

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

KARIMNAGAR | FRIDAY | 20 NOVEMBER 2020



**NATION | 4**

**Gupkar declaration  
a conspiracy: Naqvi**



**WORLD | 5**

**Transition delay is  
affecting vaccine: Biden**

**SPORTS | 8**

**Djokovic loses at  
ATP Tour Finals**



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

Vol. 83 No. 321 Established 1938 | 16 PAGES | ₹6.00

## WEATHER

**Max:** 31.6°C  
**Min:** 21.7°C  
**RH:** 56%  
**Rainfall:** Nil

**Forecast:** Cloudy sky.  
Haze, mist likely.  
Max/Min temp. 30/19 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+46,140)	(+584)
90,04,045	1,32,201
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+ 1,058)	(+4)
TS: 2,60,834	1,419
(+1,316)	(+11)
AP: 8,58,711	6,910

### CASES AROUND THE WORLD

**5,69,15,293**  
**DEATHS**  
**13,60,685**  
**COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES**  
**217**

worldometers.info/  
coronavirus

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari;** Dakshinayana  
**Tithi:** Kartika Suddha Shasthi till 9.35 pm  
**Star:** Uttarashadha till 9.24 am  
**Variyam:** 1.30 pm to 3.08 pm  
**Durmuhurtam:** 8.41 am to 9.25 am; 12.23 pm to 1.08 pm  
**Rahukalam:** 10.30 am to 12 noon

**HJRI CALENDAR**  
**Rabbi-ul Akhir 4, 1442 AH**

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 5:21 am  
**Zohar:** 12:12 pm  
**Asar:** 4:04 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5:46 pm  
**Isha:** 6:56 pm  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6:24 AM**  
**SUNSET TODAY 5:39 PM**  
**MOONSET TODAY 10:47 PM**  
**MOONRISE TOMORROW 11:22 AM**

## COUNTER POINT



**Covid Cabinet?  
You have to wait!**

## SHORT TAKE

## Oxford vaccine works for aged

**London:** The coronavirus vaccine developed by teams at the University of Oxford has been shown to trigger a robust immune response in healthy adults aged 56-69 and those over 70 years of age. The findings published in 'Lancet' on Thursday based on 560 healthy adult volunteers shows that the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine is "safe and well tolerated" with a lower reactivity profile in older adults than in younger adults, meaning the older age groups could build immunity to the disease.

■ Full report on Page 5

## Temperature to dip further: IMD

**New Delhi:** Parts of northern India witnessed a dip in minimum temperatures on Thursday with the national capital recording its coldest morning this season, while the meteorological department predicted a further dip in mercury in the northwest parts of the country in the next couple of days. Delhi's air quality was recorded in the "poor" category while the minimum temperature dropped to 9.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday morning, the lowest this season so far, due to cold winds blowing from snow-capped western Himalayas.

## Four Jaish terrorists killed



Security personnel inspect the site of encounter at Nagrota Ban toll plaza in Jammu on Thursday. A gunfight broke out between terrorists and security forces in the Nagrota area Jammu district early on Thursday. Four militants have been killed.

■ Report on Page 4

— PTI

# Tainted Bihar minister quits

**NAYEAR AZAD | DC**  
PATNA, NOV. 19

Three days after he became Bihar's Chief Minister for the fourth straight term, the Nitish Kumar-led government faced its first political humiliation on Thursday when the state education minister Mewalal Chaudhary had to resign from the post after being slammed for corruption charges.

Mr Chaudhary, who maintains that all charges against him are baseless, put in his resignation within hours of resuming office on Thursday after Mr Kumar intervened.

Mr Chaudhary has been facing flak from the Opposition parties, especially the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), ever since he took oath as the Cabinet minister along with the chief minister on November 16.

Speaking about his resignation, Mr Chaudhary said, "Accusations can only be proved either after a chargesheet is filed or the court passes an order. In my case, nothing has happened. The matter is still under



Mewalal Chaudhary

investigation". He also slammed RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav for raising questions against him and said, "He has no right to point fingers at me as he himself is facing a series of corruption charges."

In a series of tweets earlier, Mr Yadav had accused the Bihar chief minister of appointing ministers who have corruption and criminal cases pending against them.

A case was filed against Mr Chaudhary in 2017 on the basis of reports that highlighted irregularities in the appointment of assistant professors and junior scientists during his tenure as the vice-chancellor of Bihar Agriculture University, Sabour, in Bhagalpur district.

## TUNGABHADRA PUSHKARALU TO BEGIN TODAY

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 18

The Jogulamba Gadwal district is fully prepared for Tungabhadra Pushkaralu starting Friday. District officials have made all arrangements to make the pushkarams a success. Pushkarams will be held for 12 days from November 20 to December 1.

On day one, pushkarams will be launched at 1.23 pm by revenue minister Allola Indrakaran Reddy, agriculture minister Niranjan Reddy and excise minister Srinivas Gowda along with Madhavananda Swamy, chairperson of Thoguta, at Alampur ghat, and Kamalananda Bharathi Swamiji, chairperson, Hindu Temple Foundation.

The Telangana government has asked devotees participating in Tungabhadra river pushkaralu to carry their Corona negative reports and show them at the ghats before taking a dip in the river. The government has issued guidelines for devotees to follow.

■ Page 2: No entry for kids and elderly at ghats

# Hafiz Saeed gets 10-year jail

**Lahore, Nov. 19:** Mumbai terror attack mastermind and Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed was on Thursday sentenced to 10 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan in two more terror financing cases.

Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US

has placed a \$10 million bounty on, was arrested on July 17 last year in the terror financing cases.

He was sentenced to 11 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in February this year in two terror financing cases.

The 70-year-old JuD chief is lodged at Lahore's

high-security Kot Lakhpat jail.

"The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Thursday sentenced four JuD leaders, including its chief Hafiz Saeed, in two more cases," a court official said.

■ Full report on Page 5

# HC raps Delhi for rise in Covid cases

**New Delhi, Nov. 19:** The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the AAP government if it could explain to those who had lost their near and dear ones to Covid-19 in the last 18 days why the administration did not take steps when cases were spiralling in the capital.

The high court, which also asked the government to look at the situation with a "magnifying glass", observed that it was "disheartening" to see that the number of daily deaths due to the virus has increased to 131 and fresh Covid cases

have risen to 7,486. Pulling up the Delhi government, a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad asked why it waited till the court intervened to take steps such as reducing the number of people attending weddings to 50 to prevent the spread of Covid-19. "You (Delhi government) saw from November 1 which way the wind was blowing. But you turn turtle now because we asked you some questions. The bell should have rung loud and clear when the numbers were spiralling." — PTI

### TECH | TALK

## Modi calls for globalising India's tech solutions

# Tech helped Covid-hit, says PM



Narendra Modi

India is at a sweet spot. It is time for tech-solutions that are designed in India but deployed for the world," Modi said.

Pointing out that Digital India has become a way of life, particularly for the poor, marginalised and for

those in government, Modi said, thanks to Digital India, our nation has witnessed a more human-centric approach to development.

"Our government has successfully created a market for digital and tech solutions, but it has made technology a key part of all schemes. Our governance model is technology-first. Through technology, we have enhanced human dignity. Millions of farmers receive monetary support in one click. At the peak of the Covid-19 lockdown, it was technology that ensured that India's poor received proper and quick

assistance," he said.

Modi also lauded the resilience of the country's tech sector during global lockdowns, travel restrictions, and said it used tech solutions to keep work going on, from home and from anywhere.

"The tech industry recognised a great innovation opportunity in bringing people together," the Prime Minister said.

"The Covid-19 pandemic was a bend in the path not the end...The amount of tech adoption that would not have happened in a decade, happened in just a few months," Mr Modi said.

— PTI

# Trade unions rally behind KCR against privatisation

## Unions hold demonstrations; TRS to support workers' strike

**S.A. ISHAQUI | DC**  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has proved his political acumen once again by touching the emotive issue of divestment in public sector undertakings (PSUs) by the BJP government at the Centre.

The employees and workers unions of several PSUs were agitating against the move of the BJP, saying it would ruin several premier institutions of the nations while private corporates would whisk away the fruits, even as lives of employees would be dragged to the crossroads.

Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao raised the divestment issue on Wednesday during the Parliamentary Party and Legislature Party meeting at Telangana Bhavan.

He assured employees and workers unions of PSUs including Life Insurance Corporation of India, BHEL and others that TRS would stand behind them for their fight against the Central government.

He assured workers and union leaders of leading their movement personally to build pressure on the BJP government at the



K. Chandrashekar Rao

Centre. Hyderabad is the hub of various PSUs, which includes BHEL, Bharat Dynamics Ltd, Electronics Corporation of India Ltd, Hindustan Fluorocarbons Ltd, Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd and Sponge Iron India Ltd.

Apart from the Central PSUs, Hyderabad had a large number of employees of the Life Insurance Corporation, South-Central Railway, BSNL and BHEL, some of which were already on cards for divestment, and whose employees have been opposing the move of the Central government.

The Chief Minister raked the issue of LIC, BSNL and Indian Railways even as he extended support from the

TRS to the nationwide strike of trade unions on November 26 against divestment and the anti-worker policies of the BJP.

This struck political gold with employees opposing privatisation of public sector units coming out in support of the TRS for the upcoming elections for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Thousands of CPSU employees in the city, employee organisations from the LIC, BSNL and SCR held demonstrations at their union offices in the city to thank the Chief Minister. Trade unions of BSNL, LIC and SCR passed resolutions expending support to the TRS in the GHMC polls.

BSNL employees union leaders Sampath Rao, Samba Siva Rao, Sushil Kumar, Chandramouli, LIC employees union leaders Thirupathiah, Mehboob and Rajendra Babu said they would extend full support to TRS in GHMC polls.

Telangana State Planning Board vice chairman and TRS politburo member B. Vinod Kumar participated in meetings of employees' associations of BSNL and the LIC.

## KTR: MIM NOT A FRIEND OR ALLY OF TRS

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday said that his party, the TRS, had neither a friend of nor had any formal alliance with the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) for the elections to the GHMC.

Answering questions from journalists at a 'Meet the Press' programme organised by the Press Club of Hyderabad, he clarified, "AIMIM is not a friend of the TRS. As a political party, the MIM was impressed with the TRS' policies and had therefore extended its support to us."

He said that it was normal in politics that a political party might extend issue-based support to other parties or a government, even while retaining the right to be opponents in the electoral fray.

■ Page 2: TRS will win 10 seats in Old City: KTR

# 'Vaccine on priority for elderly'

**New Delhi, Nov. 19:** Expressing confidence that a Covid-19 vaccine will be ready in the next three-four months, Union health minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday said the government has drawn up a meticulous priority plan with healthcare workers and those above 65 years on top of the list.

Addressing the FICCI FLO's national webinar on "the shifting healthcare paradigm during and post-Covid", Vardhan said it is estimated that 400-500 million vaccine doses will be made available for 250-300

million people by July-August.

"I am confident that the Covid-19 vaccine will be ready in the next three-four months," he said.

"It is natural that the vaccine distribution would have to be prioritised. As you know the healthcare workers who are corona warriors will be prioritised, then people who are above 65-years of age, they have been prioritised and then those from 50-65 years of age have been prioritised. Then those below 50 years who have other diseases," the minister said.

Vardhan said everything is being decided by experts with a scientific point of view. "We have made a very detailed meticulous plan on this," he said.

"What we would have to do in March-April next year, we have started planning for it from now only. We have also initiated an integrated response system against Covid-19 and will also host clinical trials for all the major vaccines. About 20 vaccines are in different stages of development."

He said about 90-99 per cent tackling of Covid-19 is

only through protecting and motivating others. "You can protect yourself from this deadly virus with small precautions like wearing a good quality mask properly, maintaining social distance and taking care of hand-hygiene," he noted.

The phase-3 trial of the Oxford vaccine of the Serum Institute is almost near completion, while the phase-3 clinical trial of the indigenous-developed vaccine candidate of the Bharat Biotech and research institute ICMR has already started. — PTI

## ₹2,000 FINE FOR SKIPPING MASK IN DELHI

**SANJAY KAW &  
RAJNISH SHARMA | DC**  
NEW DELHI, NOV. 19

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday announced a steep hike in fine for not using face mask from ₹500 to ₹2,000. The announcement came at a time when the national capital is witnessing a high surge in the Coronavirus cases in the last past week.

Kejriwal also held an all-party meeting where he appealed for a united effort to fight the pandemic. "It is not the time for politics, there is an entire lifetime for it. We should set aside politics and allegations for a few days. This is the time to serve people," he said.

He made a fervent appeal to all political parties and social organisations to distribute masks at public places.

The hard line by the government came a day after the city recorded the highest daily death count — virtually one death every 10 minutes — due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The city has witnessed a spurt in cases since October 28, when the daily rise breached the 5,000-mark for the first time, and it crossed the 8,000-mark on November 11.



## SHORT TAKES

## NO ENTRY FOR KIDS, ELDERLY AT GHATS

From Page 1

Devotees without Covid negative test reports have to pass thermal screening at the ghats. Children below 10 years and senior citizens above 65 years of age would not be allowed to participate.

The government informed that thermal screening and sanitizers would be made available at all temples. The government appealed to devotees to maintain physical distance. The government has released ₹2.5 crore for the event.

## TRS CORPORATOR KILARI JOINS BJP IN PRESENCE OF BANDI

**Hyderabad:** TRS corporator Kilari Manohar from Vengalrao Nagar left the party and joined the BJP in the presence of state unit president Bandi Sanjay, Union minister G. Kishan Reddy, and Dr K. Laxman, the OBC Morcha president, on Thursday.

Kilari will contest as the BJP candidate from Vengalrao Nagar. Meanwhile, MIM leader Chinna Srisailem Yadav's son Venkat Yadav also joined the BJP. The BJP also released its list of star campaigners for the GHMC polls. The list includes Sanjay, Kishan Reddy, Dr Laxman, party vice president D.K. Aruna among the few.

## FORUM: PARTIES MUST EXPLAIN SELECTIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

The Forum for Good Governance has written to the State Election Commissioner requesting the issue of orders to political parties contesting the GHMC elections, to publish the criminal history of their candidates.

The forum cited the February 2020 order of the Supreme Court, directing political parties to publish within 48 hours of confirming the ticket the entire criminal history of their candidates for Assembly and Lok Sabha elections along with the reasons that goaded them to field suspected criminals over decent people.

It added that during 2016 GHMC elections, political parties gave tickets to 72 candidates with criminal background. "In the present elections also many people with criminal records may get elected. As there is very little time left until the voting begins, by publishing entire criminal records of their candidates, political parties will educate voters," it said.

## TD PUTS OUT FIRST LIST OF 90 CANDIDATES

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

TS Telugu Desam president L. Ramana said that activists had stood behind the party through difficult times, and the party has to support them by giving tickets.

The party later released its first list of 90 candidates. In 2016, the TD won one seat.

Ramana demanded that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao account for the ₹67,000 crore that were stated to be spent by the state government on Hyderabad.

Speaking after a meeting of a party meeting at NTR Trust Bhavan, Ramana alleged that the government had cheated the people without implementing the poll promises made during the last elections of GHMC.

## Hyd wants Mayor with a vision

## Majority wants Mayor who can work for development of city, rise above party loyalty

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

The seat of the first citizen of the city has been booked for a woman in the upcoming GHMC elections, and there are high expectations of the winner.

The team of reporters at *Deccan Chronicle* reached out to several voters to find out who they wanted as the Mayor of Hyderabad. It seems that a significant number of voters are in favour of Dr Lubna Sarwat of the Socialist Party, a well known lakes activist, to be elected Mayor.

Most voters that *Deccan Chronicle* spoke to wished to see someone that is young, has a vision for the development of the city

and innovative ideas for the welfare of the people. Voters reckoned that Dr Sarwat's war against corruption and mismanagement in the city, and her zeal to not compromise on principles make her a suitable candidate for the post of first citizen of the city.

Dimple K.S., a homemaker, said, "Ideally speaking, the mayor should be an independent candidate, with no party affiliations. She should not buckle down to what the party mandates, rather she should do what the people of the city require at the moment."

A medical practitioner in West Marredpally said she hoped that the Mayor would be technologically savvy, owing to the shift of most government process-



Dr Lubna Sarwat



Renuka Chowdhury

es to online platforms, and said that the Mayor should aim at being more accessible for the people. Voters are also of the view that if a woman is elected, she should not be making decisions and fronting for her husband, regardless of who it is. Yamuna Pathak, a research scholar and social activist, said, "Men

who cannot run for these elections are making their wives or family members contest, due to the reservation for women. We want women empowerment in its true sense. We also want a progress report of what and how much is being done every month." On the Mayor, she said, "We need someone

who has in-depth knowledge, is tech savvy, someone with a practical approach. Let them not sit in an air-conditioned room and make decisions. They have to come down to the grassroot level and work. These positions should not be ornamental. 'Know your Mayor' should be the approach."

Other than Dr Sarwat, voters are looking at a political figure like Renuka Chowdhury from the Congress to lead the city. Dr Sofiya Sujad, a medical practitioner, said, "We need someone with a vision and plan of action. I've always believed that when the essential unit of our society's fabric, the child, is treated as a fundamental building block of the nation, the architec-

ture of the country will fall into place in every avenue. Therefore a lady like Renuka Chowdhury who, in addition to her merits, has worked tirelessly towards the cause of women and children will be a great choice."

Voters demanded that the mayor should be elected directly by the people and not by the corporators.

Questioned on what should be the priority for the new Mayor, people listed out issues like conservation of environment and animals, management of waste and garbage in the city, establishment of a transparent organisational system, and welfare of the community as a whole, without any party biases, among other things.

## Cops to curb liquor flow ahead of polls

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

Police is setting up check-posts and identifying critical zones in several areas to tackle the illegal transfer of cash, liquor and other items which may be used to bribe voters ahead of the GHMC elections.

According to Cyberabad police commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, the focus is on 20 places to set up check-posts in Cyberabad.

As many as 34,000 police personnel, 7,000 each from Cyberabad and Rachakonda and 20,000 from the Hyderabad commissionerate, including the Task Force, Special Operations Team, Law and Order among other teams from the tri-commissionerate are being deployed by the police for the upcoming GHMC elections.

Police have formed Static Surveillance Teams and flying squads, who will be working round the clock to address violations and for expenditure monitoring.

"Police teams are working on identifying critical and hypersensitive zones. It will be based on the number of candidates as well. The Code of Conduct for the elections has been enforced and personnel have been deputed to returning offices where candidates will file nominations," said an official.

Director-General of Police M. Mahendar Reddy, held a state-level review meeting through video conference on Wednesday, where he discussed ways to standardise function verticals across the state through continuous monitoring from the state police headquarters.

He directed police officers to be vigilant while performing election duties. As the code of conduct is in force, police officers were asked to maintain law and order and take necessary measures to ensure peaceful and smooth conduct of the elections.

## Extra vigil



Police set up barricades at the North Zone GHMC office in Secunderabad on Thursday after the dates for nominations for GHMC elections were announced.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

## KTR: No alliance with MIM

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday said that his party, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, had neither a friend of nor had any formal alliance with the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimen (AIMIM) for the elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Answering questions from journalists at a 'Meet the Press' programme organised by the Press Club of Hyderabad, he clarified, "AIMIM is not a friend of the TRS. As a political party, the MIM was impressed with TRS' policies and had therefore extended its support to us."

The minister said that it was normal in politics that a political party might extend issue-based support to other parties or a government, even while retaining the right to be opponents in the electoral fray.

The TRS, which had been fighting the "anti-

people's policies of the BJP government" at the Centre, had extended supported to the Union government when the GST was implemented.

He said that in the previous GHMC elections, the TRS had defeated candidates of the MIM in five divisions of the old city and narrowly lost couple of others. "This time, we are confident of winning more than 10 seats in the old city defeating the MIM candidates."

Countering the BJP statements in which the saffron party accused the TRS of resorting to politics of appeasement of Muslims and that the TRS was planning to handover the mayor's post to the MIM, Rama Rao retorted, "Have we gone bonkers? Why will the TRS even consider such a move? A woman candidate from our party is going to be the next mayor of Hyderabad on December 4."

Stating that the TRS was contesting all 150 divisions in the GHMC elections, he claimed that his party would go it alone in the elections.

## Kavitha: BJP, Congress stopped aid to flood-hit

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

Claiming that the TRS would sweep the GHMC elections, TRS MLC K. Kavitha on Thursday said the BJP and the Congress had no right to seek votes as they had forcibly stopped distribution of interim financial assistance to flood-affected families in the city.

She was interacting with the media after accompanying TRS Gandhinagar candidate Mutta Padma for the filing of her nomination papers at the municipal office at Abids.

Kavitha said that the

party's victory in the GHMC elections would start from Gandhinagar.

She asked how the national parties could ask for votes when they had stalled the flood relief distribution to the poor. She alleged that the BJP government at the Centre had not given a single paisa for the affected families while the party had stalled the assistance the state government was trying to extend.

Responding to a question on the BJP leaders' claim of the Centre extending financial assistance for flood relief, she said anyone could ask

Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy.

Even after the outbreak of Covid-19, the Centre had not extended any help to the people, she said.

Be it the floods or the pandemic, it was the TRS government that had come to the rescue of the people. Kavitha said that the TRS government under the leadership of CM has taken up development works in the city at a cost over ₹67,000 crore. "We will explain to the people the development activities carried out in the twin cities in the last six years," Kavitha said.

## KAVITHA FLAYS TAGORE FOR HIS REMARKS AGAINST KCR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV 19

TRS MLC K. Kavitha on Thursday night cautioned AICC Telangana incharge Manickam Tagore for his remarks against Chief Minister K.

Chandrashekar Rao. Tagore had Tweeted: "Whenever Modi-Shah

needs your help in Rajya Sabha you will help them but organise conclave? Do you think the opposition leaders who are fighting the Modi-Shah can be confused? Chandrasekar Naveen-Jagan are the ATM (Anytime Modi) supporters! Chandrasekar can't fool all (sic)."

Ms Kavitha retorted say-

ing: "In the last session of the Lok Sabha when TRS MPs were fighting against d farm bills, your party MPs had to come & stood with Us. TRS is people's voice & KCR is a fighter! When he decides to fight, your leadership might ask you to go to the conclave! Pls choose your words carefully Sir (sic)."

## Specially abled can opt to vote by postal ballot

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

In a bid to ensure that every person casts his or her franchise, the Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) has given persons with disabilities (PwDs) the option of postal ballot. Apart from PwDs, those aged 80 and above and Covid-positive persons are eligible for postal ballots.

In a set of orders issued on Thursday, the SEC said: 'Keeping in view the COVID-19 pandemic in India and in order to curb the highrisk of community spread of novel corona virus (COVID-19), the Commission prescribed the broad guidelines to be followed during conduct of ordinary elections to GHMC duly following the Standard operating Procedures (SOP) on disinfection, sanitization, and prevention for containing COVID-19 issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India from time to time.'

Usually, the postal ballots are provided to certain voters, service personnel and their wives, persons who are under preventive detention and those on election duty.

Electors can apply for a postal ballot through application form (physically or through official website tsec.gov.in of TSEC using Postal Ballot Management Module system to the concerned ward returning officer).

In case of PwD voters, they have to enclose additionally their disability certificate issued by a competent authority.

Those who have found Covid-19 positive after November 1 have to enclose a recent medical

## ₹100 stamp papers cost ₹1,000 with hoarders

ATHER MOIN | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

There is an acute shortage of ₹100 stamp papers as the demand for that particular denomination of non-judicial stamp papers has suddenly shot up due to the GHMC polls.

A black market has sprung up for the valuable papers which is now thriving on the sudden demand.

Candidates need ₹100 stamp papers to make affidavits while filing their nomination papers for the polls.

Many vendors were not aware of the demand for stamp papers during the election, which was announced suddenly, resulting in many of them being unable to procure stock.

However, some vendors realised that there would be a demand as the GHMC polls were due, took advantage of the situation and hoarded the stamp papers. They are now selling it at higher rates.

Party workers were seen frantically looking for ₹100 stamp papers for the last two days. A few vendors charged inflated rates ranging from ₹500 to ₹1,000 for the ₹100 papers. These were purchased despite the cost because of the urgency of the matter. The last date for filing nomination papers is February 21.

● **CANDIDATES NEED ₹100 stamp papers to make affidavits while filing their nomination papers for the polls.**

● **THE SUDDEN announcement of the GHMC elections caught many vendors off-guard. Those who stocked up on the stamp papers by realising the elections were due are now making a killing by selling them at ₹1,000**

## PwDs NOT HAPPY WITH POSTAL BALLOT OFFER

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

The news of postal ballots being given out to persons with disabilities (PwDs) has not been welcomed by voters in the city. They were unsure of how to perceive this news as it requires the PwDs to have a disability certificate.

"Many Multiple Sclerosis Patients (MSPs) do not have a disability certificate. In such circumstances stepping out to cast votes is very difficult for a person who has a compromised immune system," said Renuka (name changed) an MSP from the city.

Kolli Nageswara Rao of the All India Disabled Rights' Forum (AIDRF), said, "There are 21 categories of disability under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act. But, the officials do not know the list of disabilities. How do we leave the postal ballots at their mercy?" He said there were 14 lakh persons with disabilities across all ages in the state."

test certificate in addition to self-attested Aadhaar/EPIC card/passport along with application form.

The elector has to apply seven days prior to the poll. After scrutiny, the returning officer will send the ballot by post to the eligible voters, along with instructions for the guidance of voters.

Those who opt for postal ballots cannot vote at the polling booths.

## CLOSE WATCH

## Officials to keep tab on high profile biz men known for funding political parties

## I-T dept eye on cash flow ahead of elections

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

As political parties huddle to draw strategies and counter-strategies to win over voters for the ensuing Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) polls — the stakes for which are very high particularly for the TRS and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) — the income-tax department is gearing up to keep a close eye on the flow of unaccounted cash.

Anticipating the flow of such funds to be "very high," high profile individ-

uals who are known to fund various political parties and banks are on the radar of the tax officers. It is learnt that the operations of the tax officers will be closely monitored by their seniors in New Delhi.

Top sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the Principal Chief Commissioner of the income-tax department of Hyderabad region is all set to finalise the name of the nodal officer who will oversee the GHMC polls from the income-tax perspective.

The nodal officer, a senior officer of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), will

● **ANTICIPATING THE flow of such funds to be "very high," high profile individuals who are known to fund various political parties and banks are on the radar of the tax officers. It is learnt that the operations of the tax officers will be closely monitored by their seniors in New Delhi.**

coordinate with the state agencies.

It is learnt that this time around the nodal officer is likely to get an elaborate team of tax officials which

is expected to pick up inputs from different areas and keep track of banks and their operations. Most importantly, they will keep a close watch on certain high-profile industrialists who are known to fund political parties. Their names are no secret, sources said.

Like many, the sudden announcement of GHMC polls surprised the top brass of the Hyderabad region of the income-tax department, who are all set to finalise the nodal officer and his team. "There is anticipation of massive

attempts being made to transport unaccounted cash as the stakes (for the political parties) are very high. Moreover, with the sudden announcement of polls, the parties do not have much time at hand for campaigning. Therefore, it is likely that they may resort to other ways to woo the voters," sources said.

It is widely believed that under the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) rule, the income-tax department has been strengthened, especially in terms of manpower and electronic gadgets used to surveil

potential tax evaders and their shady operations. "The income-tax department has its own strategies in place to keep a close watch on the goings-on during and before elections," sources said.

Once the nodal officer and his team are appointed, they are likely to hold a meeting with senior bank officials who are expected to inform the tax officials about large cash transactions.

It is likely that some banks could be flagged as sensitive, based on the inputs that trickle in.



## OTHER STORIES

DISTRESSED  
FARMER BURNS  
PADDY FIELDDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, NOV. 19

A farmer, Pagidikathula Disender burnt his paddy field as BHP (locally called as Doma Potu pest) dried the plants.

The farmer, a tenant farmer and native of Nelakondapalli, had raised paddy in three acres. But BPH destroyed his plants. Distress, he lit a fire and burnt the crop. He said, "I lost ₹50,000 as farm expenses."

VOORACHERUVU TO  
BE DEVELOPED AS  
MINI TANK BUNDDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, NOV. 19

Another mini tank bund will be coming up in Khammam soon. Minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar said that the Vooora cheruvu, at Khanapuram in Khammam, will be developed as a mini tank bund. It will have facilities like a walking track, toys for children and exercise equipment.

"There will be an open gym and palm trees will be planted around the bund, along with the setting up of a kids play area at the proposed site. Minister for municipal administration will inaugurate it."

YOUTH DIES BY  
SUICIDE OVER IPL  
BETTING LOANSDC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 19

A 23-year-old youth who had run up huge debts to take part in betting on IPL cricket matches died by suicide in Rudrur mandal headquarters.

Speaking to newsmen, Nagesh, the father of Charan, the victim, said, "We were unaware about his debts."

Reportedly, Charan had taken to drink, and had borrowed money from his friends and others.

He was unable to clear the loans. Rudrur police registered a case and are investigating.

SEMINAR ON  
EMPOWERING  
WOMEN HELDDC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 19

District judge, legal services authority chairperson K. Sai Ramadevi said that the collective efforts, of various sections in society, can help prevent domestic violence.

She said, "Women play multiple roles in families but are victims of domestic violence. Awareness about their rights and responsibilities can improve their situation."

The seminar, on empowering women was held at the Nyaya Seva sadan on Thursday.

It was organised by the National legal services authority and National commission for women jointly.

Speaking at the meeting, K.Sai Ramadevi said that a new act will be in force to prevent child marriages.

Locals take to 'begging'  
to bring back TRS MLA

To get Ramesh back from Germany, devotees told to donate

PULI SHARATH  
KUMAR | DC  
SIRCILLA, NOV. 19

The candidates who contested from the Vemulawada Assembly constituency as independents against TRS party candidate Chennamaneni Ramesh Babu in 2018, along with locals staged a unique begging protest in front of the famed temple in Vemulawada on Thursday.

Expressing ire at Ramesh Babu, they urged the devotees to donate money so that they could purchase air tickets to get their MLA back from Germany.

They recalled that before the elections, Ramesh Babu had promised the people of the constituency that he would be with them during hard times and would stand by them if he was re-elected.

They said that in the last 10 months when they were facing hardships because of Covid-19, the MLA was enjoying with his family in far-off Germany.



Candidates who contested from the Vemulawada assembly segment as independents beg in front of the temple premises in Vemulawada of Rajanna Sircilla district on Thursday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

"Even after lodging a complaint against him in the police station, there has been no response

■ THE HIGH COURT on Wednesday issued orders directing the home ministry and Indian embassy in Germany to inform the court whether Ramesh was still holding a German passport.

from him. So we decided to beg and raise funds for the plane tickets to bring him back," they informed.

Meanwhile, after hearing the argument of the citizenship row against him, filed by Congress leader Adi Srinivas, the High Court on Wednesday issued orders directing the home ministry and Indian embassy in Germany to inform the court whether Ramesh was still holding a German passport.

It is to be notified that Adi Srinivas in his plea charged that the MLA had misled the authorities with incorrect information about his citizenship, even though he was settled in Germany and had worked there before his political plunge.

GHMC POLLS: COPS  
ASK PEOPLE TO  
DEPOSIT FIREARMSDC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

The Hyderabad and Cyberabad police issued orders on Thursday, asking firearm licence holders to deposit their weapons with the police or arms dealers ahead of the GHMC polls.

The order does not cover those who are exempted and working on guard duty at nationalised banks, public sector undertakings, sportspersons and security personnel.

The police said penal action will be initiated against those who do not comply with confiscating the weapons and prosecuting them under appropriate provisions of law. The deposited weapons may be collected by the licence holders on or after December 6, after completion of the election process.

₹25.50 LAKH  
CASH SEIZED, 2  
HELD IN HYD

**Hyderabad:** The West Zone Task Force seized ₹25.50 lakh unaccounted cash from two men on Thursday evening.

The accused men, Suresh Ojha and M. Srinivasa Rao, were caught with the cash at Ramakrishna theater in Abids, the police said.

Nizamabad sees rise  
in NDPL liquor salesNARENDER  
PULLOOR | DC  
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 19

The sale of spurious and non-duty paid liquor (NDPL) is on the rise in undivided Nizamabad district.

The contraband is being brought in from Goa and Maharashtra by smugglers and sold it in the tribal thanadas of Mopal, Gandhari, Varni, Indalwai, Sirikonda, Bheemgal, Sadasivanagar, Macharareddy and other areas.

The prohibition and excise department officials seized 325 bottles of spurious liquor manufactured in Goa from Mopal mandal recently. Officials registered a case against four persons and arrested one Ravi Pedda Malkapur. The remaining, including the prime accused, are absconding.

To apprehend the smugglers, excise officials with the help of the police visited Dharwad in Nanded district of Maharashtra. However the smugglers mislead the investigation agencies, by using their mobile phones from the current spot before leaving.

The sale of spurious and NDPL liquor is a serious crime, as it harms the lives of people and causes loss to

the state exchequer.

"A few excise officials take regular bribes from wine dealers and belt shops organisers. Few cite their rapport with key persons in the state government and ignore their duties," an excise sources said.

District prohibition and excise superintendent Dr S. Naveen Chandra said that they are more vigilant on spurious liquor sales. "We are seriously trying to nab the smugglers," adding, the sale of spurious liquor is in tribal areas only. If sales take place in the towns, the wine dealers would have informed us. The officials seized, 80 motorbikes transporting NDPL from Maharashtra.

The sales of desidaru (cheap liquor) are high along the borders of Telangana - Maharashtra in undivided Nizamabad district.

Deglur, Biloli, Dharmabad talukas of Nanded district borders with Kamareddy and Nizamabad district. There is a difference in the price of desidaru in Maharashtra and Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) in Telangana.

Taking advantage, smugglers brought the liquor from Maharashtra to the borders areas of Nizamabad city.



District collector S. Krishna Aditya inspecting the collector's office on Thursday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

Kin of 13 farmers to  
get compensationDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, NOV. 19

District in-charge collector Krishna Aditya directed officials to take steps to pay compensation to the families of the farmers who died by suicide as early as possible.

The district collector on Thursday conducted a surprise inspection of various sections of the collector's office.

The families of 13 farmers who died by suicide are awaiting compensation. Section superintendent Rama Rao was asked to provide compensation immediately.

Raghavendra, district manager, civil supplies, was directed to set up tested moisture measuring machines, electronic

weighing machines, paddy cleaners, tarpaulins and gunny bags at all paddy procurement centres to allow for smooth procurement of paddy from the farmers.

Mr Aditya inspected the record room of the collector's office and suggested to the officers to keep separate files of completed works and current activities.

Collector office AO, Mahesh Babu, was directed, to prevent water stagnation around the collector office building. The surrounds should be kept clean of debris and shrubs.

The collector checked the CCTV cameras in the officers chambers of all the branches were working.



BJP district president G. Satyanarayana visits IT-Hub in Khammam on Thursday.

BJP slams delay in IT-Hub  
completion at KhammamRAVINDRA SESHU | DC  
KHAMMAM, NOV. 19

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has slammed the TRS government over the delay in opening the IT-Hub in Khammam.

BJP district president G. Satyanarayana said that minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar had announced the opening of the IT-Hub on Dasara. Three Dasaras have passed, but no IT-Hub yet. Minister for Information Technology K.T. Rama Rao had laid the foundation stone for the IT-

Hub in Khammam in 2017.

"The youth of Khammam is waiting for the IT-Hub so that they can get jobs. It seems their dreams may not be fulfilled in the near future," he said.

The BJP president visited the site where the IT-Hub is being constructed and expressed discontent over the works. He said that the NDA government is taking steps for the development of IT in the country. The NDA government allocated funds for the IT-Hub in Khammam, but the government failed

to complete it in time. The cost of the project is ₹17 crores and works are progressing slowly." The minister claimed eight companies came forward to set up companies in Khammam. Ajay should announce the names of the companies.

He demanded Puvvada to announce the date of the corporation elections, and the people of Khammam will not vote for his party.

The BJP president said that the Central government announced ₹2 lakh for the development of IT and science in the country.

STATE TD CHIEF  
WANTS TICKETS  
FOR PARTY  
WARRIORSDURGAM  
SRINIVAS | DC  
HYDERABAD, NOV. 19

Telugu Desam (TD) president L. Ramana said that activists had stood behind the party through difficult times, and the party has to support them by giving tickets to put up a strong fight against the TRS.

The party later released its first list of 90 candidates. In the 2016 elections, the TD won one seat.

He demanded that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao account for the ₹67,000 crore that were stated to be spent by the state government for the development of Hyderabad. Speaking after a meeting of the party politburo at NTR Trust Bhavan in connection with the GHMC polls, Ramana alleged that the government had cheated the people without implementing the poll promises that were made during the last elections of GHMC.

He said that it was the TD government during N.T. Rama Rao had made Hyderabad a curfew-free city.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW  
COURT BUILDING IN  
MAHBUBABAD SOONANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC  
WARANGAL, NOV. 19

District collector VP Gautam said the district administration would submit proposals for setting up a new court building in the district soon.

The collector, along with the VI-Additional District Judge Anil Kiran Kumar, visited the court buildings in the district headquarters on Thursday. They examined the old buildings and those under construction.

At a meeting afterwards, Gautam said, "I come from a family of lawyers and am aware of the functioning of the court and difficulties. The new court buildings are being built at an investment of ₹20 lakh and we have asked officials to complete works, by the end of December," adding that as the district centre develops, court buildings will have to be developed. "Proposals will be submitted to undertake new building works at the cost of ₹5 crores."

The tribal population in the district is 50 per cent, while the scheduled caste population is 30 per cent.

As many as four to five SC and ST cases are registered every day. Cooperation is the need of the hour for speedy resolution.

"If there are any objects in the works, the district administration will provide information through WhatsApp," said the collector, adding, in the past, people feared visiting the court. But, in the present circumstances, there is a growing awareness. People are becoming more conscious.

The meeting was attended by, senior civil judge Amravati, chief junior civil judge Radhika Jaiswal, additional junior civil judge Sura Sumalata, District Bar Association president Dasari Nageswara Rao, municipal commissioner Ravinder and other lawyers.

■ THE TRIBAL population in the district is 50 per cent, while scheduled caste is 30 per cent.

■ AS MANY as four to five SC and ST cases are registered every day. Cooperation is the need of the hour for speedy resolution.

**OBITUARY**

**Mrs. N.L. Vijaya Bharathi**  
(Retired Matron) / Rly hosp. L G D  
W/o. Dr. B. V. Rao  
slept in Dr. on 18-11-2020.  
Burai Service on 20-11-2020, Friday  
in Balaji Nagar Cemetery, Dammaguda.  
After Prayers at BAPTIST CHURCH,  
Tarnaka @2:00PM  
Family Members  
**B. Rajesh, B. Avinash & Kalyani**  
8008948649, 9676953195, 9912743336

AGRI | POLICY **Seek ₹25,000 per acre as compensation to farmers**BJP holds KCR responsible for  
losses incurred by farmersDC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, NOV. 19

It is the responsibility of the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to help farmers who faced huge loss by cultivating the fine variety of rice following his directions.

The government must pay compensation of ₹25,000 per acre to the farmers immediately, demanded national general secretary of the BJP Kisan Morcha, Polsani Sugunakar Rao in a statement released in Karimnagar district on Thursday.

Mr Sugunakar alleged that before the start of the rains, the CM boasted about the new agriculture policy and direct farmers to grow crops having higher demand in the market. While instructing farmers to cultivate fine variety paddy and cotton crops, the CM threatened them that the government would not purchase crops only suggest-



National general secretary of BJP Kisan Morcha, Polsani Sugunakar Rao

ed by the government, and not the other crops cultivated. Many farmers across the state cultivated fine variety paddy and cotton. Unfortunately due to incessant rains and attack by pests and insects the crops got damaged and farmers had to shell out an extra ₹10,000 to protect their crops.

Despite all the efforts to save the crops, farmers lost 10

quintals of produce per acre. Farmers who grew the fine variety rice incurred losses of ₹25,000 per acre.

"When farmers demand that their crops be purchased fixing MSP of ₹25,000 per quintal, the state government is blaming the Central government," he criticised.

Mr Sugunakar Rao said that the Central government did not issue any orders to the state government regarding the MSP on the fine variety of rice. It did not impose any restrictions also.

The TRS government is carrying out false propaganda against the BJP government. Why would the Central government restrict the state government from fixing MSP, did it object to the state government when it decided to sanction Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bhima schemes, he questioned.

The Central government has never objected to any

state governments helping the farming sector. It is the TRS government which agreed with the Food Corporation of India (FCI). Both put forth certain conditions. As per the agreement, if the state government agrees to pay a bonus, then it should bear it. Without having proper knowledge about the agreement made, the TRS ministers are making baseless comments against the Central government, he alleged.

The TRS government is betraying the farming community in the state. Many farmers are staging dharnas, holding rasta rokos, burning their crops in frustration, some have even committed suicide.

But the Chief Minister has shown no mercy. The government must sanction compensation of ₹25,000 per acre for farmers who faced loss cultivating the fine variety of rice, he demanded.

**FOR SALE PROPERTY**

**PLOTS**

**SHAMSHABAD RGI** Airport 1.5 km, close to IT Hubs & MNCs, 5 minutes to Novotel & ORR, HMDA Approved plots, Ready to construct with all facilities Ph: 9949406068 (HYMM/2021/C03959)

**SITUATION VACANT**

**MULTIPLE VACANCIES**

**WALK-IN INTERVIEW.** Corporate Group Conducts JOB MELA on 22nd & 23rd Nov 2020. (Qual: Graduation Pass/ Fail) A.U CAMPUS (Near Out Gate) Vizag. P h : 9 1 3 3 3 4 7 7 5 8 . (HYCLM/2021/C01675)

**TECHNICAL**

**WANTED CONSULTANT** for all type of mechanical fabrication and erection for our factory at patancheru Hyderabad Contact- Zen Tanks And Vessels Pvt. Ltd Email- ztvpdtd@gmail.com contact no- for clarification 04027904033/34 (HYMM/2021/C03953)

**MATRIMONIAL**

**BRIDE WANTED**

**COSMOPOLITAN**

**KAMMA, ELITE,** Affluent, 41 Years, Divorced, No Children.

Highly Educated, Reputed Group. Wanted Suitable Bride. Contact WhatsApp 9347668696 (Matrimony Consultant) (HYMM/2021/C03964)

**EDUCATIONAL**

**CAREER/ENTRANCE COURSES**

✓ **ONE-SITTING / Fasttrack- Graduations (All), Post-Graduations (All), PG Diplomas, Polytechnic Diplomas, Secondary (10th) & Senior Secondary (12th), Provided Online results & Online verifications, Eligible for Private & Abroad. Ph:9912540011, 7337291133, www.hyderc.com (A/2021/IC00066)**

**DISTANCE EDUCATION**

✓ **ONLY FOR Educational Consultants/Academies. No Advance Fee. Students please no call. Contact for Verifiable + Fast Track :Graduation (15,000)/B.Ed.-M.Ed.-NCTE-Recognised (30000)/BBA-MBA-BCA-MCA (20-25,000)/from Government University.WES Documentation & Attestation Support Available. 47-years Educational Experience. Shiksha Bharti.Varanasi.Moblie: 9519759663, 9915103781.Email: shikshabharti88@yahoo.com (HYMM/2021/C03868)**

**EDUCATIONAL**

✓ **XAMS 2020, Join Direct SSC/INTER, B.A., B.Com, B.Ed., B.Sc., BCA, B.Tech., M.A., M.Com, M.Sc., MBA/MCA Diploma Polytechnic. ANM/GNM/ DPT/BPT/ DMLT/BMLT/ X-Ray Technician/ Dental Technician/ MPHW/Ph.D. WES/IQAS- Applying. "Certificate Attestations For all Countries Possible". Ph:7981597599/ 7981598278. "LIMRA INSTITUTIONS." (HYMM/2021/C03858)**

**NOTICE**

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. Decan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. does not vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers. The Printer, Publisher, Editor and Owner of Decan Chronicle Holdings Ltd. shall not be held responsible / liable for any consequences, in case such claims are found to be false.

**Decan Chronicle**

**BOOK YOUR CLASSIFIED / DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENTS at**

**EDITION CENTRE : KARIMNAGAR**

H.No. 1-21/12/, Cherlabhukur Road, Mudumuru Village, Karimnagar - 505 186

**9000650508**

e-mail: krmadvtd@deccanmail.com

**9121183123**



SHORT TAKES

BJP, BPF TO GO SEPARATE WAYS IN ASSAM

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, NOV. 19

In what may lead to a major realignment of political forces, the ruling BJP is heading to breaking its partnership with Bodoland People's Front (BPF) that it had built more than four years ago to form its first government in Assam, along with the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP).

Differences between the two political parties have cropped after the decision of the BJP to go all out to take control of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) in elections which are going to take place in two phases on December 7 and 10. The council has been in the hands of BPF for the last 17 years at a stretch.

Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, while campaigning for elections to Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), an autonomous council, said, "The BJP will contest the 2021 Assembly elections on its own here, too. There will be no alliance with BPF this time."

The BJP made a seat-sharing arrangement with the BPF and AGP before the 2016 Assembly polls and formed the first coalition government in the state. The BPF had won 12 seats and joined hands with the BJP after dumping Congress, which had been its partner in government since 2011. The BJP had finished short of a simple majority in the 2016 polls and banked on BPF and AGP to form its government.

K'TAKA BJP STIRS TROUBLE WITH MARATHA BODY

VINAY MADHAV | DC BENGALURU, NOV. 19

The BJP strategy in Karnataka to win the byelections by promising sops to the dominant community in each constituency is becoming counter-productive for the government.

The government announced the formation of the Maratha People Development Authority, just on the eve of the byelections to the Basavakalyana constituency, which has a sizable Marathi population.

This move has irked pro-Karnada organisations as Karnataka has a long border as well as water sharing disputes with Maharashtra. It has given a platform for Maharashtra not only to reiterate its claim on Belagavi, but also to extend it till Karawar. Worse even the Maharashtra Ekikarana Samithi in Belagavi has opposed the move to form the Maratha Development Authority.

Basavakalyana has over 30,000 Marathi speaking voters and the bypoll for the constituency is in offing. Soon after announcing this, the Lingayat community, which is the dominant community in the state, demanded a similar body for them. The government immediately announced the Lingayat Development Corporation, as the constituency has more than 35,000 Lingayats.

MNS TO HOLD STIR AGAINST 'INFLATED' ELECTRICITY BILLS

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, NOV. 19

The issue of inflated electricity bills is likely to escalate further in Maharashtra with Raj Thackeray-led MNS has announced statewide protests across the state, if the bills are not waived off till Monday.

MNS leader Bala Nandgaonkar said on Thursday, "The state government had promised to provide waiver in electricity bills. We met several people including Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and NCP chief Sharad Pawar on this issue. But nothing has happened. In the race in the MVA government to take credit for the waiver, people of Maharashtra are made to suffer."

The MNS would hold protests at all district offices in the state on Monday, if the electricity bills are not waived off, he added.

Another MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande tweeted, "We have tried everything from statements, applications, meetings to pleas (to demand waiver in the electricity bills), but the government is not ready to move. Finally, to provide relief to people, we have to hit the streets to fight on this issue."

Raju Shetti, the chief of Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana, one of the supporters of MVA government, has also appealed people not to pay the electricity bills.

Malabar calling



An aerial view of ship refuelling during the second phase of the Malabar naval exercise in the Arabian sea. India, Australia, Japan and the United States started the second phase of a strategic navy drill on November 17 in the Northern Arabian sea. — Indian Navy

MP'S DEFEATED MINISTERS MAY GET PARTY POSTS

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, NOV. 19

Rajya Sabha member and senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya Scindia on Thursday indicated that state ministers who lost the November 3 Assembly byelections may be suitably accommodated.

Scindia, who arrived here in the afternoon from Delhi, told reporters that he had earlier held discussions with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on the fate of the defeated ministers.

Asked if the defeated ministers would be accommodated in corpora-tion bodies, he said, "The BJP has always promoted those who worked hard." He hastened to add that the party would take the final call on the matter.

Three out of 14 non-MLA ministers in the Shivraj Singh government who sought re-election lost the recent Assembly byelections. While two of them, Imarti Devi and Giriraj Dandotia, are yet to resign from their posts, the other minister, An-del Singh Kansana, has put in his papers.

Rajasthan to ease mining rules for new Ram temple

Jaipur/Ayodhya, Nov. 19: The district administration in Rajasthan's Bharatpur is seeking the denotification of part of a wildlife sanctuary to allow the mining of a special sandstone, much sought after by builders including those constructing the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Thousands of tonnes of the pink sandstone mined in Bharatpur's Bansri Paharpur have been sourced for the temple over the years, but much more is needed.

There were concerns in Ayodhya that supplies of this stone with a unique pink hue would dry up. Since blocks of this sandstone had already been carved — ready to be put in place as the temple comes up — switching over to a lesser grade of stone would have caused problems. The Dholpur variant is said to be no match to the Bansri Paharpur stone.

Authorities in Congress-run Rajasthan denied that the move to denotify Bansri Paharpur block in Bharatpur's Band Baretha wildlife sanctuary has anything specific to do with the Ram temple. But a Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader approved of reports that this "technical problem" is now being sorted out.

"The Rajasthan government never created hurdles in the supply of the stone. However, there was some technical problem regarding Forest and Wildlife Act at Bansri

4 Jaish militants heading to Kashmir Valley gunned down

Weapons haul included 11 AK-47 assault rifles, 3 pistols, 29 hand grenades

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, NOV. 19

Four suspected Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militants on their way to Kashmir Valley with a huge weapons cache were gunned down by the security forces during an encounter at a toll plaza along the Jammu-Srinagar highway on Thursday.

The weapons haul included 11 AK-47 assault rifles, three pistols, 29 hand grenades, satellite and mobile phones and compass. "It is for the first time in past few years that such a huge recovery has been made from slain terrorists after an encounter. Apparently they were planning something very big in the Valley," said inspector general of police (Jammu range) Mukesh Singh.

He said it apparently was "a newly infiltrated group" of militants which was travelling in a goods lorry to the Valley from

Jammu. "But when the truck was stopped at the police check-point at Ban Toll Plaza in Nagrota (22.4 km north of Jammu city) at around 5 am and the policemen began searching it, the driver stepped out and fled. Then the terrorists on board opened a heavy volume of fire, triggering an encounter which lasted for about three hours," he told reporters.

The IGP said that all the four militants were killed and two policemen were injured in the gunfight. "The injured policemen were immediately evacuated to the hospital and both of them are stable," he said. The truck was damaged in the operation in which the Army and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) also took part.

The police sources said that during routine checking of vehicles, the driver of the Valley-bound truck hesitated in answering the policemen's queries, got

off the vehicle and ran away. A group of policemen then quickly started searching the truck while others took up positions as a precautionary measure.

In January this year, three JeM militants were killed in an encounter with the police after a similar situation had emerged at the same place. The police said a manhunt has been launched for the truck driver.

The police also said that the identities of the slain militants are being ascertained but as per intelligence inputs the group belonged to JeM which sneaked in Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan through some porous section of the 198-km stretch of the International Border (IB), most probably in Kathua district.

Asked where the militants infiltrated, the IGP, however, said: "This is a matter of investigation. We are looking into it. We are trying to find out." Replying to another ques-

Parl panel grills Twitter for Kamra anti-SC, CJI tweets

New Delhi, Nov. 19: A parliamentary committee questioned representatives of social media giant Twitter on stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra's recent "obscene" tweets targeting the Supreme Court and the chief justice of India and sought a reply within seven days, the panel's chairperson Meenakshi Lekhi said on Thursday.

This came close on the heels of Twitter apologising in writing to the same parliamentary panel for wrongly showing Ladakh in China and promising to correct the error by the month-end.

Twitter India representatives deposed before the Joint Committee of Parliament on Data Protection Bill on Thursday.

"It is shameful that Twitter is allowing its platform for obscene remarks like the one by stand-up comedian Kunal

THIS COMES close on the heels of Twitter apologising in writing to the same parliamentary panel for wrongly showing Ladakh in China and promising to correct the error by the month-end.

KAMRA HAS refused to retract his controversial tweets against the Supreme Court or apologise for them, saying he believes they 'speak for themselves'.

MEENAKSHI LEKHI said members of the committee across political spectrum grilled Twitter.

Kamra against the Supreme Court and the chief justice of India," Lekhi told reporters here.

"Twitter is allowing its platform to be misused for abusing top constitutional authorities, such as Supreme Court and chief

justice of India," she said.

She said members of the committee across political spectrum, including Congress MP Vivek Tankha, BSP MP Ritesh Pandey and BJD MP Bhatruhari Mahtab, grilled Twitter representatives on this issue. Lekhi also said that explanation of Twitter about banning handles and tweets was found to be inadequate.

Meanwhile, Kamra has refused to retract his controversial tweets against the Supreme Court or apologise for them, saying he believes they "speak for themselves".

Earlier, Attorney General K.K. Venugopal consented to the initiation of criminal contempt proceedings against him for a series of tweets following the Supreme Court giving interim bail to Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami.

—PTI



GUPKAR DECLATION A CONSPIRACY, SAYS NAQVI

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, NOV. 19

Union minister for minority affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has termed the 'People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration' (PAGD) formed by Jammu and Kashmir's regional opposition parties and their allies from national left parties to seek restoration of its special status as a "conspiracy" and asserted that the abrogation of Article 370 in August last year was the "death of destructive dynastic politics" in the erstwhile state.

He said that likewise the PAGD will prove but a "dying declaration" for "dynastic and destructive politics" of the Congress and other alliance partners in the erstwhile state.

"It (the formation of PAGD) was the conspiracy of political parties against the people of the Union Territory. The amalgam will try to keep J&K away from development and prosperity," he said while speaking at a rally of BJP workers in the frontier town of Kupwara. He claimed that the people of J&K were deprived of their political rights only because of Articles 370 and 35A "as the dynasty rule in J&K had kept them away from the mainstream and unaware of constitutional rights."

He said that the maiden District Development Council polls in J&K are being contested by all the parties including those which had claimed that they won't contest any polls until the August 5, 2019 decision is reversed. "These elections," he said, "will send a clear message that the people of J&K are now part of dignity, development, rights and all this will be fulfilled by BJP"

DMK MLA Aruna hospitalised after overdose of sleeping pills

ARULOLI M. | DC TENKASI, NOV. 19

Factional fight in the local DMK unit here has allegedly pushed former minister and sitting Alangulam MLA and DMK state doctors' wing secretary, Poongothai Aladi Aruna, to attempt suicide.

She was found unconscious at her residence in Alangulam on Thursday morning and was rushed to a private hospital (Shifa hospital) in Tirunelveli, where she is under treatment.

The hospital director, Dr Mohammed Arafath, in a statement issued on Thursday noon said, "She is being evaluated. At present, she is conscious, responsive and her vital

A DOCTOR herself, Poongothai Aladi Aruna, took the extreme step allegedly hurt by insult meted out to her at a party meeting organised on Wednesday night at Kadayam union in Tenkasi district.

parameters are satisfactory."

The statement also added that her clinical condition warranted stay in the intensive care unit, and she is continuously monitored by a team of doctors.

Former Assembly speaker R. Avudaiyappan, former Radhapuram MLA Appavu, and sitting Tirunelveli MP Gnanadhiraviam, visited Poongothai Aladi Aruna in the hospital.

A doctor herself, Poongothai Aladi Aruna, daughter of veteran Dravidian ideologist late

Aladi Aruna, consumed an overdose of sleeping pills, allegedly hurt by insult meted out to her at a party meeting organised on Wednesday night at Kadayam union in Tenkasi district, said party functionaries.

Sources said in the meeting, the MLA was allegedly abused by supporters of Kadayam union secretary, Kumar, who claimed that Poongothai was not respecting office-bearers of the district unit.

Following an altercation, Poongothai walked out in the middle of the meeting as some functionaries

raised their voices against her, but was later called inside.

Supporters of Kumar had further tried to prevent her from delivering her speech on the stage by switching off the mike, said party sources.

Poongothai Aladi Aruna was former minister for social welfare in the Karunanidhi ministry since 2004, and is said to be a staunch supporter of party's women's wing secretary and Thoothukudi MP, Kanimozhi.

It is to be noted that Alangulam MLA's younger brother, Ezhilvanan, is also an aspirant for the party ticket to contest in the Alangulam Assembly constituency in the 2021 Assembly election.

DIGITAL | ECONOMY IT minister says India producing huge data in digital ecosystem

Govt keen to finalise data protection law

Bengaluru, Nov. 19: Union IT and communications minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Thursday said the government was very keen to promote India as a very big centre of the data economy and would finalise a data protection law very soon.

"I'm very keen to promote India as a very big centre of the data economy. Data is going to drive the digital economy. It is also going to drive international commerce," he said.

Addressing the Bengaluru Tech Summit, 2020 (BTS2020) virtually,

he said India produces huge data and the digital ecosystem, like mobile phones and Aadhaar, is producing data.

"We are going to finalise a data protection law very soon. India is waiting for its movement for data economy, data innovation, data refinery. I would urge the Chief Minister (of Karnataka) to ensure that the state becomes a great centre of India's data economy," he added.

Organised by the Karnataka government, along with Karnataka Innovation and

Technology Society, the state government's vision group on information technology, biotechnology & startup and software technology parks of India, the summit, that saw the inaugural address by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is scheduled to take place from November 19 to 21.

Prasad said even during the pandemic the communications sector witnessed a growth of over seven per cent and also received significant investments from major global companies.

"It is a challenging time

and we decided to convert it into an opportunity. The global manufacturing world was looking towards alternative destinations. In view of India's enormous success in mobile manufacturing, we came up with a big idea of production linked incentive," he said. Prasad said major global companies, including from India, have committed to invest close to ₹11 lakh crore in the next five years and proposed to manufacture mobiles and components, out of which ₹7 lakh crore would be only for exports.

Addressing Chief

Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, Prasad said he wanted to give him some very good information, which was that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the government has got Apple to shift nine of their operating units, along with components, from China to India.

"In your city of Bengaluru, the Apple company has started production to manufacture its quality phones for India and also for abroad for exports," he said. Prasad noted that the summit was taking place in very challenging times.

—PTI



## IN BRIEF

**HOUSTON: 5 SHOT AT IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, 2 DEAD**

**Houston, Nov. 19:** Five people were shot Wednesday, two fatally, in what investigators say was a case of domestic violence in western Houston, police said.

Officers went to a house in response to a report of an "active shooter" about 2:45 pm Wednesday and arrived to find the body of a man in the driveway of the house he's believed to have owned, Assistant Police Chief Larry Satterwhite said.

Upon entry, they found a wounded man with a gun beside him, whom police suspect was the gunman, and a wounded woman believed to have been the complainant, Satterwhite said. Upstairs, they found two women, one dead and the other wounded.

A 3-month-old child appeared unharmed. All involved appeared to have been related to one another, Satterwhite said, but no motive was immediately determined.

**IRAN LAUNCHES CRAFT-CARRYING HEAVY WARSHIP**

**Tehran, Nov. 19:** Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it launched a heavy warship Thursday capable of carrying helicopters, drones and missile launchers amid ongoing tensions with the US.

Photographs of the ship, named after slain Guard naval commander Abdollah Roudaki, showed it carrying truck-launched surface-to-surface missiles and anti-aircraft missiles. It also carried four small fast boats, the kind the Guard routinely uses in the Persian Gulf. Sailors manned deck-mounted machine guns.

The Guard said the ship has a length of 150 metres (492 feet). By comparison, a US Nimitz-class aircraft carrier has a length of 332 metres (1,092 feet). The Guard's ship does not have a runway, but includes a landing pad for a helicopter.

The commander of the Guard's navy, Adm Ali Reza Tangsiri, suggested his forces wanted to move beyond the waters of the Gulf into deep-water patrolling.

**US HOUSE PASSES TIBET BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION**

**Washington, Nov. 19:** A bipartisan resolution recognising the cultural and religious significance of an autonomous Tibet and seeking peaceful solutions to the conflict has been passed by the US House of Representatives. The resolution recognised the significance of the genuine autonomy of Tibet and the Tibetan people, and the work done by 14th Dalai Lama to promote global peace, harmony and understanding.

Passed by a voice vote, the resolution determined that it would be beneficial to convene a bipartisan, bicameral forum, either through a Joint Meeting of Congress, a teleconference broadcast at the Capitol Visitor Center, or roundtable, between Members of Congress and His Holiness the Dalai Lama to discuss peaceful solutions to international conflicts.

It also noted that there is overwhelming bipartisan Congressional support for the Tibetan people's aspirations for internationally recognised human rights.

**ETHIOPIA: WHO CHIEF BACKING TIGRAY REGION**

**Nairobi, Nov. 19:** Ethiopia's government is accusing the head of the World Health Organisation, a fellow Ethiopian, of lobbying neighbouring countries to come to the aid of the country's rebellious Tigray regional government with arms and other support.

Ethiopia's army chief, Gen Birhanu Julia, asserted to reporters on Wednesday that Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus had urged unnamed neighbours to "oppose the war and for (the Tigray People's Liberation Front) to get arms."

The army chief did not provide any evidence to support his claims. The TPLF has been clashing with Ethiopian federal forces for two weeks after the country's prime minister accused the heavily armed regional government of attacking a military base.

Each government regards the other as illegal after a months-long falling-out amid political reforms. The army chief accused Tedros, a former Ethiopian foreign minister when the TPLF dominated Ethiopia's ruling coalition, of being a member of the TPLF.

# Anti-terror court sentences Hafiz Saeed to 10 yrs in jail

Mumbai terror attack mastermind was arrested on July 17 last year in Pak

**Lahore, Nov. 19:** Mumbai terror attack mastermind and Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed was on Thursday sentenced to 10 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan in two more terror cases. Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US has placed a \$10 million bounty on, was arrested on July 17 last year in the terror financing cases.

He was sentenced to 11 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in February this year in two terror financing cases. He is lodged at the Lahore's high-security Kot Lakhpat jail. "The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Thursday sentenced four leaders of Jamat-ud-Dawa, including its chief Hafiz Saeed, in two more cases," a court official told PTI.

Saeed and his two close aides — Zafar Iqbal and Yahya Mujahid — have been sentenced to 10 and a half years each, while JuD chief's brother-in-law Abdul Rehman Makki was sentenced to six months imprisonment. "Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta of ATC Court No. 1 heard the case No. 16/19 and 25/19 filed by Counter Terrorism Department in which the verdict has been announced after the statements of witnesses were cross-examined by Naseeruddin Nayyar and Muhammad Imran Fazal Gul Advocate," the official said.

A total of 41 cases have been registered by the CTD against the JuD leaders, out of which 24 have been decided while the rest are pending in the ATC courts. Four cases have been decided against Saeed so far. — PTI



Pakistan's PM Imran Khan at a press conference with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at the Presidential Palace in Kabul on Thursday.

## Imran vows to do everything to decrease Afghan violence

**Islamabad, Nov. 19:** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday met with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on his maiden visit to Kabul and vowed to "do everything" to reduce violence in Afghanistan as the two leaders explored ways to deepen the bilateral ties and discussed the reconciliation process, amidst an uptick in violence that could jeopardise the peace push in the war-torn country.

President Ghani who received Khan upon his arrival at ARG Presidential Palace, situated in the heart of Kabul, called his visit "historic" and said it was an "important message to help end violence". On his part, Khan assured Ghani that his government would do "everything possible" to

● **KHAN SAID** Pakistan played a role in the peace deal signed between the Taliban and the US side and later on starting the intra-Afghan dialogue.

help reduce violence in Afghanistan and bring a durable peace.

"The idea of visiting at a time when violence is increasing (in Afghanistan), is to assure you, President Ghani, that the people and the government of Pakistan have only one concern: Peace in Afghanistan," Khan said while addressing a joint press conference with the Afghan leader after their talks on issues ranging from bilateral ties to the Afghan peace and regional situation.

Khan said Pakistan played a role in the peace deal signed between the Taliban and the US side and later on starting the intra-Afghan dialogue. He regretted that despite such efforts violence was increasing in Afghanistan and assured that Pakistan was ready to help if it was possible. "If you feel there is somewhere Pakistan can help (in reduction of violence), please let us know...We assure you that we will do everything and whatever is within our reach," he said.

He said that Pakistan's tribal areas were devastated by the violence in the past and it was one of the reasons to help Afghanistan tackle violence. "The only way to help people on both sides of the border is by peace, trade and connectivity," he said. — PTI

## KIDNEY PAIN: AILING NAWAZ VISITS HOSPITAL

**Islamabad, Nov. 19:** Pakistan's ailing former prime minister Nawaz Sharif made a string of unscheduled hospital visits in London this week after he developed acute pain due to stones in his kidney, according to a media report on Thursday. Sharif, 70, who has been staying in London since November 2019 on medical grounds, during his visits to the hospital underwent several tests and scans to determine a course of treatment, the Dawn reported.

"He is very unwell and has serious pain in his kidney owing to deteriorating kidney function. Doctors are conducting tests and scans to determine a course of action. He has developed kidney stones," Dr Adnan Khan, the personal physician of Sharif, was quoted as saying by the paper.

Sharif, who in the past has undergone heart surgery, visited consultants on Harley Street on Tuesday and Wednesday and is scheduled for more scans on Thursday, the report said.

On Tuesday, Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz said in a tweet that her father was unable to participate in a meeting of the Pakistan Democratic Movement because of "severe kidney pain" and added that she would attend in his place. — PTI

## China perceives rising India as rival

**Washington, Nov. 19:** China perceives a rising India as a "rival" and wants to constrain its strategic partnership with the US, its allies, and with other democracies, the State Department said in a report, emphasising that Beijing intends to displace America as the world's foremost power.

Coming ahead of the transition of power from Donald Trump's administration to President-elect Joe Biden's administration after the November 3 US presidential election, the detailed policy document highlights that China is undermining the security, autonomy and economic interests of many nations in the region.

"China perceives rising India as a rival and seeks to impel it to accommodate Beijing's ambitions by engaging economically while constraining New Delhi's strategic partnership with the US, Japan, Australia and its relations with other democracies," the report said.

"China is undermining the security, autonomy, and economic interests of many others in the region — such as member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including those in the vital Mekong Region, as well as the nations of the Pacific Islands," the report added.

The 70-page report states that awareness has been growing in the US — and in nations around the

## FACE HONG KONG REALITY, CHINA TELLS 'FIVE EYES'

**Beijing, Nov. 19:** China on Thursday rejected the latest attack on its Hong Kong policy by the US and several of its allies, saying they "should face up to the reality" that the former British colony has been returned to China.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian was responding to a statement on Hong Kong issued by the US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, which together make up an intelligence partnership known as the Five Eyes. "No matter if they have five eyes or 10 eyes, if they dare to harm China's sovereignty, security and development interests, they should beware of their eyes being poked and blinded," he said at a daily briefing. — AP

world — that the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has triggered a new era of great-power competition. "Yet few discern the pattern in China's inroads within every region of the world, much less the specific form of dominance to which the party aspires," said the report. — PTI

## Oxford vaccine boosts adult 'immunity'

**London, Nov. 19:** The Coronavirus vaccine developed by teams at the University of Oxford has been shown to trigger a robust immune response in healthy adults aged 56-69 and those over 70 years of age. The findings published in *Lancet* on Thursday based on 560 healthy adult volunteers shows that the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine is "safe and well tolerated" with a lower reactogenicity profile in older adults, meaning the older age groups could build immunity to the disease.

"These findings are encouraging because older individuals are at disproportionate risk of severe Covid-19 and so any vaccine adopted for use against SARS-CoV-2 must be effective in older adults," the researchers note.

The team is also testing whether the vaccine stops people developing Covid-19 in larger Phase 3 trials and early results from this crucial stage are expected in the coming weeks. "We were pleased to see that our vaccine was not only well tolerated in older adults, but also stimulated similar immune responses to those seen in younger volunteers," said Dr Maheshi Ramasamy, an investigator at the Oxford Vaccine Group.

"The next step will be to see if this translates into protection from the disease," she said. This means there are now four promising vaccines after Pfizer-BioNTech, Sputnik and Moderna already reporting. — PTI



The empty inner city of Vienna is pictured at Stephansplatz on Thursday, amid the Covid-19.

## Biden: Transition delay hits vaccine

**Washington, Nov. 19:** US President-elect Joe Biden has warned that a delay in transition by the outgoing Trump administration will put behind the Covid-19 vaccination plan by "weeks or months".

In a virtual roundtable with healthcare workers on Covid-19, Biden alleged on Wednesday that his transition team has not been receiving any cooperation from the Trump administration. President Donald Trump has refused to concede the November 3

US election and has filed multiple lawsuits challenging results in several States.

"One of the problems that we're having now is the failure of the administration to recognise — the law says that the General Services Administration has a person who recognises who the winner is and then they have to have access to all the data and information that the government possesses to be prepared," he said. — PTI

## Australian special forces unlawfully killed 39 Afghans

**Melbourne, Nov. 19:** There is "credible information" that at least 19 serving and former Australian special forces allegedly committed up to 39 unlawful murders during the conflict in Afghanistan, according to a long-awaited military report into war crimes released on Thursday.

Australia launched the inquiry in 2016, amid reports from whistle-blowers and in the local media of the alleged killing of unarmed men and children in Afghanistan. The four-year inquiry by NSW Court Of Appeal Justice Paul Brereton found there was "credible information" of 23 incidents where Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel were involved in the serious crimes, either carrying out the offences or at least being "accessories" to the incidents.

There was "credible information" that 39 Afghans were allegedly murdered by Australian special forces in 23 incidents. There were also two incidents could be classified as the war crime of "cruel treatment", the report said. According to the Australian media, the latest report has been based on over 400 interviews with soldiers and officers from the SAS, a special forces unit, and Commandos, Afghan villagers, special forces interpreters and support staff.

The inquiry found evidence some Australian troops in Afghanistan carried "throwdowns" such as weapons, radios and grenades not issued by the ADF but planted next to the bodies of Afghan civilians to suggest they were a "legitimate target"

● **AUSTRALIA LAUNCHED** the inquiry in 2016, amid reports from whistle-blowers and in the local media of the alleged killing of unarmed men and children in Afghanistan.

in any post-incident investigations. "This practice probably originated for the less egregious though still dishonest purpose of avoiding scrutiny where a person who was legitimately engaged turned out not to be armed," Brereton said. Issuing an apology to Afghanistan people while releasing the report in Canberra, Australia's Chief of Defence Force Angus Campbell said:

"These findings allege the most serious breaches of military conduct and professional values. The killing, the unlawful killing, of civilians and prisoners is never acceptable." Campbell also apologised to the Australian people, saying he was sincerely sorry for any wrongdoing by members of the Australian Defence Force. Campbell said the report discloses a "disgraceful and a profound betrayal of the Australian Defence Force's professional standards and expectations".

"Today the Australian Defence Force is rightly held to account for allegations of grave misconduct by some members of our special forces community on operations in Afghanistan," he said. The public summary of the inquiry found that Australian soldiers summarily executed non-combatants and prisoners. — PTI

## US records more than 2.5L deaths

**Washington, Nov. 19:** The US has recorded over 250,000 deaths from Covid-19, a bleak milestone as cases soar once again across the country, worst-hit by the deadly infectious disease that has claimed over 1,349,000 lives across the world.

According to Johns Hopkins University, the US has now reported 250,537 deaths and over 11.5 million confirmed cases. It has more reported infections and a higher death toll than any other country worldwide. The Coronavirus is now killing at least one American every minute of the day, bringing the country to another horrific milestone on Wednesday.

At least 250,029 people in the country have died of Covid-19 since the first death on February 29 in Washington state, *CNN* reported. The situation is only going to get worse, warned Dr Jonathan Reiner, a professor at George Washington University School of Medicine, amidst the continued obstruction from the Trump administration for a smooth handover to the incoming administration of US President-elect Joe Biden.

"The horrible death count that we saw yesterday in the United States ... reflects the number of people who were being

## INFECTIONS MAY BE 6 TIMES MORE THAN REPORTED

**Melbourne, Nov. 19:** The actual number of global infections in the Covid-19 pandemic could be up to six times higher than the reported number of cases, according to a modelling study. The researchers, including those from the Australian National University (ANU) and the University of Melbourne, found infection rates between March and August across 15 countries were on average 6.2 times greater than reported cases.

The data, published in the journal *Royal Society Open Science*, shows Covid-19 infection rates in the UK, France, Belgium and Italy are much higher than reported and in the case of Italy up to 17-times higher. It shows Australia had the best level of detection at the end of April, but the rate of infection may still have been five times higher than what has been reported. — PTI

infected three weeks ago — to two three weeks ago, because that's the lag," Reiner said on Wednesday. — PTI

## UNDER | COVER

## Criminals and extremists are exploiting deadly pandemic to build their support networks

# Al-Qaeda, ISIS groups spread conspiracy theories

**United Nations, Nov. 19:** Groups associated with al-Qaeda and ISIS are exploiting the Covid-19 pandemic to spread conspiracy theories that the virus is "punishing the unbelievers", is "God's wrath upon the West" and incites terrorists to use it as a form of biological weapon, according to a UN report.

The report titled "Stop the virus of disinformation: The malicious use of social media by terrorist, violent extremist and criminal groups during the

Covid-19 pandemic' was released by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). It said that criminals and violent extremists are exploiting the pandemic to build their support networks, undermine trust in government and even weaponise the virus.

The report added that terrorist, violent extremist and organised criminal groups have maliciously used social media to disseminate conspiracy theories about the origin of Covid-19.

"Groups associated with ISIL and Al-Qaeda have also spread conspiracy theories that assert that the virus is a 'soldier of Allah' that is punishing the unbelievers and the enemies that have damaged Muslims over the last years. For example, ISIL and Al-Qaeda claimed that the virus is God's wrath upon the West," the report said. Similarly, Al-Shabab declared that the coronavirus disease is spread

es about the origin of Covid-19.

"Groups associated with ISIL and Al-Qaeda have also spread conspiracy theories that assert that the virus is a 'soldier of Allah' that is punishing the unbelievers and the enemies that have damaged Muslims over the last years. For example, ISIL and Al-Qaeda claimed that the virus is God's wrath upon the West," the report said. Similarly, Al-Shabab declared that the coronavirus disease is spread

● **THE GLOBAL Fatwa Index** has identified Covid-19 related messages from groups associated with ISIS and al-Qaeda, including non-official fatwas that called on ISIS members who have contracted Covid-19 to act as "biological bombs".

by the "crusader forces who have invaded the country and the disbelieving countries that support

them", the report said. The Global Fatwa Index has identified Covid-19 related messages from groups associated with ISIS and al-Qaeda, including non-official fatwas that called on ISIS members who have contracted Covid-19 to act as "biological bombs" by "deliberately spreading the disease among the organisation's enemies," it said.

UNICRI Director Antonia Marie De Meo wrote in the introduction to the report that it is "alarming

that some terrorist and violent extremist groups have attempted to misuse social media to incite potential terrorists to intentionally spread Covid-19 and to use it as an improvised form of a biological weapon." "There are cases in which right-wing extremist groups... explicitly asked their followers to spread the virus by coughing on their local minority or by attending to specific places where religious or racial minorities gather. Other groups...advocate to

spread Covid in countries with large populations or high levels of pollution," it said. It also notes the case of "inspired terrorism" was that of Timothy Wilson, who plotted to detonate a bomb in a hospital caring for Coronavirus patients in Kansas City.

Researchers examined three groups of non-State actors: right-wing extremists; groups associated with the ISIS or Da'esh terrorist group and al-Qaeda; and organised crime groups. — PTI



# DECCAN Chronicle

20 NOVEMBER 2020

## Let Cong show humility, call for wider dialogue

After the Mahagathbandhan in Bihar, of which the Congress was the second largest component, was pipped to the post by NDA, the party's dissidents who had formed a group of 23 or G-23 last August have come to the surface with vigour.

The prominent lawyer and former Union cabinet minister Kapil Sibal, who has virtually emerged as the G-23 spokesman, asserted in a recent interview that the Congress was "in decline", that the way forward was in sight but the presumed leadership (meaning interim president Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul) was not visible, and that experienced, senior folk weren't being consulted.

Much of this is valid, although Mr Gandhi has hardly been inactive. Indeed, it is hard to think of any leader of any party who has emerged as a harder or more frontal critic of this government, of PM Narendra Modi, and the RSS, especially from the liberal, secular perspective. But the former Congress chief does give the impression that he has gone solo. There is hardly any semblance of a functioning organisation that he built when he was formally at the helm. This is no way to run a party, especially one with an ambition to make its influence felt nationwide.

Mr Sibal has sought to rub his point in by pointing to the Congress' none too bright showing in the recent Bihar election and the byelections in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, UP and Karnataka. In fact, were it not for these reverses, it is unlikely he would have sprung to life the way he did.

However, the criticisms around the poll reverses do not appear well-grounded. In the byelections, the ruling parties did well everywhere, including Jharkhand where the Congress came good. As for Bihar, it is true that the bulk of the share of seats that fell in the Congress' share to fight were those that no Mahagathbandhan party had won in three decades. So, probably these would have fallen in NDA's kitty even if the resurgent RJD fought on them.

All these arguments are in the nature of garnishing, however. The core of the dissidents' argument pertains to the field of party organisation and these are not without merit, even if the G-23 are people who had thrived in a party built on nominations when the going was good and the Congress was in power.

Even if Mrs Gandhi has got into motion a process for AICC elections, a key requirement for organisation-building and daunting task at the best of times, no one really knows what's going on. Since the G-23 are experienced and senior folk, although none amongst them can claim to be a mass leader or ground-level politician, it would have been in the fitness of things if they too had been associated with this exercise and consulted routinely. Instead, it seems they have been cast aside.

It was singularly distasteful of Congress Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to suggest that Mr Sibal either float his own party or join another party instead of speaking out aloud. This is not the way of democratic parties. He — and others — should not forget that even P. Chidambaram has criticised the Congress' performance in Bihar and asked that experienced hands be consulted. The Congress would do well to summon some humility.

## Give dads family time

Some old-timers feel that it's just not cricket. But Anil Kumble took it in 2004, followed by Gautam Gambhir and Rahul Dravid in 2009, Rohit Sharma in 2018 and Joe Root earlier this year. And now skipper Virat Kohli officially asked for it and got it! The Board of Control for Cricket in India's grant of paternity leave to Kohli during his team's upcoming Oz tour is a sure sign of changing times.

At present, fathers who are government servants are permitted 15 days of leave to be availed within six months of the birth of the child under Rule 43A of the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972. Similar provisions can be found in the leave rules of state governments. It is only about eight per cent of the 182 days allowed to mothers. But private companies like Zomato, Ikea, Amazon and Novartis as well as tech giants Facebook, Deloitte and Microsoft play a big role in defining workplace cultures and they allow longer leaves.

Blinkered to shifting realities, possibly due to an ivory tower consciousness, then woman and child development minister Maneka Gandhi in 2016 scoffed at the idea of legislating for paternity leave. She was convinced that "Indian men" would turn "it into a holiday". The truth is that even where rules are in place fathers are shamed into not availing it or otherwise subjected to pressures by the office management. We need more teeth in our labour laws for holding such employers accountable. Not only in high-profile jobs or for executives in general, paternity leave should be the norm for peons, clerks and blue-collar workers. But that can only happen if there is political will to honour the cultural change taking place. Although it was women who first argued for work-life balance, a term that originated in the UK during the Industrial Revolution, allowing moderate amounts of leave to employees has been seen to improve both quality of output and prevent burnouts. An egalitarian policy of parental leaves will direct social change — promote participation of women in the labour force, currently at 26 per cent, thus drawing in their diverse skills and vision, optimise our gross domestic product as well as create friendlier workplaces.

Not only single dads, others, too, have a right to love their child.

### DECCAN CHRONICLE

**KAUSHIK MITTER**  
Editor

**K. SUDHAKAR**  
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 Patamata, 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

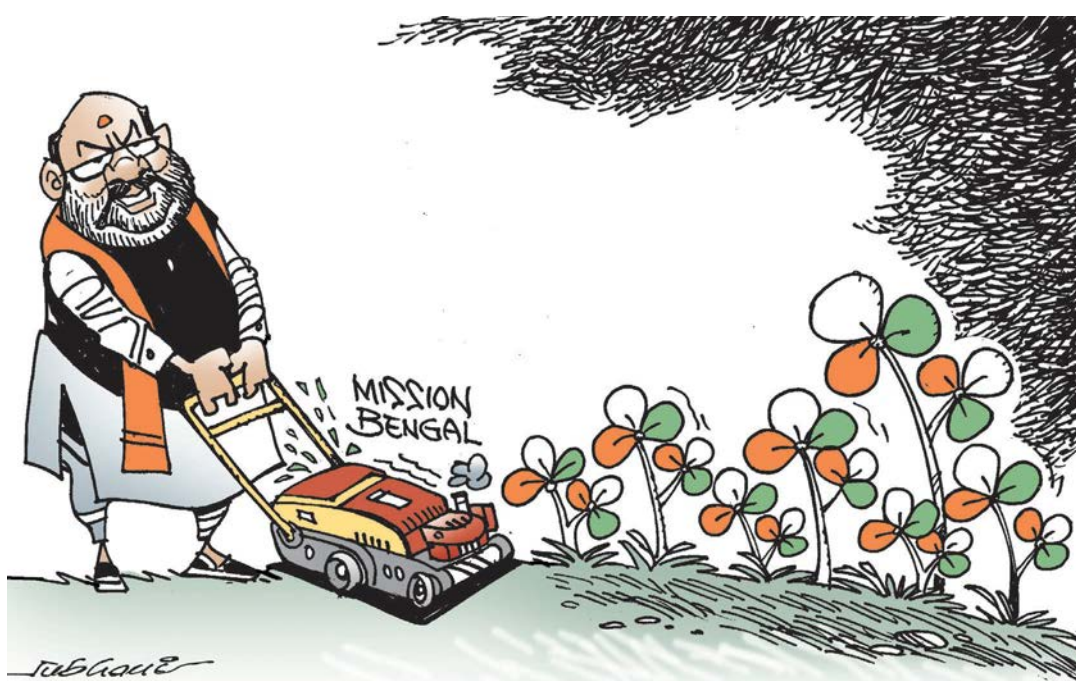
**Karimnagar:** Survey No.1341, Vavilalpally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433

**Nellore:** Survey No.527/2, Burranpur 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: 044-22254747/48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325

**Coimbatore:** 77, Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255  
Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08

Subhani



## Can KCR's gameplan stop Modi juggernaut?

Sriram Karri

The municipal elections underway in Hyderabad might have a political significance nationally, if TRS chief and Telangana chief minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's (KCR) strategy helps his party trounce the newest challenger to power — the Bharatiya Janata Party. If KCR succeeds in nipping the saffron party's surge in the bud, he might reveal a perfect playbook to counter the seemingly unstoppable juggernaut of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It is only of footnote value, not headline material, that the Congress, which ruled India for two terms based on the strength of members of Parliament Telugu people sent to Lok Sabha, and which enacted and implemented the formation of Telangana, is rapidly declining in the state. The interesting part is KCR himself pushed the weak Congress, the principal challenger to TRS as recently as the 2018 Assembly elections, from the general ward into the ICU.

In that election, which the TRS had foresight to schedule ahead of completion of term, and delink state elections from national elections to avoid having to face the Modi wave, the pink party retained power with a bigger majority, winning 88 out of 119 seats. The Congress returned as the principal Opposition party, with 19 seats, while the BJP secured a lone seat. The MIM, ever friendly to whoever is the ruling party, won seven seats.

Ignoring the mandate for over two months, without even declaring a cabinet, the TRS boss ensured defections from the Congress, till it was finally split by over two-thirds, and Congressman Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka lost the status as leader of the Opposition. The void left

by the Congress proved to be a signal to the BJP to make it an all-out direct battle with the TRS for the state.

The TRS lost two of its advantages in this possibly irreversible decline of the Congress and consequent rise of the BJP — a split in anti-incumbency votes will cease and a party with a more effective election machinery will have to be faced.

The BJP has shown it has the striking firepower. Debutant D. Arvind defeated sitting MP K. Kavitha, daughter of KCR, in Lok Sabha elections for Nizamabad, a hurt the TRS still nurses. The recent snatching of Dubbaka byelections by the BJP has consolidated a perception Telangana is now a predominantly two party state, notwithstanding the factor X that is Owaisi-led MIM.

The BJP has already pushed the TRS into a spot by making the elections to Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) about nationalist Hindutva, a template the TRS has not really been tested against. The BJP has declared that the GHMC elections are between them and the MIM, accusing the TRS of appeasing Muslims, especially Owaisi brothers, and being their sidekicks. The TRS could laugh off charges of nepotism, family rule and corruption when they were hurled by the Congress, but the same attack from the BJP could have a sharper bite. Above all, the TRS cannot twist the BJP the way it could do the Congress.

With the reputation and political future of TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, son of KCR, heavily invested in the urbane electoral climes of hi-tech Hyderabad, CM Rao is taking nothing to chance because in Indian politics, like in many Indian families, the loss to a daughter is painful, but

the loss to the image of a son, that too heir apparent, is nearly politically fatal.

Taking the reins into his own hands, KRC has firstly declared that his party would fight both the BJP and the MIM based on secular values. KCR has announced that none of their party leaders or candidates would visit temples, mosques, churches or any other places of worship as part of their campaign. Wearing of religious identity won't be a vote-winning tactic of the TRS.

This will be backed by giving a second lease of life to the idea of a Federal Front, a non-Congress, anti-BJP national front and making it about a direct confrontation between KCR and Narendra Modi as principal rivals on the national scene. This seems congruent with the perception that KCR will hand over the reins of the state to his son soon and take a one-way fight to Delhi.

Just as the TRS has seldom faced a tough rival like the BJP at the state-level head-on, Mr Modi and BJP, too, has not yet seen a challenge as KCR can alone mount in India. KCR understands the value of rhetoric and optics as few in Indian politics, besides the Modi-Shah duo. He believes in disruptive moves and being unpredictable, keeping everyone guessing. He would seldom waste a stone to kill one bird.

KCR would like to take on the BJP pan-India with a front which would acquire the image of India itself — a union of states — hence the KCR-initiated front would be a union of state-level parties and leaders. Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, besides neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, are early potential recruits for this front.

Making every state election about Modi versus his front will be crucial to KCR's strategy — make every election harder for the BJP across the country, by involving every part of the whole, all the time, leading to 2024. Thus, even a loss in, say Delhi or Jharkhand, which BJP presently dismisses as a local loss with no impact at national level, would hence-

forth become a win for the anti-Modi front, and thus a score.

KCR will likely pitch secular federalism, marked with good governance, high on welfare and development, with a strong stress on inclusivity as key ideological differentiators, with a stress on "true". KCR believes this will reduce the ability of the BJP to coerce Opposition leaders with other means, aka, use of Central agencies.

It is his calculation that the long-term incarceration of leaders in Kashmir would have become impossible, if leaders of all states had stood up with them, together. Drawing a leaf from Lincoln, KCR will now put his marketing skills to convince all state leaders to the mantra — let us hang together, lest we be hanged separately.

The TRS has a great understanding of how to build a narrative and sustain it through innovative programmes and schemes. It is hardened in social media battles. It can come out with attractive slogans and put up a convincing counter narrative. It can lure, or coerce, the media. Above all, KCR can put Telangana's own success in input investments for farmers, water as a right for all Indians, jobs, infrastructure and universal healthcare as rival models — the Hyderabad model versus the Gujarat model.

His timing is perfect, too. The Congress is at its weakest and can be dictated to support the front at any later date. Most regional leaders are also too weak to resist; they will happily follow anyone giving them hope against Modi's BJP.

But will KCR emerge the Pied Piper or end up doing an encore of 2019, when his high vision was reduced to gallantry of Don Quixote class, will start becoming clear when Hyderabad votes for its 150 municipal wards on December 1, and its results are declared on December 4.

With a final caveat — it will be by paper ballot. Does a low-tech election in a hi-tech city finally hold the key to a different result in the next Lok Sabha? KCR will hope the answer is yes.

### LETTERS

#### DURGAM CHERUVU

Boasting about the Durgam Cheruvu bridge time and again is not going to fetch votes. Many bridges to cross roads at main junctions were destroyed for the Metro Rail but how many were reconstructed? Metro stations are projected as facilitators for crossing roads, but how many of them are near junctions where people need to cross? Some who daily commute on Durgam Cheruvu may benefit from this fancy bridge, but Hyderabad is not there.

Kishore Sitamraju  
Hyderabad

#### GHMC ELECTIONS

Voters need to choose the right candidate in the GHMC election irrespective of the party affiliation. Voting along party lines will only lead to right candidates losing big. Apart from that, we expect corporators to do their best in making the city clean. The GHMC should illuminate streets and restore parks and a proper sewage system.

Mohammed Wasif Ali  
Secunderabad

GHMC voters area are in a big dilemma. Many feel the TRS, for the last 6 years, has never concentrated on improve living conditions in the GHMC as they did in Gajwel, Sirsilla and Siddipet constituencies. BJP has no contribution worth mentioning for development of GHMC and do not have candidates for contesting. They are welcoming other party leaders to fight elections.

B. Raghunadha Rao  
Hyderabad

### 50 YEARS AGO IN

## DECCAN Chronicle

### C. V. Raman passes away

BANGLORE, November 21 Nobel laureate C.V. Raman died at his residence at 7.25 am today.

Dr Raman observed his 83rd birthday on November 7 in the local St. Martha Hospital where he was convalescing following a mild heart attack. Two days back he left the hospital almost fully recovered.

According to his family members the end came suddenly. His wife, and son Radhakrishnan were beside his bed when he breathed his last.

Dr. Raman woke up as usual at six this morning and took his morning coffee and relaxed for a while. The end came at 7.25 am.

Devi Kar



## Prepare kids for future as worries rise amidst Covid

This time of the year is always fraught with anxieties for school-leaving students. First, there is the looming board examination, the results of which determine their entry into colleges and universities. Next, there is the constant brooding over the choice of career paths. But 2020 has been especially tense for them on account of the untold disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, it is such a difficult time for school-leavers that the past seems unnaturally alluring while the future looks pretty grim.

As yet, nobody knows when on-campus classes will be resumed. Nor can anybody predict when, how and where the board examinations will be held. It is no wonder that the future after leaving school seems so terrifying for high schoolers. Even in normal years, students have a tough time selecting their branch of higher studies while keeping an eye on possible career paths. This year they are totally at sea, knowing that the world of work is undergoing turbulent changes. Further, they know that they will probably have to settle for virtual classes and will not

experience college campus life, which they had been looking forward to for years.

At this time, we need to make a conscious effort to boost our students' morale. Professional career counsellors are probably doing their job of keeping abreast of changes that are taking place and of trends that are already perceptible. However, career counsellors alone can't be expected to allay the anxieties of students. Parents, mentors and teachers have an onerous responsibility too. They need to give students a sense of security and stability so that their education — irrespective of the timing and nature of the board and college entrance examinations — continues uninterrupted. Further, they must help them to face the world with a calm frame of mind and develop the adaptability to cope with the demands of new situations. Living examples may be cited, of enterprising people who have reinvented their lines of work successfully in these trying times. It would help them enormously, if teachers and mentors suggested concrete steps while their students go about trying to prepare for

an unnervingly uncertain future.

Here are a few thoughts that we can share with our students while engaging with them. I feel that such dialogues make them less anxious about their future. The first point to drive home is that they are not the only ones facing this predicament — everybody was in the same boat. Although quite obvious, somehow, they find solace in this realisation which needs to be reinforced from time to time. They must also be made aware that humans have overcome many perilous situations in the past; therefore, we can believe with reason that the present condition is only temporary. Students must make most of the time they have at their disposal and learn not only from their prescribed coursework but from the myriad resources that are available on the Internet. It has become already clear that the future demands a broad outlook and an interdisciplinary approach — narrow specialisation has become passé.

Many students, along with their parents, worry because they are undecided about their career path. Instead of trying to coax them to make a decision

immediately, it is perhaps wiser to reassure them that there is plenty of time to make a definite choice. In any case, people do not need to stick to any particular career line all through their working life. Examples may be given of the multifarious new occupations that have spawned in the recent past to demonstrate that there is no end to the opportunities that will be available to them. In the face of a possible job losses, resourceful young people have got hold of several digital assignments while working from home. Who knows, multiple careers can easily turn out to be the norm in future.

So far as their immediate anxiety of admission into reputed colleges is concerned, students must understand the need to be practical. Even a very good student may not get a seat in the college of his or her choice. This should not break the person. There are enough real-life examples to show that it is not necessary to attend a particular institution in order to make a success of life.

In the context of seeking "success", it is imperative that young people must understand that success does not have

a single definition — it comes in different forms. One way of defining success is the fulfilment of individual goals. Therefore, instead of chasing nebulous dreams, students should be encouraged to look inward and discover what they want out of life, where their interests lie and what their strengths are. To attain success, students must be resilient in the face of inevitable setbacks. In addition, they should possess certain skills and qualities which will always be in demand irrespective of place or circumstances. These include "people skills", the ability to communicate effectively and being a reliable team player. Above all, it is important to be able to manage one's own emotions competently and respond to other people's emotions sensitively.

Parents and teachers must make a conscious effort not to pass on their own worries to the young. It is easier said than done, but we must cultivate a robust outlook ourselves while holding up for them an optimistic, yet not unrealistic, picture of the future.

The writer is a veteran school educator based in Kolkata



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	43,599.96	-1.31
Nifty 50	12,771.70	-1.29
\$S&P 500*	3,566.72	-0.03
Dollar (₹)	74.27	-0.09
Pound Sterling (₹)	98.10	0.51
Euro (₹)	87.85	0.40
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,714*248	0.40
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	43.97	-0.37
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.876	-0.003
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.857	-0.025

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

SpiceJet jumps 12% after Boeing 737 MAX gets nod

Shares of SpiceJet zoomed over 12 per cent after the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the US approved the return of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft to commercial service. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation on Wednesday said it will study FAA's decision and take "some time" before taking a call on allowing Boeing 737 MAX planes to fly again in the Indian skies. On the BSE, the stock closed at Rs 74.35, up 12.06 per cent.

Apollo, Tatas to launch Covid test 'TataMD Check'



Apollo Hospitals and Tata Medical and Diagnostics, the new health care venture of the Tata Group, has announced a collaboration to introduce TataMD Check, the first Crispr Cas-9 based diagnostic test, to increase testing for Covid-19 across the country. Apollo Hospitals, along with its subsidiary Apollo Diagnostics, will offer the Tata MD Check testing in the NCR from early December, followed by other metros.

Dr Reddy's starts investigation into anonymous plaint

Dr Reddy's Laboratories said it has commenced a detailed investigation into an anonymous complaint regarding healthcare professionals in Ukraine and potentially in other countries being provided with improper benefits. DRL has a wholly owned subsidiary and a global office in Ukraine. The investigation is being carried out by a reputed independent US law firm, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Mphasis acquires UK's Datalytx for ₹130 crore

IT firm Mphasis said its subsidiary Mphasis Consulting Ltd has acquired UK-based Datalytx Ltd for up to 13.3 million pounds (about Rs 130.4 crore). The acquisition is expected to provide access to strengthen Mphasis next-generation Data GTM Strategy and provide higher value partnership status with Snowflake and Talend for cloud-based data services, the firm said in a regulatory filing.



■ Oxford Economics sees avg. 4.5% growth for 5 years  
Analysts raise growth forecast for next year

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, NOV. 19

Ahead of the release of GDP data for the September quarter, rating agencies and investment banks are predicting a faster recovery India's economy for FY22. While some see lesser contraction for this fiscal than projected earlier, some are not that optimistic. Moody's Investors Service has lowered the contraction rate for India's GDP to 10.6 per cent for 2020-21 from its earlier forecast of 11.5 per cent. It has also revised upwards its expectation for GDP growth rate to 10.8 per cent for 2021-22 from 10.6 per cent earlier. However, in the medium term economic growth is likely to settle around 6 per cent, it said. Moody's says the stimulus measures announced last week by the finance minister were aimed at increasing manufacturing competitiveness and creating jobs while supporting infrastructure investment and credit availability to stressed sectors. "As such, they present potential upside to our current forecasts, a credit positive," the rating agency said. Better growth will also be supported by the falling of Covid-19 cases in the country, it said. British investment bank Barclays has raised its FY22 GDP growth forecast for India to 8.5 per cent from 7 per cent earlier, though it has revised FY21

CHANGING TUNES

- **MOODY'S:** Revises upwards growth rate to 10.8% for FY22 from 10.6% estimated earlier
- Contraction in FY21 GDP seen at -10.6% for FY21 against earlier forecast of -11.5%
- **BARCLAYS:** Raises FY22 GDP growth forecast for India to 8.5% from 7% earlier
- Revises FY21 GDP forecast downwards to -6.4% from -6% earlier
- **ICRA:** September quarter contraction narrowed to -9.5% from -23.9% in June quarter
- **OXFORD ECONOMICS:** India will be worst-affected among major economies with output 12% below pre-Covid levels till 2025

GDP forecast downwards to -6.4 per cent from -6.0 per cent earlier. Barclays expects the recent improvement in manufacturing to broaden to the services sector early next year. "We now see a better trajectory for the recovery of consumption as well as investment, given incrementally rising fiscal and monetary support," it said. The recent stability in the health crisis has been accompanied by a faster return of the economy to normal, beyond the agricultural sector. Indicators for a number of manufacturing segments are now above pre-Covid levels. Growth in GDP will resume in Q4 20, a quarter ahead of the RBI's projections, it said. However, Barclays has modestly revised its FY21 GDP forecast downwards to -6.4 per cent to reflect marginally weaker income

FY21 remains unclear, and we caution that trends in the same may not get fully reflected in the GDP data, given the lack of adequate proxies to evaluate the less formal sectors, she said. Despite the predicted recovery India will be the worst-affected among the world's major economies even after the pandemic wanes, with output 12 per cent below pre-virus levels through the middle of the decade, according to Oxford Economics. Balance sheet stress that had been building before the coronavirus outbreak will probably worsen, says Priyanka Kishore, head of economics for South Asia and South-East Asia. She projects potential growth for India at 4.5 per cent over the next five years, lower than 6.5 per cent before the virus. "It's likely that headwinds which were already hampering growth prior to 2020—such as stressed corporate balance sheets, elevated non-performing assets of banks, the fallout in non-bank financial companies, and labor market weakness—will worsen," she said. "All supply-side factors feel the effect, with only human capital's contribution unchanged from the pre-virus baseline," she said. "Capital accumulation takes the biggest hit because we expect balance-sheet stresses to worsen following the crisis, lengthening the investment recovery cycle."

Adani Green has no firm customer for \$6 bn project

NEHA ARORA & SUDARSHAN VARADHAN  
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI, NOV. 19



Adani Green Energy's record \$6 billion solar power project announced in June has no guaranteed customer, its deal with India's main solar-adoption agency shows, and may expose the company to higher financial risk. Shares in the firm, controlled by billionaire Gautam Adani, have soared three-fold since the signing of the 8 gigawatt (GW) multi-plant deal, which Adani hailed as the "largest of its type, ever" and a landmark for India. However, details of the agreement between Adani Green and Solar Energy Corp of India Ltd (SECI) reveal the agency has no "legal or financial obligation" to support the project if SECI fails to find buyers. This would be the first major SECI project without a state-guaranteed power purchase agreement (PPA), which analysts say has been key to building up the renewable energy sector. When SECI floated the tender for the project in June 2019, it had said a PPA would be assured, but it withdrew the clause in the deal signed a year later. "There shall not be any legal or financial implication to SECI in relation to such (unsold) quantum including associated quantum of manufacturing facilities," the agreement, reviewed by Reuters, says. Adani Green has said 2 GW of generation capacity will come onstream by 2022, while the rest will be added in annual 2GW increments through 2025. There are no buyers lined up for the project yet and it is unclear when SECI will be able to find buyers, a process that typically takes months. Auctions by the SECI usually attract greater participation because of the assurance of power purchase and payments. But the lack of such a



LAMBORGHINI HURACAN STO UNVEILED

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, NOV. 19

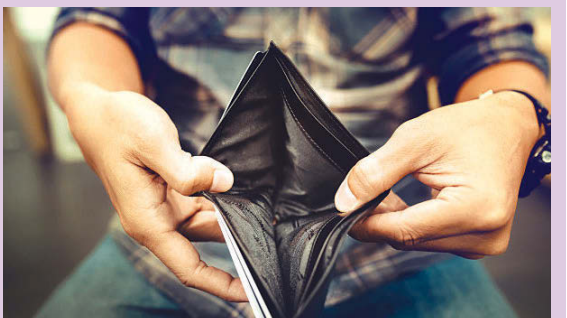
Italian super sports car maker Lamborghini has introduced the new Huracan STO (Super Trofeo Omologata) which is a track focused racing car. Lamborghini plans to commence the deliveries of the Huracan STO next year but the price has not been revealed yet. Drawing inspiration and technical learnings from the Huracan Super Trofeo Evo and successful GT3 racing models, the Huracan STO is effectively a road-homologated version of the racer that won the 24 Hours of Daytona three times. The new STO is powered by a naturally aspirated 5.2-litre V10 engine making 640hp and 565Nm. It sprints from 0-100km in an eye-blinking three seconds with a top speed of 310kmph. The firm is yet to reveal its India launch plans.

Voda Idea to get \$2 bn from Oaktree, Varde

BAIJU KALESH, ANTO ANTONY & P. R. SANJAI  
NOV. 19

A consortium backed by Oaktree Capital has offered to provide at least \$2 billion of funding to Vodafone Group Plc's listed Indian arm, people with knowledge of the matter said. Oaktree teamed up with several other firms, including Varde Partners, for the potential deal with Vodafone Idea Ltd, according to the people. The investor group made a proposal to provide around \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion of capital to Vodafone Idea, the people said, asking not to be identified because the information is private. Vodafone Idea said in September it plans to raise as much as Rs 25,000 crore (\$3.4 billion) selling shares and debt to shore up its finances as competition heats up in the Indian wireless industry. It wasn't immediately clear how a potential deal with the Oaktree-backed consortium would be structured. The Indian carrier has also been speaking to other potential investors, and there's no certainty the negotiations will lead to an agreement, the people said. Representatives for Oaktree, Varde and Vodafone Idea declined to comment. —Bloomberg

Pandemic hits income of 65% urban residents



Nearly two-thirds of the urban population seems to have had a negative impact on their income due to the pandemic and the resultant lockdown. A whopping 65 per cent respondents of a survey by Paisabazaar.com said their incomes were hit by the pandemic. About 16 per cent of them claimed to have lost 100 per cent of their income, with another 28 per cent reporting income reduction of more than half. Over 8,500 respondents between the age of 24 and 57 years from over 35 cities with a debt of Rs 1 lakh or more took part in the survey. Almost 86 per cent of the self-employed customers said the pandemic has adversely impacted their income and 25 per cent claimed that their income has come down to zero. Among the salaried class, 56 per cent saw their income take a hit. Another 30 per cent said their salary has been reduced by more than half from the pre-Covid levels and 12 per cent reported complete loss of salary due to job loss. Delhi and the NCR were the most impacted cities, with 70 per cent of their resident participants reporting a negative impact on income. Among these, 16 per cent of respondents from the NCR saw income coming down to zero. Mumbai was worst with 26 per cent Mumbaikars reporting income plummeting to nil. Mumbai also had the highest percentage of moratorium takers—65 per cent of the respondents. Further, 52 per cent respondents in the megapolis said they cannot afford to pay their EMIs in full, with 15 per cent of them saying they currently have zero payment capacity. Chennai was the least impacted city with 52 per cent seeing incomes coming down. Only 9 per cent of Chennai residents who participated in the survey suffered a 100 per cent income loss.

Market takes a breather after days of bull run

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, NOV. 19

Profit booking by domestic institutional investors and a fall in buying by foreign portfolio investors led to a more than one per cent fall in the benchmark stock indices on Thursday. Sensex and Nifty-50 gained for the fourth consecutive session and made new all time highs in early morning trade before profit booking set in. The Sensex closed 580 points down at 43,599.96 after climbing to a new all-time high of 44,230. The Nifty-50 also closed at 12,771.70, falling 166.55 points after reaching a new high of 12,963 and just 37 points short of the 13,000-mark. Domestic institutional investors were net sellers of equities worth Rs 2,854.94 crore while the foreign portfolio investors were net buyers by Rs 1,180.61 crore. The broader market outperformed the large caps as the BSE Midcap Index fell 0.65 per cent while the BSE Small-cap ended flat, gaining 0.03 per cent. Banks, which had a strong bull run in the last

few sessions, saw maximum profit taking as the Nifty Bank Index fell 2.85 per cent while the BSE Bankex fell 2.75 per cent. The Nifty Bank had climbed nearly 25 per cent this month. Only mass consumption sectors like BSE FMCG (0.46 per cent), Power (0.76 per cent) and Consumer Durables (0.76 per cent) fared well, with these sectoral indices closing with some gains. Siddhartha Khemka, head-retail research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services said, "Global cues were weak as concerns over rising coronavirus infections and new shutdowns in major US cities overshadowed vaccine progress. Optimism from news that Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine was 95 per cent effective and its plans to apply for emergency US authorisation failed to support markets. On the domestic side, markets hit a record high earlier in the session as investors bet on a faster return to economic growth following upbeat news on a Covid-19 vaccine. However, it fell sharply in the second half."

CORNERED CHINA TO FOCUS MORE ON DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION



K. J. M. VARMA  
BEIJING, NOV. 19

Chinese president Xi Jinping said on Thursday that China is set to change its development model from next year, relying more on domestic consumption than export-reliant growth which propelled it to become the world's second largest economy next only to the United States. "From next year on, China will embark on new journey toward fully building a modern socialist country," 67-year-old Xi said while addressing the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Dialogues via video link. "We will foster a new development paradigm with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulations reinforcing each other," he said. "The new development paradigm is a strategic decision we have made based on the current stage and conditions of development in China and with full consideration given to economic globalisation and changes in the external environment," he said. Last month, a key conclave of the ruling Communist Party of China headed by Xi adopted his proposals for the formulation of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035. China's status as a world's factory has been affected by declining global markets and US President Donald Trump's trade war. —PTI

28 hyper-scale data centres to come up in three years

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, NOV. 19

Amidst reports of a data centre policy on the anvil, India is increasingly attracting investments in data centres this year. Data centre projects received \$396 million between January and September 2020, which is 40 per cent of the total investments that came in during the last 12 years. The Indian data centre industry has attracted close to \$977 million in private equity and strategic investments since 2008, of which nearly \$396 million was infused in the first nine months of 2020. These investments will



help the construction of at least 28 large hyper-scale data centres over the next three years. These will span over 16 million sq. ft. with at least 1,400 MW of IT power capacity. India currently has 126 third-party data centres spanning over 7.5 million sq ft and a cumulative IT power capacity of 590 MW. While 53 players own or operate these third-party

data centres, the capacity is highly concentrated among the top 12 players, who operate 95 per cent of the total IT Power capacity in the country. Upcoming supply is expected to be concentrated in Mumbai and Chennai, followed by NCR and Hyderabad. Mumbai and Chennai together will witness 60 per cent of total future capacity and NCR and Hyderabad will contribute 33 per cent. The government may soon implement a data centre policy that will encourage firms to build data centre parks across the country. The government may also provide infrastructure status to the sector.



## SHORT TAKES

**Botham grandson for rugby debut**

**Cardiff, United Kingdom:** England cricket legend Ian Botham's grandson, James, will make his debut for the Wales rugby team in Saturday's Autumn Nations Cup match against Georgia as coach Wayne Pivac picked an experimental side with an eye on the future. James Botham, a former Wales Under-20 international who plays for Cardiff Blues, is the son of Liam Botham, the son of Ian, and himself a former professional cricket, rugby union and rugby league player, who appeared for Cardiff in the 1990s. Botham is one of three uncapped players named by Pivac for the match. — *AFP*

**Para cyclists to cut across country**

**Srinagar:** Indian para cyclists, led by Limca Book of Records holder Aditya Mehta, on Thursday embarked on a journey from Kashmir to Kanyakumari as part of the Infinity Ride 2020 to raise awareness and scout para talent from across the country. The ride, a brain-child of the Aditya Mehta Foundation (AMF) and supported by Border Security Force (BSF), took off from Nishant Bagh, Srinagar on Thursday with Rakesh Asthana, Director General BSF flagging it off. Asian Para Cycling Championship bronze medallist Harinder Singh and Asian Games Track Cycling bronze medallist Gurjal Singh also joined the journey which will end at Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari on December 29 after covering 34 cities in 41 days. "India has no dearth of talent. My goal is to scout young talents and train them," Mehta said in a release. — *PTI*

**Fifa rules for maternity rights**

**Geneva:** Female soccer players should soon get their maternity rights protected under new employment rules announced Thursday by FIFA. The governing body of soccer is preparing to mandate clubs to allow at least 14 weeks of maternity leave paid at a minimum two-thirds of a player's full salary. National soccer bodies can insist on more generous terms. "Her club will be under an obligation to reintegrate her into football activity and provide adequate ongoing medical support," FIFA said. Any club that ended a player's contract for becoming pregnant faces having to pay compensation and a fine, and being banned from the transfer market for one year. "The idea is to protect female players before, during and after childbirth," FIFA chief legal officer Emilio Garcia said on a conference call. The move is seen as a key step in professionalising women's football. — *AP*

**Aditi is tied 29th at Saudi golf**

**KAEC, Saudi Arabia:** Indian golfer Aditi Ashok faltered on the back-nine and slipped to the Tied-29th position in the individual standings after the second round of the Saudi Ladies Team International here. Aditi, who shot one-under 71 in the first round, added a three-over 75 and was individually two-over 146 in the unique tournament that is also being played as a team event. As for the other Indians, Diksha Dagar added a 78 to her first-round 71 and lay T-50th, while Tvesha Malik (74-76) was T-64th. Astha Madan (80-81) was T-108. Aditi had two birdies against three bogeys, two of them on the back-nine, and a double bogey in her round. — *PTI*

## Live on TV

**FOOTBALL**  
**Indian Super League:** Kerala Blasters vs ATK Mohun Bagan from 7:15 pm on Star Sports 1, 2, 3

**TENNIS**  
**ATP Finals:** Matches from 7:30 pm and 1:30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

**WWE**  
**SmackDown:** Bouts from 6:30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

**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, Vavilalapa Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Kaushik Mitter

# BELGIAN BOOST

## Italy and Belgium barge into Nations League final

**Paris, Nov. 19:** Romelu Lukaku helped fire Belgium into the UEFA Nations League finals by scoring twice in a 4-2 win over Denmark on Wednesday, while Italy also secured a place in the last four with victory away to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The world's number one-ranked side, Belgium only required a draw from their last League 'A', Group 2 game at home to Denmark behind closed doors in Leuven and took an early lead through Youri Tielemans. Jonas Wind equalised for Denmark, but Lukaku got a second-half double and Kevin De Bruyne made sure of the victory for Roberto Martinez's side after Thibaut Courtois allowed a Nacer Chadli back-pass to squirm under his leg and in for an own goal. Italy secured first place in Group 1 with a 2-0 triumph in Sarajevo thanks to a goal in each half from Torino's Andrea Belotti and Domenico Berardi of Sassuolo. That ensured they finished a point ahead of the Netherlands, who came from behind to beat Poland 2-1 away with captain Georginio Wijnaldum scoring the winner after Memphis Depay's penalty cancelled out Kamil Jozwiak's opener. Italy and Belgium join Spain and World Cup holders France in a final tournament which is expected to be held in Italy in October next year. Before the finals, European national teams will start their 2022 World Cup qualifying campaign in March and then the delayed Euro 2020 is set to go ahead next June and July.

England have more than one eye on that tournament, with the semi-finals and final scheduled for Wembley, and Gareth Southgate's team rounded out their Nations League campaign with a 4-0 win over Iceland.



Russian midfielder Aleksandr Erokhin (left) vies with Serbia's defender Nikola Milenkovic during their UEFA Nations League match at the Rajko Mitic Stadium in Belgrade on Wednesday. Serbia won 5-0. — *AFP*

Declan Rice and Mason Mount scored in the first half and Manchester City's Phil Foden got his first international goals with a late brace as England had three players aged 21 or younger score in the same match for the first time since 1883.

**Wales move up, Scotland miss out**

Wales won promotion to League 'A' with a 3-1 win over 10-man Finland in Cardiff that allowed them to top Group B4. Despite manager Ryan Giggs being missing after his recent arrest on suspicion of assaulting his girlfriend, Wales came good with goals from Harry Wilson, Daniel James and Kieffer Moore.

Teemu Pukki netted for Finland, who had left-back Jere Uronen sent off after just 12 minutes.

Winning their group also improves Wales' chances of securing a place in the 2022 World Cup qualifying play-offs, as the two best group winners in the Nations League are guaranteed play-off places if they don't make it via the usual route.

While Wales go up, Scotland missed out on promotion from League B, Group 2 after losing 1-0 in Israel, their second consecutive loss since clinching qualification for Euro 2020.

Manor Solomon's first-half goal sunk the Scots. — *AFP*

## THE RESULTS

<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Austria</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(Grbic 90+4)</b>	
<b>(Belotti 22, Berardi 68)</b>		<b>Norway</b>	<b>1</b>
		<b>(Zahid 61)</b>	
<b>Poland</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Israel</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>(Jozwiak 6)</b>		<b>(Solomon 44)</b>	
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(Depay 77-pen, Wijnaldum 82)</b>			
<b>England</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(Rice 20, Mount 24, Foden 80, 84)</b>		<b>(Tomas Soucek 17, Zdenek Ondrasek 55)</b>	
<b>Iceland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Serbia</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>(Youn Tielemans 3, Romelu Lukaku 56, 69, Kevin De Bruyne 88)</b>		<b>(Radonic 10, Jovic 25, 45+1, Vlahovic 41, Mladenovic 64)</b>	
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(Wind 17, Chadli 87-og)</b>			
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(Boyce 56)</b>		<b>(Siger 57, Varga 90+5)</b>	
<b>Romania</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(Bicfalvi 81)</b>			
		<b>Republic of Ireland</b>	<b>0</b>
		<b>Bulgaria</b>	<b>0</b>

# Covid hits South Africa cricketers

**Cape Town, Nov. 19:** Three players of the South African men's cricket team have been placed under isolation after one of them tested positive for Covid-19 ahead of the white-ball series against England, the country's cricket board confirmed.

Cricket South Africa (CSA), though, did not disclose the names of the three players.

CSA said about 50 Covid-19 RTPCR tests on players and support staff were conducted prior to entering the bio-bubble here for the limited overs series, starting on November 27.

"One player has returned a positive test result and two players were considered close contacts based on the risk assessment undertaken by the medical team," a CSA statement said.

"All three players have been placed in immediate isolation in Cape Town as part of the Covid-19 protocols. While all players are asymptomatic, CSA's medical team will monitor them to ensure their health and well-being," it added.

No replacements have been named for the series, comprising three T20Is and as many ODIs, but the board said two new players will join the group to make up the numbers. "At this stage, none of these players will be replaced for the tour, but two replacement players will be included into the squad for the purposes of the inter-squad practice matches that will be played on Saturday, 21 November," it said. — *PTI*

## LIVERPOOL'S SALAH TESTS +VE AGAIN

**Cairo, Nov. 19:** Liverpool striker Mohamed Salah will likely miss the club's next Premier League game after the Egyptian football association said that he had tested positive for the Coronavirus for a second time.

The 28-year-old Salah, who has mild symptoms, has been in self-isolation in Egypt's Red Sea resort of el-Gouna, where he arrived earlier this week. He had previously self-isolated in a Cairo hotel.

He first tested positive for the virus on Friday on the eve of Egypt's Africa Cup of Nations qualifier against Togo. The Pharaohs beat Togo 1-0 in Cairo, and 3-1 on Tuesday in Togo's capital, Lome.

The Egyptian association said Arsenal midfielder Mohamed Elneny also returned another positive test.

Elneny, 28, first tested positive Monday after the squad arrived in Togo.

Striker Ahmed Hassan Kouka of Olympiacos tested positive after his return to Cairo with the national team from Togo, the association said. — *AP*

# Seven more cases in Uruguay camp

**Montevideo (Uruguay), Nov. 19:** Uruguay's football federation reported seven new cases of Covid-19 in the camp Wednesday, bringing the number of positive cases among its World Cup qualifying squad to 11.

Players Alexis Rolin, who plays for Uruguay club Rentistas, and Los Angeles FC's Diego Rossi — as well as five officials — tested positive for the coronavirus after Tuesday night's 2-0 defeat at home to Brazil.

"They are all fine and appropriate sanitary measures have been implemented," the federation said.

The seven new cases are in addition to four announced in the run-up to Tuesday's match — including star striker Luis Suarez, substitute goalkeeper Rodrigo Munoz and spokesman Matias Faral.

On Saturday, the federation announced that full-back Matias Vina, who plays for Brazilian club Palmeiras, had also tested positive. — *AFP*

# IPL over, it's football now for India

**Bambolim (Goa), Nov. 19:** Behind closed doors and with a raft of health safety measures in place, football's Indian Super League (ISL) will kick off here on Friday and become the country's first major tournament to be organised since the enforcement of a Covid-19 lockdown eight months ago.

Former champions ATK Mohun Bagan and Kerala Blasters will start the proceedings with what is expected to be a blockbuster clash at the GMC Stadium here.

But the season's first big game will undoubtedly be the one between ATK Mohun Bagan and SC East Bengal in Fatorda on November 27, the two heavyweights renewing their more-than-a-century-old rivalry in a new avatar. ATK Mohun Bagan, playing in their first tournament after the merger of last season champion sides of ISL and I-League into one club, will start as the frontrunner for the title in the seventh edition of the lucrative franchise-based tournament.

They have roped in some quality players like star India defender Sandesh Jhingan while retaining the core of last season champions ATK side such as Fijian international Roy Krishna who was on

rampage against opposition defences.

Roy was last season's joint top-scorer with 15 goals from 21 matches while also providing six assists.

He was named captain in the final as ATK cruised to their third ISL title and will return as skipper alongside four other leaders of the newly-formed ATK Mohun Bagan outfit.

Chief coach Antonio Lopez Habas had recently

announced that five players will be given the captain's armband in rotation through the upcoming season.

Habas has named Fijian striker Roy Krishna and Spanish midfielder Edu Garcia among the captains. Indian players, Pritam Kotal, Arindam Bhattacharya and the seasoned Sandesh Jhingan, will also share the leadership responsibilities. — *PTI*

He was named captain in the final as ATK cruised to their third ISL title and will return as skipper alongside four other leaders of the newly-formed ATK Mohun Bagan outfit.

Chief coach Antonio Lopez Habas had recently

# Lanka's Zoysa is proved corrupt

**Dubai, Nov. 19:** Already serving suspension on match-fixing charges, former Sri Lanka player and bowling coach Nuwan Zoysa has been found guilty of three offences under the ICC anti-corruption code by an independent tribunal, the global cricket body said on Thursday.

Zoysa was charged under the ICC anti-corruption code in November 2018 and has been found guilty on all charges after he exercised his right to a hearing before an independent anti-corruption tribunal.

The Sri Lankan remains suspended and sanctions will follow in due course, the International Cricket Council said in a release.

He was provisionally suspended in May 2019 on charges of indulging in corruption during a T20 league in the UAE.

ICC said Zoysa has been found guilty of:

Article 2.1.1 — for being party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive or otherwise influence improperly the result, progress, conduct or other aspect(s) of a match.

Article 2.1.4 — Directly or indirectly soliciting, inducing, enticing,



Nuwan Zoysa

instructing, persuading, encouraging or intentionally facilitating any Participant to breach Code Article 2.1.

Article 2.4.4 — Failing to disclose to the ACU full details of any approaches or invitations received to engage in corrupt conduct under the Code.

"Zoysa has also been charged by the ICC on behalf of the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) with breaching four counts of the ECB anti-corruption code for participants for the T10 League and these proceedings are ongoing," the ICC said in the release.

Zoysa, who played 30 Tests and 95 ODIs for Sri Lanka, was appointed Sri Lanka's bowling coach in September, 2015. — *PTI*

# GAYLE AND MALINGA PULL OUT OF LPL

**Colombo, Nov. 19:** Chris Gayle and Lasith Malinga, two of T20 cricket's biggest draws, have pulled out of the inaugural Lanka Premier League (LPL) along with England pacer Liam Plunkett, dealing a huge blow to the tournament even before its take-off.

While Gayle and Plunkett's withdrawals were confirmed by their franchise Kandy Tuskers, Malinga pulled out citing "inadequate preparation time", according to a report in *ESPNCricinfo*.

"We are sad to announce that Chris Gayle will not be playing for us in this year's @LPLT20," Tuskers tweeted.

This was followed by another tweet, "We are also sad to announce that Liam Plunkett will also not be playing in this year's @LPLT20."

Gayle holds the record for hitting the most number of sixes in the T20 format. He was recently seen in the IPL.

Malinga, who was supposed to lead the Galle Gladiators, said he didn't have any training since March and it would be tough for him to play a high-level event without any practice. — *PTI*

# Punjab firm up three-year plan

**New Delhi, Nov. 19:** Frequently changing captains and coaches has hurt Kings XI Punjab in the past and that is why the franchise has decided to work on a three-year plan under Anil Kumble and K. L. Rahul to take the side forward, co-owner Ness Wadia has said.

It was a roller-coaster ride for KXIP this IPL. They lost six out of their first seven games before winning five in a row to storm back into play-off contention. The Rahul-led side needed to win its last league game against Chennai Super Kings to reach the top-four but it couldn't.

"It is a new captain, new team with a lot of fresh faces, sometimes it clicks and sometimes it doesn't. The auction is coming up soon and we would be looking to plug the gaps in the middle-order and our bowling," Wadia said.

"The international players did not perform to the expected level," he said referring to the likes of Glenn Maxwell and Sheldon Cottrell, for whom KXIP paid big money at last year's auction.

He also said that Chris Gayle, who was surpris-

**The international players did not perform to the expected level. The auction is coming up soon and we would be looking to plug the gaps in the middle-order and our bowling.**

— **NESS WADIA**  
Kings XI Punjab co-owner

ingly not picked in the first half of the tournament, had done enough to be playing from game one next season.

Talking about the future under Kumble and Rahul, Wadia said: "We have a charted a three-year strategy with Anil. K. L. has been with us for three years and there was a reason why we went after him so aggressively. He has proved us right."

"It is tough for the top order when your middle order is not performing. The good thing is that we have an established core now (Rahul, Agarwal, Pooran, Gayle and Shami) and we need to plug the gaps which are quite apparent (middle-order and death bowling)," Wadia added. — *PTI*



Novak Djokovic of Serbia reacts during his loss to Daniil Medvedev of Russia at the ATP World Finals tennis tournament at the O2 arena in London on Wednesday. Djokovic lost in straight sets at 3-6, 3-6. — *AP*

# Djoker loses big at Tour Finals

**London, Nov. 19:** Daniil Medvedev is enjoying the ATP Tour Finals a lot better in his second appearance. Medvedev secured a spot in the semifinals of the tournament by dominating five-time champion Novak Djokovic 6-3, 6-3 on Wednesday for his second straight win of the group stage.

Medvedev, who lost all three of his group matches last year in his tournament debut, has now beaten Djokovic in three of their last four meetings. The top-ranked Serb can still advance if he beats 2018 champion Alexander Zverev in a winner-takes-all match on Friday.

Zverev kept his tournament hopes alive with a 6-3,

4-6, 6-3 victory over Diego Schwartzman earlier Wednesday.

Medvedev broke Djokovic three straight times to go from 3-3 in the first set to a 3-0 lead in the second. The first break came after a marathon game when the Russian finally converted his third break point when Djokovic missed a forehand after a long rally.

Djokovic then double-faulted on set point and never looked likely to stage a comeback in the second. Medvedev saved the only break point he faced at 2-0 and then secured the victory with a forehand winner on his first match point.

"He was just better, no question about it," Djokovic said. — *AP*