ideas — was "awarded" to, among others, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump for "teaching the world that politicians can have a more immediate effect on life and death than scientists and doctors can".

In the US, Mr Trump outdid himself in September by offering a confusing array of rhetoric related to the Coronavirus, swaying back and forth between conflicting messages. As a result, that nation is divided between mask-wearers and non-wearers, largely differentiated on political lines of whose voice they trust. Just in one week in September, he announced that he had "downplayed" the pandemic in order to make people "feel safer". Exactly three days later, he claimed he actually played it up.

Prime Minister Modi's own rhetoric has been far more measured than Mr Trump's. By that I mean

he and his ministers have gone about their Covid narratives with more planning and conviction. The concept of mixed messaging is valid — we need to hear the problem along with the solution.

Mr Modi's first address to the nation after the pandemic broke out was mixed — an appeal to people to be cautious as well as an appeal to their faith. "This loud sound is for thanksgiving, and also for the beginning of the victory march in a long fight," Mr Modi said in a tweet that followed his speech. As though in a Pavlovian response, his followers took out marches in the streets, disobeying the lockdown norms and affirming their faith in a leader's words. Is down-playing statistics the answer? This was a critical, almost rhetorical, question that I was asked at a recent webinar.

In times of crisis, governments and media platforms put in their best efforts to make available information and insights that are immediate and usable. These include critical health information to insights that build a psychological fortification and acceptance. The media's dependence on official sources is more pronounced than usual in a crisis. In that communicative framework, how has our government has disseminated public messages during this crisis, and to what effect?

When the pandemic broke out, the health ministry started issuing daily press briefings. These briefings were largely informative, albeit compulsively political as this government is known to be. Then, with no warning in May, the ministry took a break from the daily briefings and only restarted them much later. The horror of the migrant exodus had unfolded. When the briefings did restart,

there was forceful nationalism with convenient comparisons, positive spin de-emphasising the rising cases and deaths, and a defensive tone. In the interim, according to some reports, the government set up a committee to examine how to state with conviction that it did not botch up its policy on the migrant crisis.

"The industrialists and innovators turned the Covid situation into an opportunity, and successfully established a home-grown ventilator industry," health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in August, adopting a storyteller's tone and demeanor. "The biggest news this week is that we have conducted two core tests... The number of recovered cases is more than double the active cases."

These are briefings of what the government hopes will be seen as achievements rather than problems. That fact that the pandemic is far from gone and is still worsening is downplayed. Euphoria is an obvious impact of the spin among believers. We see it all around us — educated, urbane people walking in groups with no masks on. In the environment of conflicting messages, it seems we assume the most convenient possibility — sometimes with unexpected results. A few days ago, I took an autorickshaw for a short ride to a store. The driver did not have a mask on. When I questioned him, his response was startling: "Corona is gone so I've stopped wearing it." When I prodded further, he explained: "There is only *sarkaaari* Corona left now. The government is play-

The media, too, must realise the damage overdependence on official sources brings, even in a crisis, and must temper the official narratives with scientific reason and simpler news that people can use

ing games, making money and enabling big people to make money."

As the World Health Organisation (WHO), points out, we are also in the middle of an infodemic: "An overabundance of information — some accurate and some not — that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it." But should the blame be passed on as usual to the social media, where millions of people are talking about it and passing their own judgments, and to our mainstream media, where the bombarding of ever-developing stories and eclectic insights lead to public confusion, and leave the elephant in the room unaddressed?

Already, news platforms must grapple with evolving information and insights. Additionally, television news channels both relay and bust silly myths about the virus. On the other hand, they are carriers of information and political narrative. If the news-you-can-use becomes so mind-boggling, politically charged narratives only exacerbate public confusion. These official narratives often come in a nationalistic package, with a liberal dose of political braggadocio.

So, the narratives put out by government communicators — from the Prime Minister to health ministry officials — have often been too clever by half. There is a dire need for them to rethink the strategy that is dividing the nation between the panic-stricken and euphoric and stop taking undue advantage of the media's pronounced dependence on official sources during a health crisis. The media, too, must realise the damage overdependence on official sources brings, even in a crisis, and must temper the official narratives with scientific reason and simpler news that people can use.

The writer is a communications expert and has led reputed institutes of media and communications

LETTERS

CENTRAL RELIEF

The Central team needs to recommend at least ₹20,000 crore as relief for Telangana state (*Crops worth ₹8,633 crore hit, TS tells Central team, DC, Oct. 23*). The loss in Hyderabad is massive, private buildings and families have lost everything. Now, it is responsibility of MoS G. Kishan Reddy to infuse Central funds into the city.

Faaz Riyan
Hyderabad

MOBILE SALES

It is clear that China is so strong in the manufacturing sector when compared to India due to their government policies (*3 in every 4 smartphone sold in are Chinese, DC, Oct. 23*). Modi government's 'Make in India' programme has remained just a slogan. To compete with China, India needs a very strong government at the Centre and a powerful, clever, matured and ambitious Prime Minister like Atal Behari Vajpayee or Lal Bahadur Shastri. Even though the Modi government has a majority in the Lok Sabha it missed an golden opportunity to keep India on the development path due to its wrong policies.

P.V. Tirumala Rao
Hyderabad

VOTE FOR VACCINE

With the BJP promising a free vaccine if voted to power in Bihar, I need a clarification as to what will happen if they lose? Will the people not get the vaccine free? Will the Central government not send the vaccine to Bihar if the Opposition wins? I doubt if my grandparents voted for the Congress on the election manifesto promise of free cholera vaccine or for free polio drops which I was administered.

Lal Melwani
Hyderabad

Big powers must respect UN: Indira

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 23 Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi chided the great powers today for denigrating and ignoring the United Nations simply because they were no longer able to direct and control its activities

or use it as an instrument of national ends.

Addressing the General Assembly at its 25th anniversary commemorative session, she charged them with pursuing the same discredited policies of balance of power and spheres of influence that killed the League of Nations.

Farrukh Dhondy
Cabbages & Kings



"I am the last to finish a meal Because I eat so slowly O Bachchoo, must you be condemned Because of this as lowly!"

— From Row Row K. Gumbihara by Bachchoo

I've written in several genres for the small and large screen but, gentle reader, never a courtroom drama. And that's strange because as a viewer I find them fascinating, mesmerising even, if well written with the suspense maintained till the last word, as in Billy Wilder's adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Witness for the Prosecution*.

My taste for courtroom drama was perhaps formed when reading my grandfather's discarded paperbacks of the Perry Mason books by Erle Stanley Gardner. I still feel compelled, though I restrain myself, from dismissing a friend's, foe's or dining-table-guest's argument, with "that's incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial!" Those were Perry Mason's nails in the coffin of evidence, but I suppose I am more inclined to say "aiy don't be silly

yaar!" when confronted with some absurdity.

Having seen two very compelling courtroom dramas on television this week, made me wonder why I hadn't ever attempted the genre. I've always thought writing should reflect one's own experience, observation, insight and memory, even through the invention, as in Shakespeare or Dickens, of dramatic characters.

The first of the TV shows I admired was a recreation of the British 'Mangrove Nine' trial of 1970, in which four out of nine of the accused were friends and 'comrades' of mine and two others were people I knew. The trial arose from the West London Police's reaction to and attack on a demonstration of 160 black people protesting against the unjustified, repeated and destructive raids on a West Indian restaurant called The Mangrove.

The restaurant was owned by the late Frank Critchlow and was subjected to regular, vicious and destructive raids by the West London police under the pretext of closing down a drug den. The Caribbean community of Notting Hill and North Kensington used the

restaurant as a meeting place. I went there occasionally. No drugs were ever found and no prosecutions brought, though the police smashed up the restaurant, wrestled its clientele and arrested its owner, workers and customers without any evidence with which to charge them.

In reaction to the raids the 'political' elements and individuals in the community called a demonstration to expose these raids as racist attacks on the innocent. The British establishment, and the West London police force as its arm, had not faced such a militant protest before. The demonstrators, in the argot of the time were shouting slogans of Black power, notably "the Pigs, the Pigs, we gotta get rid of the Pigs". This was, in that era, a porcine metaphor for the police force (later known to the black young as "de Babylon").

The confrontation ended in a mild fracas, with flaying police batons, women being held on the ground by three burly policemen and some demonstrators aiming kicks at blue-uniformed crotches and shins.

Nine people ended up in court accused of riot and affray and other lesser charges. These charges were

absurd. It's possible that the British prosecutors were throwing the book, or even a shelf of the library, at the accused in order to *encourager les autres*.

The film of the trial, seen today as a historical milestone in the settlement of the new communities of Britain, is as fair a representation of the events and the court proceedings as dramatic reproduction can make it. Yes, I spotted twenty discrepancies or petty falsehoods in the retelling, with some characters with the wrong names and wrong accents, but the overall impression captured the events before and in the courtroom.

The second trial on screen was that of the Chicago 7, individual leaders of the hippie generation who opposed the draft law which would send thousands of young men and women to fight and possibly die in the American war in Vietnam. I remember following reports of the trial in which the accused had led protests against the Democratic Party convention in Chicago.

In both trials, the defendant's fate was in the hands of a jury. Jurors are not allowed to speak at or during a

trial, so the drama is confined to the interaction between the lawyers, the judge, the witnesses and defendants, with occasional contributions from the press and the spectators.

This re-enactment of the Chicago 7 trial, with Bobby Seale, the only black defendant, bound and gagged in public when he vociferously protested against a judgement of the bench, was also an essential and telling record of US history.

And now, gentle reader, I am inspired to mull over which trial I can dramatise and attempt to have produced for the screen. To tell the truth, I have only been indicted personally in one trial I which I defended myself and was acquitted of the charge of assaulting policemen in a London demonstration. Ten-minute drama if that. Then there were two trials in India in which I was peripherally involved: the failed attempt to get my film *Bandit Queen* banned and the dismissal of the case against my other film *Mangal Pandey, the Rising*. Both dramatic — the first with the future minister of the BJP, the late Arun Jaitley, appearing to represent, believe it or not, freedom of speech and truth.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,685.50	0.31
Nifty 50	11,930.40	0.28
S&P 500*	3,448.13	-0.16
Dollar (₹)	73.60	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.44	0.13
Euro (₹)	87.15	0.01
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,685.81	0.16
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.89	-0.57
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.844	-0.071
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.858	0.010

* As of 9:30 PM IST

IDBI Bank posts ₹324 cr profit, NPA ratio drops

IDBI Bank on Friday reported a net profit of ₹324 crore for the second quarter of the current fiscal year against a loss of ₹3,459 crore for the same period of the previous fiscal. Compared sequentially, the bank registered a 125 per cent jump against the first quarter net profit of ₹144 crore. Total income of the bank fell by 7.5 per cent to ₹5,761.06 crore during Q2FY21 compared to ₹6,231.02 crore in Q2FY20.

TechM Q2 profit declines by 5% to ₹1,065 cr



Tech Mahindra on Friday posted around five per cent fall in consolidated profit at ₹1,064.6 crore for September quarter of the current fiscal year. The company had a profit of ₹1,123.9 crore in the same quarter a year ago, it said in a statement. Income increased by 2.1 per cent to ₹9,489.3 crore during the period under review from ₹9,286.2 crore in the same period of 2019-20, the company said.

Crompton Greaves shares up 15% after Q2 results

Shares of Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals surged nearly 15 per cent on Friday after the company reported a 27.77 per cent increase in consolidated net profit for the Q2FY21. The company on Thursday reported a 27.77 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹141.68 crore for Q2FY21. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 110.88 crore for the July-September period a year ago.

Biocon Q2 profit declines 23% at ₹195 cr in Q2

Biocon on Friday reported a 23.01 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit to ₹195.4 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, mainly on account of higher expenses. It had posted a net profit of ₹253.8 crore for Q2FY21, Biocon said. Its consolidated total income stood at ₹1,760.3 crore for the quarter under consideration. It was ₹1,605.7 crore for the same period a year ago, it added.



RBI fears India entering recession in H1 of FY21

Deputy governor says lost output can't be regained for few years

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, OCT. 23

For the first time in its history, India has entered a technical recession in the first half of the year, said Reserve Bank of India deputy governor Michael Patra, quoting the projections of the central bank for real GDP growth for 2020-21.

According to minutes of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) that were released by the RBI on Friday, the RBI deputy governor said: "The projections of real GDP growth for 2020-21 that are set out for the first time in the MPC's resolution provide a sense of the wounds on the soul of the economy inflicted by Covid-19."

"If the NSO's provisional estimates for Q2 that are expected at the end of November corroborate at least the direction of these forecasts, India has entered a technical recession in the first half of the year for the first time in its history," Patra said.

The RBI deputy governor also said that it may take years for India to reach pre-Covid output as the potential of the economy has declined.

"GDP is an aggregative indicator of economic activity and hides the extent of human misery and the loss of social and human capital caused by the health crisis. Nonetheless, if the projections hold, the level of GDP would have fallen approximately six per

Double-dip recession likely in euro zone

Brussels, Oct. 23: Renewed restrictions to control the pandemic forced many businesses in the bloc's dominant service industry to limit operations, and nearly 90 per cent of economists polled by Reuters this week said there was a high risk the coronavirus resurgence would halt the nascent euro zone economic recovery.

"The euro zone PMI confirms that the second wave of the coronavirus is weighing more and more on the economy. A double-dip in the fourth quarter is becoming more likely at this rate," said Bert Colijn at ING.

IHS Markit's Flash Composite Purchasing Managers' Index, seen as a good gauge of economic health, fell to 49.4 from September's final reading of 50.4.

That was below the 50-mark separating growth from contraction and only fractionally better than the 49.3 predicted in a Reuters poll.

That headline PMI was dragged down by the service industry's PMI, which sank more than expected to 46.2 from 48.0.

"The further decline in the euro zone Composite PMI in October adds to the evidence that the second wave of infections, and the new wave of containment measures, is taking a heavy toll on the economy," said Jack Allen-Reynolds at Capital Economics. — Reuters

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 23

Equity market has got tied to a narrow range in the last fortnight after a decisive upward move last month on rerating of IT stocks and recovery in financials post RBI's policy announcement.

The Nifty-50 has hit 12,000 barrier for the time being as the index has not been able to close above this level in the current bull run signalling tough resistance as the economy

Wealth increases in India despite Covid

New York, Oct. 23: The pandemic that's led to more than one million deaths globally has also led to a decline in individual wealth, yet household wealth largely held up and even increased in China and India.

That's one of the main findings in Credit Suisse Group AG's 2020 Global Wealth Report released Thursday. Thanks to government and central-bank actions to mitigate the Covid-19 fallout, wealth rebounded from an initial slump in the first quarter of the year, adding \$1 trillion by June after ending 2019 at \$399.2 trillion.

"Given the damage inflicted by Covid-19 on the global economy, it seems remarkable that household wealth has emerged relatively unscathed," said economist Anthony Shorrocks, one of the report's authors, adding as a caveat that the findings are based on provi-

cent below its pre-Covid level by the end of 2020-21 and it may take years to regain this lost output."

"There is also an anecdotal sense that the economy's potential output has fallen, and the post-Covid growth trajectory will look very different from

Maharashtra invites Tesla to set up electric car plant

Mumbai, Oct. 23: Maharashtra is looking for potential investment from the US electric car major Tesla in the state and has held discussions with the company, weeks after Tesla revealed its plans to enter the Indian market.

State tourism minister Aaditya Thackeray said in a tweet on Thursday that industries minister Subhash Desai held a video call, in which he also participated, with the Tesla team, inviting the electric car maker to Maharashtra.

Maharashtra is already home to a host of domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers with Chakan Industrial belt near Pune a major automobile hub in the state.

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The legal battle between Amazon and Future Group will take much longer to come to a conclusion. A three-member tribunal may be finalised in a couple of days and the arbitration process can take six months to one year to conclude.

Amazon had recently approached the Singapore International Arbitration Centre objecting the ₹24,000 crore asset sale deal by Future Group with

is still battling six months shut down.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) chairman Ajay Tyagi did refer to a disconnect between market and economy and some heavyweight stocks moving indices which can keep market range bound for some more time even if fresh Covid cases fall sharply as it has happened and economy recovers.

"It was clearly a dull week as we witnessed a lot of choppy trades with no

what has been recorded so far. Changes in social behaviour and norms of commercial and workplace engagements may accentuate this structural change," Patra added.

To address Covid-induced economic problems, the Monetary Policy



"This evening I had the opportunity to participate in a video call by industries minister @Subhash.Desai ji with @Tesla team to invite them to Maharashtra. I was present not because of just the investment but my firm belief in electric mobility & sustainability @elonmusk," Thackeray said in a tweet.

Reliance Industries. According to sources privy to the development, the pre-arbitration process is currently on.

During this, the tribunal for the arbitration process is being finalised. Amazon has come up with an arbitrator from its side and Future Group one from its side. There will be a common arbitrator who will be agreeable for both sides. The members of this tribunal will be finalised in a few days.

Ways to interpret laws pertaining to the case also

Committee (MPC) may continue with an accommodative stance for an extended period of time.

The MPC members were keen to support economic recovery rather than control inflation even though it would drift from the original mandate of keeping retail inflation on an average between two and six per cent.

The MPC on October 9 had unanimously voted to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at four per cent for the second consecutive time and maintain an accommodative stance "at least during the current financial year and into the next financial year".

According to minutes, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said there are downside uncertainties that could put sand in the wheels of the nascent recovery being witnessed.

"Primary among them is the risk of a second wave of Covid-19... Despite sequential improvement in Q3 and Q4, the full year GDP is expected to contract by 9.5 per cent with a strong rebound next year," Das added.

Aditi Nayar, principal economist at ICRA said, "While the MPC members clearly desire to support the economic recovery, inflation may not oblige by falling fast enough to allow for speedy or substantial rate cuts. In our view, the incoming price data suggests the chances of a February 2021 rate cut have dimmed."

Tesla Inc. co-founder and chief executive Elon Musk had earlier this month said the company will enter the Indian market in 2021. "Next year for sure," Musk said while replying to a query on Tesla's India plans on Twitter.

An Avendus Capital report in July this year had forecast that the Indian EV market could be a ₹50,000 crore opportunity by 2025.

Factors such as policies, battery cost, charging infrastructure and supply chain as well as localisation are expected to drive the adoption of electric vehicles in various segments in the country over the next decade, the report noted. — PTI



are being looked into. Once the tribunal is formed, the arbitration process will start. "The

India business begins to see uptick, says Unilever

New Delhi, Oct. 23: After a strict lockdown impacting sales, India has returned to the growth path again, Anglo-Dutch FMCG major Unilever has said.

The return of growth of India business, along with Brazil and continued recovery in China helped the company's emerging markets clock a growth of 5.3 per cent in the September 2020 quarter.

"India (business) grew low-single digit, driven by growth in foods and refreshment and hygiene. China grew double-digit led by beauty and personal care categories and a return to growth in food service, as the out-of-home eating channel returned to full capacity," Unilever said in its post-earnings statement.

After a strict lockdown earlier in the year, India saw a pick-up in economic activity, even though cases of Covid-19 continued to increase during the quarter, said Unilever.

India (business) grew low-single digit, driven by growth in foods and refreshment and hygiene. China grew double-digit led by beauty and personal care categories

UNILEVER'S earnings statement

India comes under the Asia, AMET (Africa, Middle East, Turkey) and RUB (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus) market region of Unilever, which has reported a turnover of 6 billion euros. "Underlying sales grew 4.5 per cent with 3.7 per cent from volume and 0.7 per cent from price, as lockdown restrictions eased across much of the region compared to the first half of the year," it said.

Earlier this Tuesday, its Indian subsidiary Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) had declared the

results of the second quarter (July-September) reporting a better-than-expected rise net profit and revenues, signalling a revival of demand.

HUL's consolidated net profit rose 8.6 per cent to ₹1,974 crore in July-September, while revenue from the sale of products was up 13.7 per cent at ₹11,510 crore, the company had said in a regulatory filing.

The food and refreshment business saw nearly 83 per cent jump, while home care and beauty and personal care was almost near pre-Covid-19 levels.

HUL, maker of popular brand products such as Rin, Dove, Lux and Lifebuoy, said the worst is behind and is "cautiously optimistic" on demand recovery. The Indian economy had seen an unprecedented 23.9 per cent contraction during April-June as the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus pum-melled demand. — PTI

Flipkart acquires 8% stake in AB Fashion Retail

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 23

In a bid to build its omnichannel presence in the fashion business, Flipkart has acquired 7.8 per cent stake in Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFRL) for ₹1,500 crore.

The ABFRL board has approved the raising of ₹1,500 crore by way of preferential issue to the Flipkart Group.

The equity capital will be raised at ₹205 per share. With this infusion, Flipkart Group will own 7.8 per cent equity stake in ABFRL on a fully diluted basis. The promoter and promoter group companies of ABFRL will hold about 55.13 per cent upon completion of the issuance.

The investment agreement provides Flipkart preemption rights and right of first refusal which are for a limited period of one to five years from the date of allotment of equity shares or if the equity shareholding of the investor falls below a certain threshold.

Through this partnership, the Flipkart Group will strengthen the range of brands offered on its e-commerce platforms Flipkart and Myntra, and enhance the range of pre-



mium international and Indian brands on offer. ABFRL owns brands like Pantaloon, Allen Solly and Peter England.

Flipkart's technology prowess will enhance ABFRL's omni-channel capabilities, enriching customer experiences while continuing to provide access to premium loyalty programmes and affordability constructs.

ABFRL, which has more than 3000 stores, plans to use this capital to strengthen its balance sheet and accelerate its growth trajectory.

The company plans to increase presence in emerging high-growth categories such as innerwear, athleisure, casualwear and ethnic wear.

ABFRL will also aggressively accelerate execution of its large-scale digital transformation strategy that will build strong omni-channel functionalities.

Centre to sell 15% stake in RVNL via OFS

New Delhi, Oct. 23: The government is planning to sell up to 15 per cent stake in Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) and has invited bids from merchant bankers for managing the share sale process.

"The GoI intends to disinvest up to 15 per cent paid up equity capital of RVNL out of its shareholding of 87.84 per cent through Offer for Sale (OFS) method of shares by promoters through the stock exchanges, the department of investment and public asset management (DIPAM) said while inviting bids from merchant bankers.

The government will appoint up to three merchant bankers for managing RVNL share sale.

Shares of RVNL closed at ₹18.80 on Friday. At the current market price, a 15 per cent stake sale would fetch about ₹580 crore to the exchequer. — PTI

GST racket on illegal ITC busted

New Delhi, Oct. 23: Busting an illegal input tax credit (ITC) racket, GST officials have arrested a wannabe chartered accountant for alleged involvement in passing on ITC of about ₹50 crore through a web of 115 fake companies, a source said. Prince Manish Kumar Khatri, a partner of a CA firm in Ahmedabad, allegedly registered fake firms that were used to avoid paying GST by showing bills generated by them as ITC. In all, ITC of ₹50.24 crore was wrongfully passed on, the source said.

The source said Khatri is allegedly the key person involved in registration of 115 non-existent firms and filing of GST returns of such fake firms, thus passing on ineligible ITC for wrong availment and utilisation for GST payment. — PTI

Heavyweight stocks keep Sensex, Nifty rangebound

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 23

Equity market has got tied to a narrow range in the last fortnight after a decisive upward move last month on rerating of IT stocks and recovery in financials post RBI's policy announcement.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) chairman Ajay Tyagi did refer to a disconnect between market and economy and some heavyweight stocks moving indices which can keep market range bound for some more time even if fresh Covid cases fall sharply as it has happened and economy recovers.

- **MOMENTUM IS** lacking because the heavyweights, the main drivers of frontline indices have started underperforming.
- **IN THE WEEK** gone by Axis Bank, Tata Steel and Bharti Airtel gained the most while Reliance Industries, TCS and Mahindra & Mahindra lost the most in the BSE-30 index.

clear direction. Although we could reclaim 12,000 this week for Nifty-50, the momentum was clearly lacking as the benchmark once again looked a bit tentative around this, said Sameet Chavan, analyst,

technical and derivatives, Angel Broking. After more than 1,000 points correction for the Sensex on Thursday i.e. October 15, the market has inched up and traded around the 11,900-12000

range. Momentum is lacking because the heavyweights, the main drivers of frontline indices have started underperforming. In the week gone by Axis Bank, Tata Steel and Bharti Airtel gained the most while Reliance Industries, TCS and Mahindra & Mahindra lost the most in the BSE-30 index.

"The upper area of 12,025 has been acting as a key overhead resistance in the last couple of weeks and this hurdle could be tested again in the coming week. A sustainable upside breakout of this hurdle could have a sharp positive impact on the market ahead," said Nagaraj Shetti, Technical Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

"The short-term trend of Nifty continues to be range bound and the near-term uptrend status remains intact. There is a possibility of a retest of 12000-12050 levels by next week, before showing minor profit booking again from the highs,"

SHORT TAKES

Indian squad make online chess semis

Chennai: The top-seeded Indian women's team on Friday stormed into the semifinals of the Asian Nations (Regions) Online Cup 2020 Championship, while their male counterparts eked out a fighting win over Mongolia to secure the last four berth. The Indian women made short work of Kyrgyzstan in the last-eight round, winning the two match-ups easily — 4-0 and 3.5-0.5 — after having topped the preliminary Swiss system phase. The Indian women will face Mongolia in the semifinal on Saturday. The Indian men, on the other hand, were given a tough fight by Mongolia. Both the matches ended with a similar 2.5-1.5 scoreline in favour of India. The Indian men will take on Iran in Saturday's semifinal. Young woman Grandmaster R Vaishali continued her good run, winning both her matches. She beat Alexandra Samaganova. — *PTI*

Bottas fastest at Friday practice

Portimao, Portugal: Valtteri Bottas topped the times ahead of Formula One leader Lewis Hamilton in a one-two finish for Mercedes in Friday's opening practice for the Portuguese Grand Prix. Finn Bottas maintained a habit that has seen him enjoy being 'fastest on Friday', but not always with success on the following days, as he clocked a best lap of one minute and 18.410 seconds at the Algarve International Circuit 15 kilometres inland from the coastal town of Portimao. That lap was enough to lift him three-tenths of a second clear of six-time world champion and Mercedes teammate Hamilton, who this weekend is seeking to overtake Michael Schumacher and claim a record 92nd GP victory. — *AFP*

Aryna downs Coco in Ostrava thriller

Prague: Aryna Sabalenka came back from 2-5 down in the third set to defeat American teenager Coco Gauff and reach the Ostrava WTA quarterfinals on Thursday. The big-hitting Sabalenka, the world number 12, took two hours and 13 minutes to beat 55th-ranked Gauff 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/2). The third-seeded Belarusian got off to a slow start against the patient Gauff who had few problems taking the first set. Sabalenka won the second 7-5 after breaking Gauff's serve for the first time, but then she started piling up the errors again to see the 16-year-old go 5-2 up in the decider. A racquet-smashing interlude helped her regain her composure. "After 5-2 in the third set I didn't care at all about the result," said Sabalenka, who had lost another three-set thriller to Gauff at Lexington in August. — *AFP*

Munoz grabs lead as Tiger teeters

Los Angeles: Colombia's Sebastian Munoz endured a roller-coaster round on his way to an eight-under par 64 Thursday to lead the PGA Zozo Championship while defending champion Tiger Woods struggled to a woeful 76. The 27-year-old South American star, had two eagles, eight birdies, five pars, two bogeys and a double bogey on his trip to the top of the leaderboard after the opening round at Sherwood Country Club. "I've become better with managing crazy ups and downs," Munoz said. Four-time major winner Rory McIlroy snapped a club in frustration on his way to a disappointing 73. — *AFP*

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Chennai Super Kings vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FORMULA ONE

Portuguese Grand Prix: Practice 1 from 2.25 pm; Practice 2 from 6.25 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

FOOTBALL

Spanish League: El Clasico — Barcelona vs Real Madrid from 7.30 pm on LaLiga page on Facebook

English Premier League: Aston Villa vs Leeds United from 12.30 am (Saturday) on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Italian League: Sassuolo vs Torino from 12.15 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

WWE SMACKDOWN

Bouts from 5.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1

THUNDERBOULT

Mumbai Indians thump CSK by 10 wickets

Sharjah, Oct. 23: Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah's devastating pace-bowling spell in tandem before Ishan Kishan's batting heroics helped Mumbai Indians post a comprehensive 10-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in a completely lop-sided IPL match here on Friday.

With the embarrassing loss, CSK are all but out of reckoning for the play-offs with just six points from 11 games, while MI jumped to the top spot with 14 points from 10 matches.

Bowling in tandem, Boult (4/18) and Bumrah (2/25) reduced CSK to 21 for 5 inside the Powerplay period with three and two wickets respectively and CSK never recovered from there, limping to 114 for 9, largely thanks to Sam Curran's 52.

Needing 115 for a win, Kishan (68 not out), opening in place of regular skipper Rohit Sharma who missed out due to a hamstring injury, and Quinton de Kock (46 not out) knocked off the required runs in just 12.2 overs.

The duo toyed with the CSK bowling attack on a dreadful day for the MS Dhoni-led side.

The left-handed Kishan, who has not had a substantial score after his knock of 99 against Royal Challengers Bangalore, was at his attacking best as he smashed six fours and five sixes during his 37-ball innings.

— *PTI*

Trent Boult of Mumbai Indians celebrates the wicket of Ruturaj Gaikwad of Chennai Super Kings during their IPL match at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Friday. — *BCCI*

SCORECARD

Chennai Super Kings Innings: Ruturaj Gaikwad lbw b Boult 0, Faf du Plessis c de Kock b Boult 1, Ambati Rayudu c de Kock b Bumrah 2, N Jagadeesan c Yadav b Bumrah 0, Mahendra Singh Dhoni c de Kock b Chahar 16, Ravindra Jadeja c Krunal b Boult 7, Sam Curran b Boult 52, Deepak Chahar st de Kock b Chahar 0, Shardul Thakur c Yadav b Coulter-Nile 11, Imran Tahir not out 13, Extras (B-1, LB-3, W-8) 12. **Total (for 9 wickets in 20 overs) 114.** **FoW:** 1-0, 2-3, 3-3, 4-3, 5-21, 6-30, 7-43,

8-71, 9-114.

Bowling: Trent Boult 4-1-18-4, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-25-2, Krunal Pandya 3-0-16-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-22-2, Nathan Coulter-Nile 4-0-25-1, Kieron Pollard 1-0-4-0.

Mumbai Indians: Q de Kock not out 46, I. Kishan not out 68, Extras (LB-2) 2. **Total (for no loss in 12.2 overs) 116.** **Bowling:** D. Chahar 4-0-34-0, Hazlewood 2-0-17-0, Imran Tahir 3-0-22-0, S. Thakur 2.2-0-26-0, R. Jadeja 1-0-15-0.

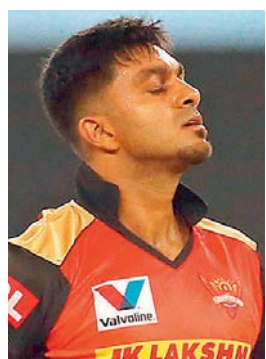
It was do-or-die game for me, says Vijay Shankar

Dubai, Oct. 23: All-rounder Vijay Shankar says he treated the match against RR as a 'do-or-die game' as his good show with both bat and ball may have saved his place in SRH's playing XI.

Manish Pandey (83) and Shankar (52) stitched an unbroken 140-run partnership to help SRH chase down RR's 154 for six on Thursday.

"If you ask personally it was a do-or-die game for me. That's how I saw this game. I didn't have the best of time with the bat, so I had to perform in this game and fortunately or unfortunately, we lost early wickets which made the team to send me up the order," Shankar said.

The Tamil Nadu crick-



Vijay Shankar

eter, who also picked up a wicket on Thursday, said the team should have previous couple of close games.

"We just slipped in the last minutes. A win like this will give confidence to each and every member of the team. We can win the remaining

games and keep ourselves alive in the tournament," he said.

After SRH lost two early wickets during their chase, Shankar said their plan was simple — forge a partnership and take the game as deep as possible.

"Manish was actually hitting the ball really well early on. I actually didn't bat (faced) that many balls before this innings. I batted just 18 balls before this innings so it was really important for me to have a feel of it. Archer was bowling quick so it was important for me to stay at the wicket.

"We wanted to take the game deep so I opened up and then we got few boundaries and it made things easier for us," he said. — *PTI*

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	10	7	3	0	14	+1.448
Delhi Capitals	10	7	3	0	14	+0.774
Royal Challengers Bangalore	10	7	3	0	14	+0.182
Kolkata Knight Riders	10	5	5	0	10	-0.828
Sunrisers Hyderabad	10	4	6	0	8	+0.092
Kings XI Punjab	10	4	6	0	8	-0.177
Rajasthan Royals	11	4	7	0	8	-0.620
Chennai Super Kings	11	3	8	0	6	-0.733

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

Warner all praise for middle order

Dubai, Oct. 23: Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper David Warner on Thursday said their middle order, under the scanner in the ongoing IPL, proved itself by guiding the team to a victory against Rajasthan Royals.

Manish Pandey (83) and Vijay Shankar (52) scored unbeaten half-centuries after Warner and Jonny Bairstow were dismissed early in the run chase to help SRH register a comfortable eight-wicket win.

"It is just great to show people that we do have a middle order.

"For them to come out and play like this, I am so happy for them. They showed they can build a platform for us to get across the line. Or set a big total. I am chuffed for them," Warner said at the post-match presentation.

Jason Holder, who was brought as a replacement

for the injured Mitchell Marsh, impressed in his first match of the season. The West Indies Test skipper came up with figures of 3/33, while also affecting a run out to destabilise the RR innings.

"Jason adds an extra string to our bow. His height. His experience. And he couldn't bat today, but he is an all-round package," Warner said.

The Sunrisers excelled on all fronts and Warner felt a victory like this was needed going ahead.

"It was a stunning performance. Starts with the toss where you questioned my decision to chase. We were able to bring them back after powerplay. All in all, the kind of game we were asking for," he added.

Jofra Archer dismissed Warner yet again and the Australian said it was frustrating. — *PTI*

Spirited SRH take on hungry KXIP

Dubai, Oct. 23: Their campaign back on track with a hat-trick of wins, Kings XI Punjab will take on another resurgent team — Sunrisers Hyderabad — here on Saturday in a must-win IPL game for the two well-matched sides.

Both KXIP and SRH are on the same pedestal, having garnered eight points apiece after 10 games, but the Hyderabad outfit is a rung ahead in the eight-team standings, on the fifth spot by virtue of a better net run rate.

And both the teams need to win their remaining four games to guarantee their place in the play-offs. It has been a terrific turnaround especially for KXIP after a slow start to the tournament.

After the initial hiccups, KXIP got its campaign back on track with three consecutive wins — over mighty DC, MI and RCB and the KL Rahul-led side would be hoping to carry the winning momentum forward to break into top four.

While KXIP's batting is in the safe hands of skipper Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Chris Gayle and Nicholas Pooran, the shaky form of Glenn Maxwell remains a concern.

SRH too find itself in similar position and needs to win its remaining four matches to seal a play-off berth. The side managed to keep itself in the play-off hunt with a confidence-boosting eight-wicket win

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 15
- Hyderabad: 11
- Punjab: 4

MEETING IN 2019

- Kings XI Punjab beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6 wickets at Mohali
- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Kings XI Punjab by 45 runs at Hyderabad

MEETING IN 2020

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Kings XI Punjab by 69 runs at Dubai

FOR THE RECORD

- Sandeep Sharma who took 99 wickets at an average of 25.10 in 86 innings of as many matches for Kings XI Punjab and Sunrisers Hyderabad, needs just one wicket to become the 15th bowler to complete a century of wickets in IPL.
- Lokesh Rahul with 540 runs at an average of 67.50 and a strike rate of 135.67 in 10 innings is only batsman to cross 500-run mark in this IPL.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

over RR on Thursday night after three consecutive defeats. The positive for SRH is that despite Warner and Jonny Bairstow departing early in the 155-run chase against RR in their last match, young Manish Pandey (83) and Vijay Shankar (52) rose to the occasion and shared an unbeaten 140-run partnership to secure win. Jason Holder's inclusion has added firepower to SRH's bowling attack. — *PTI*

DC look to derail wobbling Kolkata

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 23: Table-toppers DC would expect more from their batsmen after an underwhelming performance in the loss to KXIP when they take on a low-on-confidence KKR in an IPL game here on Saturday.

For Delhi, opener Shikhar Dhawan has been in brilliant form but even his record-setting hundred was not enough to save the side from a defeat against KXIP for lack of contribution from other batters.

Young Prithvi Shaw needs to bat with more responsibility at the top since Dhawan may not be able to rescue the side all the time. Shaw's last four innings have included two ducks.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer too has not been hitting the ball as fluently as he was before suffering a side strain. Rishabh Pant, who made a comeback from injury against Punjab, too has not yet set the stage on fire.

Iyer and Pant, along with Marcus Stoinis, form the

backbone of Capitals' middle order. They are vital cogs in DC's wheels and need to do more than just making good starts.

Pacer Anrich Nortze, who has been instrumental in Capitals' superb run thus far along with his South African compatriot Kagiso Rabada, had a niggle and missed the last match against Punjab.

If he comes back, it will add sting to DC's attack. If he plays, Australian pacer Daniel Sams will have to make way for him.

KKR are heading into the contest after an embarrassing batting performance against RCB.

Blown away by Mohammed Siraj's furious spell, KKR managed just 84 runs on the board.

It certainly was a confidence-crushing defeat and KKR need to regroup quickly.

Sitting at fourth place in the table with 10 points, they would be desperate to increase their tally to stay alive in the play-offs race. — *PTI*

NUMBERS GAME- DC vs KKR

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 24
- Kolkata: 13
- Delhi: 10
- Tied: 1+

MEETING IN 2019

- Delhi Capitals beat Kolkata Knight Riders in Super over after match ended in a tie at Delhi
- Delhi Capitals beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 7 wickets at Kolkata

MEETING IN 2020

- Delhi Capitals beat Kolkata

Knight Riders by 18 runs at Sharjah

FOR THE RECORD

- Rishabh Pant who scored 1926 runs at an average of 35.66 in 61 innings of as many matches, needs 74 runs to become third Delhi Capitals batsman to score 2000 runs in IPL.
- Dinesh Karthik will equal Suresh Raina's record of 193 matches in IPL. Only Mahendra Singh Dhoni (200 matches) and Rohit Sharma (197 matches) appeared in more matches.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*

An empty feeling at the 1st Clasico

Barcelona, Oct. 23: For some it has been decades since they last missed a Clasico at the Camp Nou but this weekend they have no choice but to stay away.

One of the biggest matches in the global football calendar, Barcelona's home clash with Real Madrid is usually played in front of over 90,000 fans but on Saturday will unfold in a kind of void, as not only the stands but even the streets outside will be empty. "It's not just a football match," says Joan Bertran, the president of Pena Anguera, one of Barcelona's most historic supporter associations, who has attended every Clasico at the Camp Nou for the last 48 years.

To rub salt into the wounds, those prevented from entering the Camp Nou this weekend will not even get the second best thing: meeting up to watch the game with friends and fellow supporters.

"We'll go from having 600 people for the Clasico to no people and not a single euro," says Albert Devesa, manager of the Overlla Negra, whose frustration at the timing of the recent measures is clear.

Although a 1400 GMT kick-off, picked to allow fans in Asia to watch, was not ideal, Devesa was confident he would fill his huge tavern, an old industrial building in Barcelona, where many fans come to watch games. — *AFP*



Lucas Moura of Tottenham Hotspur in action during the UEFA Europa League first round match against Linzer ASK at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London on Thursday. — *AFP*

Tottenham lay LASK low; Milan send Celtic packing

Paris, Oct. 23: Gareth Bale said it felt good to be "loved and appreciated" after helping Tottenham to a 3-0 win over LASK of Austria in the Europa League on Thursday.

Despite Bale starting, it was on-loan Carlos Vinicius who made an impressive debut in the Group 'J' opener.

Vinicius started in place of the resting Harry Kane and he made goals in either half for Lucas Moura and Son Heung-min, while he would have also netted himself had Andres Andrade

not scored an own goal. Bale made that goal where Andrade put through his own net.

Leicester made the perfect start in Group 'G' with a comfortable 3-0 win over Zorya Luhansk of Ukraine. James Maddison, Harvey Barnes and Kelechi Iheanacho were on the scoresheet.

In Glasgow, Celtic struggled against Serie 'A' leaders AC Milan who were 2-0 up at half-time thanks to goals from Rade Krunic and Ibrahim Diaz.

Mohamed Elyounoussi

reduced the arrears after the break, but Jens Petter Hauge broke clear to secure Milan's Group 'H' 3-1 win in stoppage time.

Earlier Thursday, Arsenal came from behind to down Rapid Vienna 2-1 and Rangers beat Standard Liege 2-0. David Luiz put them level with a deft glancing header off Nicolas Pepe's free-kick, with Aubameyang then tapping home to bag the three Group 'B' points.

Elsewhere, Bayer Leverkusen ran riot 6-2 against Nice. — *AFP*

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20

Printed and Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: **Kaushik Mitter**