


# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA  
KARIMNAGAR | TUESDAY | 13 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 27.4°C

Min: 22.6°C

RH: 96%

Rainfall: 35 mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.

Thundershowers likely.

Max/Min temp. 27/23 °C

COVID-19

COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+58,967)	(+765)
71,73,069	1,09,892

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,021)	(+6)
TS: 2,13,084	1,228
(+3,000)	(+32)
AP: 7,58,951	6,256

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,79,48,409

DEATHS

10,83,890

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana

Titthi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula  
Ekadasi till 2.29 pm

Star: Magha till 10.49 pm

Varjyam: 11.37 am to 1.06 pm;  
6.04 am to 7.31 am (Wednesday)

Durmuhurtam: 8.32 am to 9.19 am;  
10.48 pm to 11.37 pm

Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HILIRI CALENDAR

Safar ul Muzaffar 25, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.08 am

Zohar: 12.12 pm

Asar: 4.17 pm

Maghrib: 6.01 pm

Isha: 7.10 pm


SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.08 AM

SUNSET TODAY 5.55 PM

MOONRISE TODAY 2.23 AM

MOONSET TOMORROW 3.31 PM

COUNTER POINT



His body doubles are wearing masks and out campaigning!

IN BRIEF

Power outage cripples Mumbai

**Mumbai:** A rare power outage paralysed Mumbai on Monday, halting local train services, trapping people in lifts and disrupting work from home during the pandemic. Power restoration efforts began on “war footing” and pocket-wise resumption in supply started around 12 noon, nearly two hours after the outage. Tata Power attributed the outage to a substation tripping at 10.10 am at state-run MSETCL’s two substations in Kalwa and Kharghar. Train services took two-and-half hours to resume operations. They are carrying only essential services workers at present.

WEATHER | WARNING

## 14 Telangana districts put on rain alert

**BALU PUKIPAKA | DC**  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

Fourteen districts in Telangana state have been placed under a warning for heavy to very heavy rainfall for Tuesday. The Indian Meteorological Department said rain, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, can be expected in Pedda-palle, Siddipet, Jangaon, Jaishankar-Bhupalapalli, Karim-nagar, Warangal Urban and Rural, Mahbubabad, Bhadadri-Kotha-gudem, Nalgonda, Yada-dri-Bhongir, Suryapet

and Mulugu districts. In the GHMC area, between 8.30 am, and 7 pm on Monday 59.5 mm of rain was recorded in Uppal, while Musheeraabad received 53 mm, Trimulgherry 47 mm, while parts of Nampally and Khairatabad areas received between 29 mm and 25 mm of rain. Teams from the GHMC, the police and Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Works and Sewerage Board were deployed in various parts of the city to clear water-logged streets.

Wanaparthi received 77.8 mm of rain for the same period, the highest in the state, followed by 71 mm in parts of Nagarkurnool district, 61 mm in Ranga Reddy district, and 59.5 mm in Medchal-Malkajgiri district. The TS Southern Power Distribution Corporation Limited has been posting minute to minute updates on its Twitter page @TsspdclCorporate on power outages in several parts of the city. Around 50 such power outages were reported till 7 pm in the city.

On Monday, Telangana state received an average rainfall of 13.4 mm against the season normal fo 3.7 mm, with heavy rainfall ranging between 64.5 mm and 115.5 mm being reported from Medak, Kamareddy, Jag-tial, Siddipet, Sangareddy and Jogulamba-Gadwal districts. The rest of the state, with the exception of Hyderabad, Yadadri-Bhongir and Nalgonda districts, received moderate rain till 5 pm ranging between 15.5 mm and 64.4 mm.



**NATION | 4**  
**BJP's Phase-II picks in Bihar upper castes**



**WORLD | 5**  
**China to test 9 mn in 5 days for Covid**

**SPORTS | 8**  
**Los Angeles Lakers win NBA title**



## Central govt staff offered LTC sop, festival advance

**MADHUSUDAN SAHOO**  
NEW DELHI, OCT 12

The Centre on Monday announced a slew of booster shots for both government employees and states to prop up demand, in terms of consumer spending and capital expenditure. It said the demand boost is estimated to be a total of ₹73,000 crore and that it should be spent till March 31, 2021. The Centre expects the demand to go up by ₹1 lakh crore if the states join the exercise.

The two schemes — LTC Cash Voucher Scheme and Special Festival Advance Scheme — are expected to benefit Central government staff. Under the LTC Cash

### CONSENSUS ELUDES GST COUNCIL AGAIN

**New Delhi:** The stalemate over compensating states for the shortfall in GST collections continued on Monday.

■ **Report on Page 7**

Voucher scheme, government employees can opt to receive cash amounts for leave encashment plus three times the ticket fare, to buy items which attract GST of 12 per cent or more on only digital transactions, and a GST invoice will have to be produced from the vendors.

Under the Special Festival Advance

scheme, the money will be given to employees as a prepaid RuPay card. The amount granted is ₹10,000 crore.

For the states, the Centre will offer interest-free 50-year loans to the tune of ₹12,000 crore. It will consist of three components. The first part is ₹2,500 crore for the Northeast (₹1,600 crore), and ₹9,000 crore for Uttarakhand and HP. The second part involves ₹7,500 crore for other states in proportion to their share in the Finance Commission’s devolution. The last part is ₹2,000 crore for states that meet at least three out of four reforms mentioned under the Atmanirbhar fiscal deficit package.

### In protest



A protest organised by the Thiruvananthapuram Forane and Archeparchy of Changnacherry in front of the accountant generals office in the city against the arrest of 83-year-old activist Stan Swami by the NIA in the Bhima Koregaon case, in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday.

— PTI

## Telangana faces heavy borrowing, says Harish

**S.A. ISHAQUI | DC**  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

Finance minister T. Harish Rao took serious exception to the Centre’s reluctance at the GST Council’s meeting in paying GST compensation to the states.

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced at the 42nd meeting on Monday that the Centre cannot make up the GST shortfall to states as it will lead to an increase in borrowing costs. “There is no consensus,” she announced.

According to Harish Rao, the Centre has to pay ₹1.83 lakh crore as GST compensation to states under various heads, but it has agreed to pay only ₹1.10 lakh crore.

With the stand of the Centre at the GST

Council, the government will now have to borrow its quantum of compensation crore to make up for the shortfall.

Harish Rao said that during the meeting the state government had reiterated its stand that the Centre has to pay the GST shortfall to state governments by borrowing from banks. The minister said that the GST Council had not taken into consideration the demand of the Telangana state government that population and capital expenditure of states be taken into account while announcing the package of GST compensation to states.

He pointed out that the 15th Finance Commission had reduced Telangana state’s share in devolution grant from 2.43 to 2.13 per cent. To fill the gap, the Finance

Commission had recommended that the Centre give ₹723 crore to the state as a one-time grant.

Though the GST Council claimed to have announced a special package based on the Finance Commission formula, it did not consider the recommendation of giving a one-time grant to Telangana state.

Harish Rao said that this decision of the GST council will put the developed states including Telangana, Maha-rashtra and Karnataka to a huge loss. During the meeting Harish Rao demanded that the GST Council provide relief immediately after which efforts to evolve a consensus can be made. During the earlier meeting of the GST Council the Centre had given two options to the state governments.

### NEET ASPIRANTS TO GET SECOND CHANCE IN OCT

**New Delhi, Oct. 12:** The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the National Testing Agency to conduct second round of the NEET (UG) for the Covid-19 affected students and those in containment zones on October 14.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S.A. Bobde passed the order after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta sought the top court’s nod in the issue citing special circumstances due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

“In view of the circumstances, we grant permission to the NTA to conduct a second part of the NEET (UG) 2019 for the Covid affected students and those in containment zones on October 14, 2020,” it said.

The bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, said the result may be declared on October 16, 2020. The crucial National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), which is a pen and paper based test unlike engineering entrance exam JEE, was held on September 13 after being deferred twice in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. The exam was originally scheduled for May 3, but was pushed to July 26, and then to September 13.

The apex court had earlier dismissed a plea seeking postponement of JEE (Main) April 2020.

— PTI

## 3 teachers booked as 13 students join militant ranks

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 12

Three teachers of a private school in Jammu and Kashmir’s southern Shopian district have been booked under stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) after the discovery that 13 of its students joined militants’ ranks over a period of time.

One of them is Sajjad Bhat, an accused in the February 2019 bombing of a convoy of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in neighbouring Pulwama in which 40 jawans were killed and eight others wounded.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range), Vijay Kumar, told reporters here that during the investigation by it and other security and law enforcing agencies it was found that 13 of the alumni of Siraj-ul-Uloom schools situated in Shopian’s Imam Sahib area and affiliated with Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), had joined various militant outfits. The three teachers who have been detained under the PSA are Abdul Ahad Bhat, Rouf Bhat and Mohammad Yusuf Wani, he said.

However, the sources said that the school is run by a local trust called Siraj-ul-Uloom Educational Trust which incidentally

is, at present, being headed by a JI member Muhammad Yusuf Mantu.

A JI official claimed that the school has nothing to do with the organisation or its subsidiary Falah-e-Aam Trust which runs a chain of schools across J&K.

Under the PSA, introduced in J&K in 1978 initially to deal with timber smuggling but later used by successive governments often against their political opponents, a person can be detained for a period of six months to two years without the authorities seeking a formal trial.

The Centre had in February 2019 through a notification declared JI, Jammu and Kashmir as “unlawful association” for five years under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Also, the rightwing party’s almost entire leadership and hundreds of members were arrested and subsequently many of them booked under the PSA. The police sources said that the students enrolled at the school were mainly from Kulgam, Pulwama and Anantnag districts of Kashmir Valley which with Shopian have been the hotbed of insurgency over a period of time and witnessed spurt in recruitment of local youths by various militant outfits

after the killing of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen’s internet savvy commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani in July 2016.

The sources said that the schools had outstation students from Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Telangana, but their number dropped to almost nil after the Centre stripped J&K of its special status and split it up into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

IG Kumar said, “The school’s name is Siraj-ul-Uloom, Imam Sahib. It is not that this school has not been under observation. We have already booked three teachers of the school under the PSA.”

He added that five to six other teachers of the school were under surveillance of the police under Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and that the police are taking action against individuals and “if need arises, we will take action against the school as well.”

The Section 107 of the CrPC deals with any likely breach of peace or public tranquility.

The other alumni of the school who, according to the police, joined militants’ ranks included Zubair Nengroo, a commander of the proscribed Al-Badr outfit killed in a clash with security forces in August.

## Kavitha wins MLC poll with 89% vote

### Opposition party candidates lose deposit

**NARENDER PULLOOR | DC**  
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 12

TRS candidate K. Kavitha won the MLC byelection from the Nizamabad local authorities’ constituency with a thumping 728-vote majority.

Of the 823 polled votes, Kavitha secured 88.45 per cent while BJP nominee Pothankar Laxminarayana polled 56 votes and Congress candidate B. Subhash Reddy a mere 29. Both of them lost their deposits.

Although the TRS has 504 votes in the constituency, Kavitha polled more votes because the Congress and BJP voters changed their loyalties, while MIM’s 28 and 66 independents supported her. TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and party working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao had directed MLAs and MLCs of undivided Niza-mabad district to ensure victory of the party nominee.

The byelection was necessitated as sitting TRS MLC R. Bhupathi Reddy had switched over



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao with daughter K. Kavitha who won the MLC bypoll from Nizamabad.

to Congress resulting in his disqualification.

Nizamabad collector and election returning officer C. Narayana Reddy handed over certificate to Kavitha as MLC. Later, speaking to newsmen, Kavitha thanked the Chief Minister for giving her an

opportunity to serve the people of the district. She also expressed her gratitude to the voters.

Minister V. Prashanth Reddy said that people of Nizamabad district had ‘realized’ that they were cheated by BJP in the last Parliament elections.

### BORDER ROW CREATED ON MISSION MODE, SAYS RAJNATH

**DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs**  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

After Pakistan, China is also creating a dispute at the border with India as if it was part of a “mission”, defence minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday, as Indian and Chinese troops remain locked in a standoff in eastern Ladakh for over five months.

The defence minister, speaking at an online event after inaugurating 44 bridges, said India is not only facing the situations along the frontiers resolutely, but it is also bringing in major development including in border areas. “You are well aware of the conditions created along our northern and eastern borders. First it was Pakistan, and now also by China, as if a border dispute is being created under a mission. We have a border of about 7,000 km with these countries where the tension continues,” Singh said.

The defence minister on Monday virtually inaugurated 44 major permanent bridges in the border areas including 10 strategic bridges in J&K and eight in Ladakh. These bridges constructed by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) are spread in seven states and Union Territories including Himachal Pradesh (2), Punjab (4), Uttarakhand (8), Arunachal Pradesh (8) and Sikkim (4). These bridges are of strategic importance and provide connectivity to remote areas. The BRO is also working to complete 45 more bridges in Ladakh in next two years.

These are part of Modi government’s effort to speed up infrastructure development in border areas for rapid movement of forces and faster supply of ammunition to forward areas. A majority of these bridges are expected to significantly improve movement of troops in areas along the border with China.

## LeT’s Pak commander, aide killed in encounter

**YUSUF JAMEEL | DC**  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 12

A Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) commander from Pakistan and his local associate were gunned down by the security forces in a fire fight that broke out early Monday in Srinagar’s Barzulla area.

A private house where the duo had been holed up following the security forces launched a cordon-and-search operation in the area was destroyed as it caught fire in the latter’s

final assault. J&K’s Director General of Police Dilbag Singh claimed at a hurriedly called press conference that the slain Pakistan militant commander Saifullah was involved in a series of attacks on security forces including the ambushes that took place in and outside Srinagar past fortnight, leaving several security forces personnel dead and injured.

The other militant killed in the encounter has been identified as Irshad Ahmed

Dar alias Abu Usama, a resident of southern Pulwama district, “who was active since May 2019 and involved in several civilian killings and attacks on the J&K police and central security forces.”

The police chief said that, so far, this year the security forces have conducted 75 counter-insurgency operations across J&K during which as many as 180 militants including several top commanders of various outfits were killed.



## IN BRIEF

## 2020 RULE FOR PENDING LRS APPLICATIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

The government on Monday announced that all pending applications under the LRS 2015 would be considered and disposed of as per new LRS 2020 rules.

Municipal administration and urban Development principal secretary Arvind Kumar issued a circular in this regard stating that a number of applications received under LRS Scheme 2015 were still pending for various reasons such as want of no-objection certificate from revenue and irrigation authorities with regard to title aspects, payment of balance of LRS charges, among others.

He instructed the authorities concerned in the circular that no fresh application needs to be insisted from the old LRS applicants. The officials were directed to dispose of all pending applications by December 31.

## IIT-H JOINS COMPUTING MISSION

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

The Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H), will collaborate with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) in setting up a state-of-the-art computing facility as part of the national supercomputing mission, the IIT-H announced on Monday.

A memorandum of understanding was signed by IIT-H and C-DAC in the presence of the Union minister of state for education, communications, electronics and IT, Sanjay Dhotre who said that the new facility "is a great step in the direction of 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and the making of Atmanibhar Bharat.

Highlighting the importance of this collaboration, Prof. B.S. Murty, Director, IIT-H, said, "IIT-H is a pioneer in the field of artificial intelligence. With a strong base of close to 25 faculty in the department of AI, IIT-H is looking forward to such opportunities to come up with many more innovations and research achievements."

The high-powered computing facility will also assist IIT-H's research into climate change, smart mobility, cyber physical systems and health care.

## DACOIT GANG FROM NEPAL ARRESTED

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

The Cyberabad police on Monday stated that they had busted a notorious inter-state gang of dacoits from Nepal who are living in different Indian states. The identification and arrest of three of them was a joint exercise involving police officials from Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand and Seema Suraksha Bal, Cyberabad commissioner of police V.C. Sajjanar told reporters.

The police, who recovered property worth ₹20 lakh from them, are on the lookout for six other gang members.

Activities of the gang came to light when police began investigating a complaint from one G. Sailaja Reddy, who lives in the Raidurgam police station limits. She said that a cook who worked at her house, Janki, had served drinks to the family after mixing sleep-inducing drugs in it. Sailaja Reddy had a sip of the green tea, it tasted different and she did not take a second sip.

As soon as everyone fell asleep, Janki informed gang leader Netra Bahadur Shahi. He came along with other members of the gang. They beat Sailaja who was awake and threatened to kill her grandchild if she raised an alarm. She was blindfolded and the gang robbed the house of cash and gold ornaments.

After managing to free herself, Sailaja alerted the next door watchman, who called her nephew Suryanarayana Reddy.

The police said that Netra Shahi would befriend others from Nepal working in various homes and then convince them to join him in planning robberies. Once a plan was in place, he would contact his accomplices in Mumbai, Delhi, Udaipur and Surat and commit the offence with the 'insider' member providing access to the targeted house.

Netra, Prakash Shahi, and Sita Lawar have been arrested, the police said.

## People begin ignoring masks; it's dangerous, warn experts

Study finds people feel Covid-19 threat has gone, 50% stop wearing masks

KANIZA GARARI | DC  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

A 50 per cent violation is being observed in the wearing of masks not only in India but also in some southeast Asian countries as unlocking processes are making people reckless and irresponsible.

While strict regulations have been put up by business, commercial and government establishments, there are several violations. It is most visible in public places like markets, shopping hubs and tourist destinations.

With cases declining and unlocking processes unfolding, the mistaken belief that the SARS-CoV-2 threat has reduced is afoot and people are not as alert as they were before.

According to the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, a research institute, there was 70 per cent compliance in July and August. This, it is believed, is one of the main reasons for a lower mortality rate in those months in India.

Studies have shown that use of masks reduces the transmission of the virus by 40 per cent. Countries which have the maximum masked population have lower death rates. Due to this reason, the programme of universal mask-wearing must be strictly adhered to and people must not let their guard down.

Dr J. Anish Anand, internal medicine consultant at Apollo Hospitals, explained, "There is a major need to educate people to continue with the use of masks and not give it up. It is important as the alertness and guard must not be let down. Those who have problems wearing tight-fitting masks must opt for surgical masks."

People who are working in the open are complaining of difficulty in wearing masks all the time. They find that it is suffocating them and they are not able to breathe properly.

At the same time, those who travel long distances for outdoor jobs are also facing the same problem.

Heart patients, diabetics and senior citizens have difficulty wearing masks for a long time when outside and are complaining of uneasiness. Experts advise that they must opt for masks with less discomfort, like cotton and linen ones.

Wearing masks is important as social distancing norms in public places are difficult to maintain. It has been noted in large weekly vegetable markets, commercial hubs and public transport systems, this is posing a major challenge.

Due to the economic cri-



A large number of patients turn up at the out-patient ward of Osmania General Hospital, where services resumed on Monday after a six-month lockdown. Many of them were not wearing masks. — P. SURENDRA

## MASKING ISSUES

● Do a torch light test on the masks - the less light that passes through the masks the more effective it is.

● Those who find tight-fitting masks suffocating can opt for double-layered cotton or linen masks.

● Cotton masks have 69 per cent effectiveness and linen 60 per cent.

● Always wear a mask when outside or when meeting people.

● Maintain physical distance as far as possible.



## FEWER TESTS, FEWER COVID CASES FOUND; RECOVERIES AT 1.87 LAKH

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

Sunday saw 1,021 new Covid-19 cases and six deaths in the state, according to the health department bulletin issued on Monday. There are 1,87,342 total recoveries. Of the 24,514 active cases, 20,036 people undergoing treatment at home, the bulletin said. Daily testing came down on Sunday to 30,210 and that is being attributed to fewer reported cases. With fewer patients coming forward on Sunday, testing has

decreased said the health department.

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area recorded 228 new cases, Medchal Malkajigiri, 84 and Ranga Reddy, 68. The other districts too had very little testing due to which the numbers are low.

Government officials state that the disease is on a decline but the guard must not be let down.

It is very important to not travel unnecessarily and senior citizens and children must continue to exercise caution.

sis, movement of people is expected and that will lead to increased travel. Dr K.K. Aggarwal, president of the Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania, said, "Masks prevent the transmission of the virus. This has been very clearly established. It is also clear that the virus transmits in 15 minutes. Hence protection is important and people must follow it."

Use of a face shield is also recommended for those who have the habit of pulling the masks down

during conversations with others.

Whenever in contact with people, the use of masks must be proper as any lapse is a risk. With restaurants and bars opening up, the need is felt more as in southeast Asian countries like Hong Kong, where a cluster of new Covid-19 cases emerged from bars. For this reason, alertness in the public must be maintained at all times and letting down of the guard would mean emergence of new cases.

## HC questions TS on Covid deaths

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

Expressing doubt over declaration of daily deaths due to Covid-19 in TS, with the figure hovering around 10 even though the number of positive cases has spiralled, the Telangana High Court observed: "It is like someone issuing a stay on Lord Yama to keep the number of dead only around 10."

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayen Reddy was adjudicating a batch of 25 public interest litigations filed by various petitioners alleging laxity of state government in dealing with the situation arising out of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The bench termed the 520-page report submitted by the government on its endeavour to bring down Covid-19 cases as "vague." It directed Advocate General B.S. Prasad and Dr G. Srinivas Rao, Director, Public Health and Family Welfare, to file a better informative report by November 16.

Chief Justice Chauhan observed, "This court cannot but emphasise that both the Telangana state and the nation continue to wage war on Covid-19, despite the fact of euphoria that the pandemic will come down. But going by the fact that Delhi and Kerala have witnessed the second wave of

● THE HIGH COURT termed the 520-page report submitted by the government on its effort to contain Covid-19 cases as "vague".

Coronavirus, there is a grave possibility of Coronavirus hitting Telangana state (again), going by the fact that people will congregate during ensuing festivals such as Bathukamma, Dasara and Diwali."

The court sought explanation of rationale behind the decision diverting employees of sanitary and health departments for taking up data entry work for Dharani portal. It expressed deep concern over only around 1 lakh population being tested for Coronavirus when the state's population is 3.7 crore, which comes to around just 0.3 per cent.

The bench directed the state government to implement its undertaking with regard to establishment of live dashboards at least in Gandhi Hospital and Government Chest hospital, and explore the possibility of erecting live dashboards at other hospitals, which are designated as Covid-19 hospitals in Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts.

The High Court wanted the state government to increase the number of mobile testing vans for the benefit of homeless and the destitute, as their population is more.

## Covid-19 impact sees a decline in corneal donation

KANIZA GARARI | DC  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

Corneal donations have come down to a dismal 10 per cent due to Covid-19. Corneal tissue donation was one of the most successful programmes of the government. The network of hospitals, which carried out counselling and donation of corneal tissues, was widespread.

Due to this, there were 60,000 donations in India during 2019. Before that, these donations ranged from 30,000 to 40,000.

Corneal tissue transplants had seen a major rise since a decade, with people volunteering for donations. The number of donations that rose slowly peaked last year, which depicted the success of the programme.

But the spread of SARS CoV-2 virus with lockdown in March has led to a drastic decline in these donations.

With superspecialty hospitals becoming Covid-19 treating hospitals, patients are not approaching these hospitals for other ailments. Small and middle-level hospitals got shut down and post unlocking, they have been facing operational issues. Patients are scared of visiting hospitals for fear of contracting the virus. Grief counsellors, paramedical staff and other human resources in hospitals are not available for facilitating donations.

Dr T.P. Das, senior ophthalmologist at LV Prasad

Eye Hospital, says, "With SARS CoV-2 affecting eyes and also being a mode of transmission, there is social stigma attached to eye donation. This is proving to be one of the biggest hurdles to this programme."

In pre-Covid times it was noted that 50 per cent of the corneas collected were not fit for transplant. The requirement in India is two lakh corneas every year.

There are more than 600 eye banks in India. The need for corneal tissues is high, as there are 12 lakh corneal blind in the country. Further, 30,000 new cases get added every year. With Covid-19 impacting the programme, the gap is going to widen, say experts, pointing out that the disease burden is going to see a drastic rise.

Dr Santosh Kumar Kralei, public health specialist, said, "Corneal donations do not require protocols like blood donation. A donor's blood need not match the recipient's blood. This means everyone can be an eye donor. The success rate in restoring vision by corneal transplant is 95 per cent."

There is urgent need to bring cornea donation programme back on track, at least in those hospitals, which are non-Covid. Restoring confidence back into the healthcare infrastructure is important, so that people can come forward for treatment of other ailments apart from Covid-19.

## Another Cong leader joins TRS

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC  
HYDERABAD, OCT. 12

In another shock to the Congress, M. Nageswar Reddy, who contested the 2018 Assembly election on party ticket from Dubbaka, joined the TRS in the presence of finance minister T. Harish Rao at Telangana Bhavan on Monday.

The minister, speaking to the media, said that the result of the Huzurnagar bypoll result — where the TRS won — will be repeated in the Dubbaka election. He said the Congress and the BJP will lose their deposit.

Harish Rao said that the Congress and BJP candidates lost their deposits in the Nizamabad MLC byelection, the results of

which were announced on Monday. He said the situation would repeat in Dubbaka. The leaders of both the national parties only have a presence on social media and not among the people, he said. He said that the Congress leaders need to review why their leaders were leaving the party, before making allegations against other parties.

Harish Rao also condemned CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's statement that the Congress would stop the Pharma City. He said that Congress did not even give water to the people during its party government.

He alleged that the Opposition leaders had tried to stop the Kaleshwaram project.

## COTTON PURCHASING FROM OCT. 19: MIN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
ADILABAD, OCT. 12

Minister for forest Allola Indrakaran Reddy held a meeting on Monday to know the arrangements made for the purchase of cotton in Adilabad district.

He said that the state government would begin purchasing cotton from October 19.

The minister asked the concerned officials to encourage farmers to bring their cotton produce to the market yards

after drying them. He said, "Officials must give incentives to cotton produce having below 8 per cent moisture content."

He said, "Due to the fog and weather this season, I am aware that it will be difficult to have cotton produce with less moisture content."

I will raise the issue with the Chief Minister and the agriculture minister, to see what steps we can take to purchase cotton having more than 12 per cent moisture content."

## Travel or splurge: How Centre's LTC sop pans out FM says consumer demand must be boosted to grow

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, OCT. 12

In order to induce demand during the festive season, the government has announced a Leave Travel Concession scheme.

Central government, PSU and PSB employees usually get LTC in a block of four years twice — one to a domestic destination and home town or twice to home town. This entitles them for air or rail fare and leave encashment of 10 days.

Employees opting for the festive LTC will receive the travel fare they are eligible for under the three slabs. A person eligible for business class air fare will get ₹36,000 per person for a

## FROM PAGE 1

"The proposals are designed to stimulate demand by frontloading/advancing some of the expenditure with some offsetting changes. Others are directly linked to an increase in GDP," finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the media on Monday.

round trip, ₹20,000 for a person entitled for business class and ₹6,000 for those entitled for rail fare.

If a person with eligibility of economy class is

"Consumers' demand needs to be boosted. We estimate the measures announced today for consumer spending and capital expenditure will boost demand by ₹73,000 crore, to be spent by March 31, 2021. Given that private LTC tax benefit would be at least ₹28,000 crore, we estimate that the total

demand boost due to today's measures to be more than ₹1 lakh crore," she said, adding that if the demand goes up based on the stimulus measures announced, it will have an impact on those people who have been affected by Covid-19.

Besides, an additional budget of ₹25,000 crore (in addition to ₹4.13 lakh

that he was driving his car in a very rash manner. A video grab from a CCTV camera shows the car arriving at the junction at very high speed and weaving to a side to avoid slamming into a truck and then hitting Nagaraju's bike. The impact was such that the scooter caught fire.

Nagaraju and Srilatha

residents of Manneguda

in Ranga Reddy district, were on their way to the temple as Monday was an auspicious day. Though officials did not confirm, it was reported that the couple was on their way to the temple to get married. The police said Srilatha was a divorcee and was with Nagaraju for some time with her children.

encashment for 10 days is ₹50,000, she will have to spend a total of ₹2,90,000 on the festive purchase.

She will have to pay GST of 12 per cent or above on

spending this amount. At 12 per cent, she will have to make an additional payment of ₹34,800. He will get 100 per cent of the leave encashment and

of them involve advancing of expenditure, with offsetting changes later — others are directly linked to increasing GDP."

"At least 50 per cent of the loan to states will be granted initially and the balance will be allotted after use of the first instalment. It may be noted that the unutilised funds may be reallocated," she added.

50 per cent of the travel fare as advance and the remaining amount after producing the purchase bill within March 31, 2021.



## SHORT TAKES

ONE KILLED, 3 HURT  
AS LORRY HITS  
BIKE AND AUTODC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, OCT. 12

A speeding lorry created havoc on the Warangal-Khammam road in Warangal Rural district on Monday.

The speeding lorry collided with an auto and a motorcycle at the Katriyala village in Wardhannapet mandal.

One person Sriramula Nagraj, 32, who was riding the bike died on the spot and three others travelling in an autorickshaw were injured.

The biker was reportedly not wearing a helmet which resulted in him severely injuring his head after falling from the bike and lead to his death.

Locals rushed the injured to the MGM Hospital for treatment. Police arrived at the scene and registered a case against the lorry driver.

COMPLETE RVs  
BEFORE DASARA,  
SAYS COLLECTORDC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, OCT. 12

District collector R.V. Karnan has directed all officials to complete the construction of the Rythu Vedikas in all clusters before Dasara festival.

Every completed Rythu Vedika should have chairs, power connection and other facilities; and should have a uniform look.

In the case of scarcity of funds, officials can avail funds from the general fund on a reimbursement basis.

"There is no compromise on quality of the construction and stern action will be taken against concerned officials if any defects are found", he said.

TS PLASMA  
DONORS GROUP  
NOW IN WARANGALDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, OCT. 12

The services of the Telangana Plasma Donors Association have been extended to Warangal, keeping in mind the demand for plasma in Warangal city, its president Guduru Narayana Reddy said while addressing the media.

He informed that E.V.Srinivas Rao, has been appointed as the vice president of the TPDA and he would be in charge of the TPDA operations in Warangal and Hanamkonda. Mr Srinivas Rao will coordinate with the patients who require plasma and with the hospitals.

"As per the World Health Organisation, the spread of the Coronavirus will continue for a few more months. No dependable medicine is available to treat the patients. Plasma has been proved to be one of the best treatment methods to treat the patients. We have been planning to extend the TPDA services in Khammam and Karimnagar soon. Through the TPDA, so far, we have provided plasma to 1,000 patients who contracted Covid-19," he said.

● **PLASMA HAS** been proved to be one of the best methods to treat patients. TPDA services will be extended in Khammam and Karimnagar soon.



Minister V. Prashanth Reddy dances along with party workers in front of K. Kavitha's office in Nizamabad on Monday. — DECCAN CHRONICLE

Kavitha likely to take  
oath on October 14

Visits Neelakanteshwara temple, performed special pujas

NARENDER  
PULLOOR | DC  
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 12

Newly elected MLC K. Kavitha is likely to take her oath on October 14. Immediately after the byelection results on Monday, Kavitha along with her family members visited the Neelakanteshwara temple in Nizamabad and performed special pujas.

Kavitha along with minister V. Prashanth Reddy, MP B.B. Patil, Government Whip Gampa Govardhan, legislators Bajireddy Govardhan, A.Jeevan Reddy, Shakil Amer, J. Surender, Hanmanth Shinde of the undivided Nizamabad district and MLC D. Rajeshwar Rao, met Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Reddy. Kavitha also met Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy at his residence in Hyderabad.

On the other hand, TRS activists celebrated the victory of Kavitha in the

Kavitha should be given  
cabinet post, says MLAPULI SHARATH  
KUMAR | DC  
JAGTIAL, OCT. 12

Member of Legislative Assembly, Jagtial constituency, Dr. Sanjay Kumar congratulated the public representatives of the old Nizamabad district for securing a huge majority and registering landslide victory for Kalvakuntla Kavitha in the Nizamabad MLC elections on Monday.

In a press meet held at the MLA camp office in Jagtial town, Mr Sanjay Kumar said that the victory of the TRS candidate Ms Kavitha has once again ensured that the

MLC byelections. They fired crackers and danced to drumbeats. Minister Prashanth



Dr. Sanjay Kumar, MLA Jagtial constituency

people are with the ruling party. The victory of the TRS in the Nizamabad MLC elections is a big slap to the national parties, the Congress and the BJP.

Pointing to Mr D. Aravind, the Nizamabad MP of the BJP, Mr Sanjay Kumar said that people gave a fitting reply to the

leaders who won in the previous elections. The people of Jagtial district will never forget the services rendered by Ms Kavitha during her tenure as an MP. She fought for the rights of Telangana as a Parliamentarian. Recognising her services, Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao must allot newly elected MLC Ms Kavitha, a cabinet post so that she can render services to the state, he said.

The zilla parishad chairperson D. Vasantha, municipal chairperson B. Shrivani, TRS town president Gattu Satish and ZPTC Mahesh along with other were present.

Reddy danced in front of Kavitha's office at Kanteshwar Housing Board Colony.

TRS leaders set up flexi boards in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts congratulating her.

## Kova Laxmi helps injured couple

PILLALAMARRI  
SRINIVAS | DC  
KUMARAMBHEEM  
ASIFABAD, OCT. 12

The Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) women leaders are promoting Bathukamma saris, by wearing them during the distribution programmes in their respective areas in old Adilabad district.

Asifabad ZP chairperson Kova Laxmi was travelling to Jainoor district to distribute Bathukamma saris. On the way, she came across a road accident at Choupanguda in Kerameri mandal in the Kumarambheem Asifabad district.

A couple with their infant had met with an accident. The infant who narrowly escaped was lying on the

side of the road crying, as her parents struggled to get up. Kova Laxmi, herself a mother of three, stopped her vehicle, picked up the infant and fed water. She also cleaned the infant's running nose with a handkerchief.

She called an auto and sent the injured couple and the infant with a few party persons to the government hospital in Asifabad.

She called asked the doctors and asked them to treat the couple immediately.

Kova Laxmi wearing a Bathukamma sari later proceeded to Jainoor, to attend the sari distribution programme and played Bathukamma with the womenfolk there.



Kova Laxmi in a Bathukamma sari after comforting the infant hands her over to her parents who struggle to get up who after meeting with an accident on October 11.

## PLANTATION | DRIVE

Green cover to increase if Haritha Haram continued for 5 more yrs

## Geo-tagging of saplings sees higher survival

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, OCT. 12

The government has completed geo-tagging of 72,92,218 saplings, and efforts are being made to geo-tag the remaining saplings planted during the Haritha Haram programme. The government set a target of planting 1,04,98,000 saplings. So far, it has planted 1,04,96,192 saplings, which is 99.98 per cent.

Geo-tagging was necessary, as nearly 60 per cent of the saplings planted in the first, second and third phases had either dried up as they were not watered, or got eaten by goats and sheep. Another mistake the government made was they did not entrust the job of protecting the planted saplings to any agency be it the gram panchayat or the forest department. However, in the sixth

● **THE GOVERNMENT** set a target of planting 1,04,98,000 saplings. So far, it has planted 1,04,96,192 saplings, which is 99.98 per cent. The forest, DRDA and the excise departments helped the programme meet its targets.

phase, the government entrusted the responsibility of protecting the saplings to the villages sarpanches, locals, secretaries and others.

A difference was seen in the Haritha Haram programme as the survival rate of the saplings planted in forest areas, particularly on barren lands, increased.

The forest department, the DRDA and the excise departments planted saplings more than the given targets, helping the

programme meet its targets.

The forest officials planted 16.53 lakh saplings against a target of 15 lakh, the DRDA, 71 lakh against a target of 60 lakh and the excise department 1,00,050 saplings against a target of 1 lakh saplings.

If the Haritha Haram programme continues for another five years, the green cover in the state will increase drastically.

Meanwhile, the education department is lagging as it was able to plant only 5,017 saplings against a target of 1 lakh saplings. The reason is the closure of schools due to Covid-19.

Even the horticulture department, urban bodies and the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) have been unable to meet the targets. The municipalities planted 8.94 lakh saplings against 19.98 lakh target.



A sapling being planted in a government office in Kallur as part of Haritha Haram programme. — DC

Police lathi charge ABVP  
activists in WarangalANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC  
WARANGAL, OCT. 12

Tension prevailed at the camp office of government chief whip D. Vinay Bhaskar when police lathi charged ABVP activists who tried to lay siege at the chief whip's residence demanding reservations in education and employment for economically weaker sections (EWS).

ABVP state secretary Ambala Kiran claimed that police behaved arrogantly when they tried to submit a memorandum to the chief whip in this regard.

"Police started beating us even though we were peaceful," Kiran maintained. He demanded that police apologise for calling students as naxalites.

The ABVP leader said, "Even though the central government has brought in a legislation allowing 10 per cent reservations for economically weaker sections in 2019, Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao has not implemented them yet."

He accused the state government of trying to stifle the voice of the students using police force.

However, ABVP will continue its fight against the government until reservations for EWS students are implemented.

Kiran demanded that action be taken against Subedari inspector Ajay for behaving ruthlessly with protesting students.

ABVP leaders Ganesh, Balaraju, Siva Vamshi, Srihari, Raj Kumar, Likhith and Srinivas were among others present.



A ABVP activist being dragged away by the police.

Chief whip tests  
positive for CovidDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, OCT. 12

Government Chief Whip Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar has tested positive for the Coronavirus here on Monday. He had been taking part in several state government activities in the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) limits since the past few days.

After developing symptoms of the virus on Monday, he underwent a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) and the result was returned positive.

On the suggestion of doctors, he isolated himself at home and asked officials and activists who had been in proximity to him to get tested for Covid-19.

Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar along with minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao distributed the Bathukamma saris to women at Waddepally park under

● **HE HAD** been taking part in several state government activities in the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation limits since the past few days.

● **HE ISOLATED** himself at home and asked officials and activists who had been in proximity to him to get tested for Covid-19.

the 50th division in the city on Sunday.

He also took part in the preparatory meet of MLC polls for Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates constituency meeting with public representatives on Sunday.

As a result of the development all those in close contact with Vinay Bhaskar are undergoing Coronavirus tests.

MULUGU ON HIGH  
ALERT AS TIGER  
ON THE PROWLDC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, OCT. 12

The Mulugu forest department has sounded a high alert around the Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary area and has put its entire staff on vigil following the news that a tiger is on the prowl for the last four days.

The residents of Kannaigudem had alerted the forest officials about the movement of a tiger in their region. The Mulugu District Forest Officer (DFO) Pradeep Kumar Shetty on Monday said that the forest officials are on the alert to find the whereabouts of the tiger.

He told the locals not to venture into the forest and said that they are yet to ascertain the movements of the tiger.

Meanwhile, the district officials, are slated to attend a high-level meeting of the forest department in Hyderabad later this week. They are likely to propose that the region be declared, as a tiger zone. In over a decade, this is the second time; the region has witnessed the movement of a tiger.

On 30 August, forest officials spotted pugmarks of a tigress in the Nimmaguda forest in the Pegadapally Range under the Mahadevpur Division in the Jayashankar Bhupalpally district.

Min: All foodgrains should  
be procured without issuesDC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, OCT. 12

A district-level preparatory meeting held on Monday discussed the procurement of foodgrains produced in this Kharif season. Minister for Backward Class, food and civil supplies, Gangula Kamalakara told officials of the concerned department to purchase the foodgrains without creating problems to the farmers.

Due to an increase in the are of the cultivation, this Kharif season will likely have a higher yield. Officials were told to make necessary arrangements in advance, by assessing the latest situation with the procurement process done in the past.

Mr Kamalakara said that the situation before the formation of Telangana, and after, is different. In the united Andhra Pradesh, 20 lakh metric tonnes of grains was pro-

● **IN THE** previous Kharif season, 1.96 lakh acres of land was under cultivation, whereas this Kharif season, the area of cultivation increased to 2.52 lakh acres.

cured, while in Telangana state 1 crore metric tonnes of grains was procured.

He said, "Farmers who faced a lot of problems without any power supply, water and investment are now enjoying the results with the completion of Kaleshwaram project. The area under cultivation has increased enormously as even barren lands came under cultivation."

The Telangana state will become the rice bowl of the country as it is procuring 54 per cent of grains from the farmers. In the previous Kharif season, 1.96 lakh acres of land was under cul-

tivation, whereas this Kharif season, the area of cultivation increased to 2.52 lakh acres.

As there is a possibility of more yield this Kharif season, officials should be alert and must increase the milling capacity and provide transport facility. It is the minimum responsibility of the officials to procure the grains from the farmers without causing any hurdles to them and must deposit the amount into the bank account of the respective farmers, he said.

District collector K. Shashanka, MLA S. Ravi Shankar, TESCOB chairman K. Ravinder Rao, ZP chairperson K. Vijaya, additional collector Shyam Prasad Lal, trainee collector Ankitha, agriculture officer Sridhar, deputy director of marketing department Padmavathi, district supply officer Srimala were present.



SHORT TAKES

BJD NAMES CANDIDATES FOR BYPOLLS

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 12

Odisha's ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Monday declared its candidates for the forthcoming by-elections to Balasore Sadar and Tirtol assembly seats.

Bijay Sankar Das, son of former BJD MLA Bishnu Das, will contest from Tirtol, while Swarup Kumar Das was declared as the party's nominee for Balasore Sadar.

On Sunday, the BJP had declared its candidates for the two constituencies.

Manas Dutta, son of deceased BJP MLA Madan Mohan Dutta will contest from Balasore Sadar while Rajkishore Behera was declared as party candidate for Tirtol.

Congress is yet to announce their candidates. However, party MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati dropped hints that the party would announce its candidates within a day or two.

The by-polls to both the seats have been necessitated by the demise of sitting BJP MLA Madan Mohan Dutta (Balasore) and sitting BJD legislator Bishnu Das (Tirtol). Polls will take place on November 3 and results will be announced November 10.

BUXAR WOMAN GANG-RAPED, MINOR SON KILLED

**Buxar, Oct. 12:** Seven persons allegedly raped a 30-year-old woman after killing her five-year-old son in a village in Bihar's Buxar district, police said on Monday.

One person has been arrested in connection with the incident, while search is on to nab the others, they said.

On Saturday, the accused took the woman to a jungle when she had come to Chaigain village to deposit money at a bank along with her son, raped her and killed the child, her father said in the FIR lodged with Murar Police Station.

The men then threw the woman and her son in a canal after tying them with a rope, according to the police complaint.

The two were taken to Chaigain Primary Health Centre, where doctors declared the child brought-dead and referred the woman to Sadar Hospital, police said, adding, the body of the minor has been sent for post-mortem examination.

The woman's medical examination report is awaited and her statement will be recorded in the court of the judicial magistrate on Monday, a police officer said.

Dumraon Sub-Divisional Police Officer K.K. Singh said a person named Munni Ram has been arrested and the other accused will be apprehended soon.

HATHRAS VICTIM'S KIN APPEAR BEFORE HC

**Lucknow, Oct. 12:** Family members of the 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after allegedly being raped by four upper caste men in Hathras appeared before the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, which fixed November 2 as the next date of hearing.

They were heard by the Bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and Rajan Roy on Monday.

The UP Additional Chief Secretary, DGP; and the ADG (Law and Order) also deposed before the court, along with the Hathras DM and SP.

The DM told the court that the decision to cremate the body in the night was taken due to the law and order considerations and there was no pressure from the state authorities.

Additional Advocate General V.K. Shahi, who represented the state authorities in the court, said the next date of hearing has been fixed for November 2.

The woman's father, mother and three brothers was brought to the court amid tight security from Hathras earlier in the day.

The court had summoned the Additional Chief Secretary, Home; the Director General of Police; ADG, Law and Order; and the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police of Hathras to furnish the status report of investigation into the case.

The woman was allegedly raped by four upper caste men on September 14.

Power outage rocks Mumbai



A doctor treats a child with the help of a torch in Sion Hospital in Mumbai on Monday. A rare citywide power outage paralysed Mumbai, halting local train services, trapping people in lifts and disrupting work from home adopted by millions during the ongoing pandemic. Power restoration efforts began on war footing and pocket-wise resumption in supply was started around 12 noon onwards, nearly two hours after the outage.

— RAJESH JADHAV

Half of BJP picks for Bihar's 2nd phase are upper caste

BJP seeks to maintain sway over upper castes while wooing OBCs, Dalits

**Patna, Oct. 12:** A strategy of keeping its upper caste support base intact while making inroads in the sizeable OBC and Dalit vote bank meets the eye upon perusal of the BJP's list of 46 candidates for the second phase of assembly elections in Bihar.

Altogether 94 seats go to polls in the phase, for which voting will take place on November 3.

The BJP had got more than half of these under the seat-sharing arrangement with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U).

The saffron party's list of candidates for the second round of voting was released on Sunday.

Nearly half of the BJP's 46 candidates for the second phase of voting belong to the upper castes Rajputs, Bhumihars, Brahmins, Kayasthas and Vaishyas which constitute the core base of the saffron party in the state.

The party has also given tickets to eight Yadavs, seeking to make a dent into the opposition RJD's unquestionable sway over the most sizeable OBC group in the state.

The JD(U), which has announced its candidates for all the 115 seats it will be contesting, has also fielded a substantial number of Yadavs.

Yadavs form nearly 15 per cent of the electorate in the state and the NDA parties are trying to cash in absence of Prasad from the poll scene to wean away the core support base of the RJD.

The RJD supreme is in jail after conviction in four cases of multi-crore fodder scam.

Candidates from other OBC groups also figure in the BJP's list while seven

52,000 VOTERS OPT FOR POSTAL BALLOT IN PH 1

**New Delhi, Oct. 12:** More than 52,000 voters, who are either senior citizens above 80 years of age or are people with disabilities, have opted for postal ballot in the first phase of Bihar elections to be held on October 28.

Booth Level Officers (BLO) in 71 constituencies spread across 16 districts of the state had approached over four lakh voters of the two categories.

Dalits will be seeking votes for the party in as many reserved constituencies.

Out of the 46 seats in the second phase, the BJP has set aside five from its quota for the Vikassheel Insaan Party, headed by former Bollywood set designer Mukesh Sahni who left the Opposition camp and joined the NDA nearly a week ago.

The VIP has been allocated total 11 seats for all three phases of the polls by the saffron party from its share of 121 seats in the NDA.

Bihar has a 243-member assembly.

Rest 122 seats in the NDA camp have gone to the JD(U) out of which it has provided seven to Hindustani Awam Morcha of the former chief minister Biju Ram Manjhi.

The BJP had won 20 out of the seats going to polls in the second phase.

Its sitting members in four of these Sugauli, Chanpatiya, Siwan and Amnour have been

deprived of tickets this time.

While Sugauli has gone to JD(U), the BJP has placed its trust in new faces in the remaining three.

Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey's reported lobbying for his son Arijit Shashwat seems to have paid no dividend in Bhagalpur where the party has placed its trust in district unit chief Rahul Pandey.

Another candidate, who has risen from the ranks and made it to the list is Nikhil Anand, one of the most prominent spokesmen in the state unit who will be challenging RJD strongman Bhai Virendra in Maner.

Former MP Om Prakash Yadav who had won Siwan for the party in 2014 but was denied tickets last year as the seat went to the JD(U), has been fielded from the assembly segment of the same name.

In neighboring Daraunda, the party has pacified rebel Karanjeet Singh, who quit and won the seat as an Independent in by-poll necessitated by Kavita Singhs election to the Lok Sabha from Siwan. Karanjeet Singh will now seek to retain the seat as the BJP's official nominee.

Two state ministers in the list Nand Kishore Yadav and Rana Randhir will be seeking re-election from Patna City and Madhubani respectively.

The party has come out with names of its candidates for a total of 75 seats which go to polls in the first two phases. Unsurprisingly, not a single Muslim has been given the party ticket though ally JD(U) has fielded nearly a dozen.

— PTI

Cong leader hits out at Chouhan's humble background

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, OCT. 12

The campaigning for the November 3 by-elections in 28 assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh has reached a new low with a senior Congress leader trying to belittle chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan citing his humble family background.

State unit president of farmers' wing of Congress Dinesh Gurjar said Mr Chouhan was no match to former chief minister Kamal Nath while drawing a comparison of their financial backgrounds.

"Mr Chouhan hails from a family of 'nange, bhookhe', loosely translated in English as extremely poor, while Mr Nath was the second biggest industrialist in India", the Congress leader said while addressing an election meeting in Ashok Nagar late on Sunday.

The ruling BJP has seized the opportunity to portray it as a battle between 'rich vs poor' in the assembly by-polls to target Mr Nath, who is leading Congress in the crucial by-elections.

"Yes, I come from a poor family. That's why I understand the pangs of hunger. That's why my focus has

always been to uplift the poor and the farmers. I have transferred ₹1000 to the bank accounts of each farmer as soon as I assumed office. I have undertaken many welfare measures for the poor and the farmer after I assumed power in March", he said while addressing a poll meeting in Guna in the state on Monday.

He also attacked Mr Nath saying that the latter never visited villages and was hardly aware of conditions of the poor in villages.

"Congress is projecting Mr Nath as an industrialist. But, I challenge Mr Nath if he has ever visited villages to know how agriculture operations are being undertaken by the farmers, or what kind of problems the poor and the farmers are facing", he said.

"A man from a poor family like me can only understand the people's plight and work for their development. An industrialist like Mr Nath is hardly aware of their problems", he observed.

Senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya scindia, who quit Congress following his differences with Mr Nath in March this year, joined the issue daring Mr Nath to reveal how he became rich and industrialist.

Kerala opens up tourism sector in a phased manner

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT. 12

The Kerala government has opened up tourism sector partially by allowing tourists in hill destinations, adventure tourism spots and backwaters from Monday.

The Covid-19 safety norms will be adhered to strictly at these tourist destinations.

The tourist centres will be opened up in two phases complying with the safety protocols, said tourism minister Mr Kadkampally Surendran.

While houseboats and tourist boats have been allowed in backwaters and lakes, the beaches will be opened for tourists only after November 1 in the second phase.

The decision to open tourism sector has been taken in view of the huge crisis being faced by the sector and the people who are dependent on it, due to the lockdown.

While many other states had opened up tourism sector earlier, the government in Kerala was cautious as it did not want to trigger a spike in the Covid cases, especially in the densely populated areas.

Therefore, the government decided to open up the sector in a phased manner.

Since the union home ministry in its Unlock 4 order has not mentioned tourism in the prohibited category, the sector can be opened with adequate measures. The government's decision has brought some relief to the people engaged in tourism sector.

The government had earlier announced that those coming to Kerala from outside the state for business purposes, would be exempted from 7 days mandatory quarantine. The same norm is going to be applied to the tourists as well. They can come to the state on a short visit for a week.

All tourists coming from outside should register with the state government's Jagratha portal. If the tourists don't return after seven days, they will be subjected to Covid-19 test and they will have to bear the expenses for the same.

Those who are interested to stay for more than seven days should either come with a Covid negative certificate or on reaching Kerala, undergo a Covid test. If the tourists don't comply with the norm, they will have to undergo seven days quarantine.

The government said tourists with any suspected Covid symptoms should not travel to Kerala. All tourists while in Kerala, will have to wear masks, use sanitizers and maintain a distance of 2 meters from others.

In the event of tourists developing Covid-19 symptoms during their trip, they should immediately get in touch with the government helpline Disha and seek assistance of health professionals.

Those with symptoms will have to go into isolation.

INDIA RECORDS CASES BELOW 70,000, DEATHS LESS THAN 900

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

With 66,732 fresh cases, India on Monday registered a total of 71.21 lakh cases of coronavirus while its death toll climbed to 1,09,150 with 816 new fatalities in the last 24 hours.

However, despite significantly high number of fresh cases being detected, the virus spread seems to have slowed down a bit in India though the coming festive season will make it clear if India has crossed the "peak".

The gap between India and the United States of America in terms of overall cases is narrowing down and on Monday it has further come down to 8.70 lakh.

Union health ministry officials said that the trend of steady decline in active cases is continuing and the active caseload is now only 12.10% of the total positive cases, which is 8.62 lakh.

"For the fourth day after the active cases dropped below the 9 lakh mark after a month, the decline continues unabated," officials said.

India is also reporting a high number of recoveries and the total recovered cases are close to 61.50 lakhs.

The difference between active cases and recovered cases stands at 52.88 lakh as on date. In the last 24 hours, 71,559 patients have recovered and discharged compared to 66,732 new cases admitted. The national Recovery Rate now stands at 86.36%.

The government has issued details of the norms, guidelines and restrictions to be followed in tourist centres.

The hotels, restaurants and other facilities in the tourist centers will comply with all safety norms.

They will keep infrared forehead thermometer, soap for washing hands and sanitizers.

All the pathways, railings, other facilities will be sprayed with disinfectants form time to time. The names and addresses of people arriving at the tourist centres will have to be registered. Tourism deputy directors and DTPC secretaries have been entrusted with the task of ensuring all Covid safety norms are strictly complied at the tourist centres.

All hotel bookings, tickets to tourist spots should be booked through online system. The government has asked the Ayurveda tourist centres to strictly following the Covid safety norms.

The tourism minister hoped that tourists from outside the state and abroad will not hesitate to traveling to Kerala in view of the strict safety protocols in place.

SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE STILL CRITICAL

**Kolkata, Oct. 12:** Legendary Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee is still in a "high risk zone" though his parameters are stable, doctors attending to the thespian said on Monday.

The 85-year-old Dadasaheb Phalke awardee has fever and continues to be in a "drowsy, confusional state", which is a matter of concern, they said. Chatterjee might have to undergo an MRI later on Monday, doctors at the private hospital, where he is being treated for Covid-19, said.

"He is stable, had good sleep last night, but is still in a high risk zone. His oxygen saturation level has improved," a doctor said.

— PTI

FRESH ISSUE

Will fight 'love jihad' in next term: Assam mantri

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, OCT. 12

After announcing to shut down all the government madrasas, senior BJP leader and Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stirred a fresh controversy by announcing to launch a fight against 'love jihad' if they return to power in 2021 assembly polls.

Addressing a meeting of BJP Mahila Morcha at Dibrugarh, the minister said that they have been fighting against various problems that that state has been facing but five years were not enough to bring an end to it.

Coining a new term 'Ajmal's culture and civilisation' for illegal immigrants from Bangladesh

and equating it with AIUDF chief Badruddin Ajmal as its saviour, the minister said that a large number of girls have become the victim of 'love jihad' on social media platforms like Facebook.

Referring that many Assamese mothers came to him crying that her daughter was victimised by youths displaying fake Hindu names on social media, the minister said that this is being done by a section of youths who are from 'Ajmal's culture and civilisation'

Stressing the need of launching a campaign against love jihad, the minister said, "If BJP comes to power again, we will take a decision that if any boy hides his religious identity

● **AIUDF CHIEF** Badruddin Ajmal, who has been instrumental in stitching alliance with Congress for the assembly election next year, has become the regular target of the BJP leader as political observers are of view that AIUDF-Congress alliance may turn out to be a formidable challenge for the saffron party in Assam.

and comments anything negative on Assamese daughters and women, he will face rigorous punishment."

Referring to instances as to how Hindu girls are becoming victims of 'Ajmal's culture and civilisation'

on Facebook where boys hiding their religion on social media befriend and marry them, the minister said, "We have taken an oath that if Ajmal's army touches our women, the only punishment for them will be a death sentence, nothing less. We are working with such a resolve."

AIUDF chief Badruddin Ajmal, who has been instrumental in stitching alliance with Congress for the assembly election next year, has become the regular target of the BJP leader as political observers are of view that AIUDF-Congress alliance may turn out to be a formidable challenge for the saffron party in Assam.

The minister added,

"Love jihad has created a mountain-like problem for Assamese daughters. Many girls have faced talaq after getting duped by fake names of the boys. The BJP has resolved that whenever anyone from 'Ajmal's culture-civilisation' attacks Assamese girls, 'ruthless' replies will be given."

Describing the assembly elections of 2021 as a fight to save culture and civilisation of the state, he said, "If people do not unite then the society will not be saved. That is why the 2021 assembly election is for saving our culture-civilisation. If the 65 percent people don't fight together against Ajmal's culture-civilisation, then our future Assam will not be

saved. If we lose this fight of culture-civilisation, then we will not be able to live in Assam after 15 years."

The minister's reference to 65 per cent population was obviously to non-Muslims as according to the 2011 census report, 34.22 per cent people in Assam are Muslims while 61.47 per cent are Hindus.

Mr Sarma said, "We had spoken about the Saraighat battle in 2016. This battle doesn't end in five years. We will have to fight till we finish off Ajmal's army politically."

The Battle of Saraighat was a naval battle fought in 1671 between the Mughal Empire, and the Ahom Kingdom on the Brahmaputra at Saraighat.



## IN BRIEF

## Lanka suspends expatriates rescue

**Colombo:** Sri Lankan officials say they have suspended bringing back expatriates stranded overseas due to the Coronavirus because the country's quarantine facilities are full. Army Commander Shavendra Silva, who heads the task force to control the pandemic, says Sri Lanka's quarantine facilities have filled up amid a steep rise in Covid-19 patients in the past week. Sri Lanka had earlier announced that it successfully contained the spread of the virus, and no local clusters were reported for two months.

## Death penalty for rape in B'desh

**Dhaka:** Bangladesh's Cabinet on Monday approved an increase in the maximum punishment in rape cases to death from life imprisonment after a series of recent sexual assaults triggered protests on streets and in social media.

Cabinet spokesman Khandaker Anwarul Islam said President Abdul Hamid is likely to issue an ordinance amending the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act because Parliament is not in session. Details of the amendment were not immediately available, but Islam said the Cabinet agreed to a proposal that trials in rape cases be completed in a speedy manner. Under the current law, the maximum punishment in rape cases is life imprisonment, except for cases in which the victim dies, when capital punishment is allowed.

## Protesters raze statues in Portland

**Portland:** Protesters overturned statues of former Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln in Portland, Oregon, in a declaration of "rage" toward Columbus Day. Protest organisers on Sunday night dubbed the event "Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage," in response to Monday's federal holiday named after 15th-century Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, a polarising figure who Native American advocates have said spurred centuries of genocide against indigenous populations in the Americas. The group threw chains around Roosevelt's statue, officially titled "Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider."

## Poland defuses WW bomb, shifts 750

**Warsaw:** Hundreds of people in northwest Poland have been evacuated for a few days to allow Navy sappers to neutralise a British World War II giant Tallboy bomb resting under a waterway leading to the port of Szczecin. The 5.4 tonne bomb was found in Sept. 2019 during work to deepen the waterway. It's located on the southern edge of a popular Baltic Sea resort of Swinoujscie, that, like Szczecin, was a busy Nazi Germany military port during the war. In a defusing project that began on Monday and is expected to last for five days, experts will be seeking to neutralise the Tallboy underwater by causing its explosives to burn out in a controlled way.

## CLOTH MASKS NEED DAILY WASH TO CUT VIRUS RISK

**Melbourne, Oct. 12:** Cloth masks may reduce the transmission of viruses such as SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, only if they are washed daily at high temperatures, according to a study.

"Both cloth masks and surgical masks should be considered 'contaminated' after use," said Professor Raina MacIntyre, from the University of New South Wales in Australia. "Unlike surgical masks, which are disposed of after use, cloth masks are re-used. While it can be tempting to use the same mask for multiple days in a row, or to give it a quick hand-wash or wipe-over, our research suggests that this increases the risk of contamination," MacIntyre said.

The researchers analysed data from a randomised controlled trial (RCT) they published in 2015. The latest study, published in the journal BMJ Open, is still the only RCT ever conducted on the efficacy of cloth masks in preventing viral infections, they said. The researchers did a deep dive into the 2011 data on whether the health workers in their study washed their masks daily, and if so, how they washed their masks. The team found that if cloth masks were washed in the hospital laundry, they were as effective as a surgical mask.

## US Supreme Court confirmation hearing



White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows (left) looks on as Judge Amy Coney Barrett arrives to testify at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on her nomination to serve as an associate justice on the US Supreme Court on Capitol Hill in Washington on Monday. — AFP

## Don's task: Resetting campaign that GOP fears is slipping away

**Washington, Oct. 12:** President Donald Trump is running out of time to recover from a series of self-inflicted setbacks that have rattled his base of support and triggered alarm among Republicans who fear the White House is on the verge of being lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

The one-two punch of Trump's Coronavirus diagnosis and his widely panned debate performance also has Republicans worried they could lose control of the Senate. With just over three weeks until Election Day, Senate races in some reliably red states, including South Carolina and Kansas, are competitive, aided by a surge in Democratic fundraising that has put both the Republican Party and Trump's own campaign at an unexpected financial disadvantage.

The president will aim for a reset this week, hoping an aggressive travel schedule and Judge Amy Coney Barrett's Supreme Court confirmation hearings will energise his most loyal supporters and shift attention away from a virus that has killed more than 214,000 Americans on his watch. Optimists in the president's inner circle point to his unique ability to command attention and to his 2016 campaign, which also seemed destined for defeat before a late shift. But that comeback was aided by outside forces

## Trump begins the election trail again

**Washington, Oct. 12:** US President Donald Trump will launch a campaign marathon on Monday, holding rallies in three key swing states over the next few days as his White House race against surging rival Joe Biden enters its critical final weeks.

The Republican leader will hold a rally in Florida, followed by Pennsylvania and Iowa — states all crucial to clinching a victory on November 3. Trump will likely try to galvanise his electoral base by touting his nominee for Supreme Court justice, Amy Coney Barrett.

The Republican-controlled Senate will begin hearings for the 48-year-old judge, whose confirmation — of which there is little doubt — will shift the nation's highest court firmly to the right for generations.

Trump's doctors gave

him the all-clear Saturday to return to the campaign trail after he was ruled no longer a Coronavirus transmission risk, and on Sunday he said while calling in to a campaign event that he tested "totally negative." But he has yet to be declared virus-free, and his immunity claim is unproven.

"It looks like I'm immune for, I don't know, maybe a long time and maybe a short time, it could be a lifetime, nobody really knows, but I'm immune," Trump said. The word 'immunity' means something, having really a protective glow.

"So now you have a president who doesn't have to hide in a basement like his opponent," Trump added — in a jab at Democratic challenger Biden, who has taken a far more cautious approach to campaigning during the pandemic. —AFP

against an unpopular opponent.

This year's campaign, other Republicans worry, may instead resemble 1980 or 2008: a close race until, at the end, it decidedly wasn't. "It's not good for my side," said veteran

GOP pollster Whit Ayres. "Pretty obviously, in many ways down-ballot Republicans are in the boat with Donald Trump. That's good for Republicans in deep-red states, but more problematic for those in swing states." —AP

## EU weighs in on action against Russia for poisoning Navalny

**Brussels, Oct. 12:** European Union foreign ministers were weighing on Monday whether to impose sanctions on Russian officials and organisations blamed for the poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny with a Soviet-era nerve agent.

The ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, are considering a proposal from France and Germany to freeze the assets of those suspected of involvement and ban them from travelling in Europe under sanctions to combat the use and spread of chemical weapons.

Navalny, an anti-corruption investigator and major political opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, fell ill on August 20 during a domestic flight in Russia. He was flown to Germany for treatment two days later and is still recovering there.

Last week, tests conducted at labs designated by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons confirmed that Navalny was the victim of a Novichok nerve agent. German Foreign Minister

Heiko Maas said on Monday that given the OPCW's findings, it is now "objectively clear that this is a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention, one that cannot remain without consequences."

In a statement on Friday, France and Germany said that despite repeated calls Russia has provided "no credible explanation" for what happened and that "there is no other plausible explanation for Navalny's poisoning than a Russian involvement and responsibility." —AP

## IRAQI MILITIAS OFFER TRUCE FOR U.S. PULLOUT

**Baghdad, Oct. 12:** Iraqi militias backed by Iran have agreed to temporarily halt attacks targeting the American presence in Iraq, on the condition that US-led coalition troops withdraw from the country in line with a parliamentary resolution, three militia officials have said.

The militia officials said after a roadside bomb targeted a convoy that was transporting equipment for the US-led coalition, damaging one vehicle, an Iraqi army statement said. The attack on a highway south of Baghdad prompted questions over whether such a truce could hold across all militia factions.

Roadside bombs and in particular rocket attacks targeting the US Embassy in Baghdad — located inside the heavily fortified Green Zone — have become a frequent occurrence and have strained ties between Washington and Baghdad. The militia factions offered a truce and will refrain from targeting the US in Iraq, including the embassy, on the condition that all American-led forces withdraw within an "acceptable timeframe," said Mohammed Mohie, a spokesman for the powerful Iran-backed Kataib Hezbollah. —AP

## China to test 9mn for Covid in 5 days

## Quingdao city begins nucleic acid test campaign

**Beijing, Oct. 12:** China's Qingdao city has launched a citywide nucleic acid test campaign that will cover its nine million residents over the next five days, amid apprehensions of a second wave after the coastal city reported 12 Covid-19 cases. The cases were connected to Qingdao Chest Hospital which is a designated medical institution for the Covid-19 patients from overseas.

In May, China tested 11 million people in Wuhan — the epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Qingdao health authority has said that a citywide testing program has been launched. The five districts — home to about six million people — will be fully covered in the next three days. The whole city will be tested within five days, covering roughly nine million people, state-run *Global Times* reported.

So far, all medical staff, new hospitalised patients and nurses in hospitals at Qingdao have been given nucleic acid tests, with all 114,862 results coming back negative. As of Saturday, the total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases on the Chinese mainland had reached 85,557, including the 218

● **ONE OF** the ways they sped up the process was to use batch- or pool-testing.

● **IN THIS** process, a batch of between five and 10 samples was tested. Only if a sample tested positive would the team go back to carry out individual tests to see who was

patients still being treated.

Altogether 80,705 patients have recovered, according to China's National Health Commission's report released on Monday. It said 4,634 people have died to Coronavirus on the mainland.

They also mobilised teams to test disabled people, the elderly and those vulnerable in their own homes.

One of the ways they sped up the process was to use batch- or pool-testing.

In this process, a batch of between five and 10 samples was tested. Only if a sample tested positive would the team go back to carry out individual tests to see who was positive within the batch.

Videos circulating online showed residents

lining up late on Sunday to get tested, said the *Global Times*, adding that some of these test points were open from 07:00 to 23:00.

The new cases come a week after China's Golden Week holiday — which saw millions travel across the country.

A *Global Times* report quoting the Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism said the coastal city had received 4.47 million passenger trips over this period.

The nearby city of Jinan, in the same province as Qingdao, called for anyone who had visited the city since 23 September to get tested, according to a report by *The Paper*.

Earlier last month, Qingdao announced that two port workers who handled imported seafood had tested positive. They were not known to have infected anyone else.

Daily Coronavirus infections have fallen drastically in China, and for the most part the country appears to have recovered from the worst.

China currently has 91,305 virus cases and the death toll stands at 4,746, according to WHO data.

— Agencies



Asif Ali Zardari

## EX-PAK PRESIDENT ASIF ALI ZARDARI HOSPITALISED

**Islamabad, Oct. 12:** Pakistan's former president and PPP co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari was admitted to a private hospital in Karachi after he felt "unwell", his party has said.

"Doctors are conducting his medical check-up and necessary medical tests," the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) tweeted on Sunday without providing much details.

Zardari was "shifted to hospital after feeling unwell late on Sunday evening," it said. The former president's long-time associate Dr Asim Hussain told a private news channel that Zardari was brought to the hospital due to low sugar level. It was reported that the PPP leader was admitted in the emergency ward of the private hospital in Karachi. It, however, did not mention the hospital's name.

Zardari, who is facing multiple corruption cases, was released from jail in December last year after the Islamabad High Court approved his bail on medical grounds. He had been suffering from ischemic heart disease, which means his heart may have an inadequate supply of blood and oxygen. —PTI

## Imran's top aide resigns, facing graft charges

**Islamabad, Oct. 12:** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's Special Assistant on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen. (ret'd.) Asim Saleem Bajwa resigned on Monday, amid allegations that he used his offices to help family set up several off-shore businesses.

"I requested the honourable prime minister to relinquish me from the additional portfolio of SAPM on Info & broadcasting. He very kindly approved my request," Bajwa, the former Pakistan Army spokesman who also served as Commander of the Southern Command, tweeted. However, he would continue working as chairman of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority.

The development comes more than a month after Bajwa submitted his resignation to Prime Minister Khan following a report on a website that alleged that he had used his offices in setting up off-shore businesses of his wife, sons and brothers. However, Khan rejected his resignation at the time and asked him to continue working as his special assistant.

The report alleged that Bajwa's younger brothers opened their first Papa John's pizza restaurant in 2002, the year he started working as a Lieutenant Colonel on the General Pervez Musharraf's staff. It claimed that his brother Nadeem Bajwa, 53, who started as a delivery driver for the pizza restaurant franchise, another three brothers, his wife Farrukh Zeba and

## FATF'S REGIONAL GROUP KEEPS PAKISTAN ON FOLLOW-UP LIST

**Islamabad, Oct. 12:** Noting that Pakistan's measures against money laundering and terror financing "is not yet sufficient to justify a re-rating", a regional affiliate of the Financial Action Task Force on Monday retained the country on its 'Enhanced follow-up' list, according to a media report.

The development came only a few weeks ahead of the meeting of the FATF — the Paris-based global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog — to decide on Pakistan's grey list status.

The first Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) underlined that the country's progress on the 40 FATF recommendations on the effectiveness of anti-money laundering and combating financing terror (AML/CFT) system largely remained unchanged — non-compliant on four counts, partially compliant on 25 counts and largely compliant on nine recommendations. —PTI

three sons now own a business empire which set up 99 companies in four countries, including a pizza franchise with 133 restaurants worth an estimated \$39.9 million. —PTI

## TOP HONOURS

## U.S. Economists worked towards improving the theory of how auctions work

## Milgrom, Wilson bag Nobel Prize in Economics

**Stockholm, Oct. 12:** Two American economists won the Nobel Prize on Monday for improving the theory of how auctions work and inventing new and better auction formats that are now woven into many parts of the economy.

The discoveries of Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson "have benefited sellers, buyers and taxpayers around the world," the Nobel Committee said, noting that the auction formats developed by the winners have been used to sell radio frequencies, fishing quotas and airport landing slots.

Both economists are based at Stanford University in California, and Milgrom said he received news of their win "in a strange way." "I got a knock at my door from Bob Wilson," he said. "He was my Ph.D. advisor, and he lives right across the street from me." Milgrom said students, friends and colleagues had long suggested he and Wilson might be due for the prize. "It's really sweet actually," he said. "It's nice to have their respect but their affection as well." The winners were announced in Stockholm by Goran



Robert B. Wilson

Hansson, secretary-general of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, rounding off a week of Nobel Prizes. Technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic



Paul R. Milgrom

Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, the award was established in 1969 and is now widely considered one of the Nobel prizes. The committee said Wilson's work showed "why

rational bidders tend to place bids below their own best estimate of the common value," that is, "the value which is uncertain beforehand but, in the end, is the same for everyone." "Bidders are worried about the winner's curse — that is, about paying too much and losing out," the committee said.

Wilson, 83, described his former student as "sort of the genius behind all of this auction work," noting that they first worked together on auctions in the 1970s. "We're really motivated to use theory in a very practi-

cal way to improve various economic processes," Wilson said. Milgrom, 72, developed a more general theory of auctions that takes into account what is known as the "private value" of what's being sold that can vary greatly from bidder to bidder. Speaking to reporters in Stockholm by phone after learning of his win, Wilson struggled to think of an auction he himself had participated in. But then added: "My wife points out to me that we bought ski boots on eBay. I guess that was an auction." —AP



DECCAN  
Chronicle

13 OCTOBER 2020

Judiciary must keep  
itself above suspicion

The move by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to write a letter to Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde, with a “sense of pain and anguish” at the “politicisation of institutions”, monitored by N. Chandrababu Naidu, “through honourable sitting judges of Supreme Court”, is unprecedented in India’s history. True, there have been confrontations between politics and the judiciary, between Parliament and other legislative bodies over the division of powers. There were times that the judiciary was accused of “judicial overreach” and “legislating in disguise” in the course of interpreting legislation and executive orders. The relationship between judiciary and political pillars of the legislature and executive is complex, but there is little doubt, even factoring in the impeachment powers of Parliament, that the judiciary is independent and supreme in interpretation of the Constitution and legal matters.

Equally important, as much as the powers of judiciary are supreme, the dignity, honour and majesty of the courts are sacrosanct too. Indian history records that whenever Indian politics was set to compromise with the values of democracy or unhesitant to trample on the rights of citizens or let down the foundational values of our republic, it was the judiciary that time and again has saved our nation. The Indian judiciary is not just one of the four pillars of the modern Indian nation or democracy — it has also been the exemplar of the highest standards, ethical conduct and has served as a role model for the other three. Like Caesar’s wife, it stands even above suspicion or a shade of doubt, and must continue to do so.

The political rivalry between YSRC chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and his arch-rival Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu is irrelevant here; it is best decided every five years in the people’s court. But when a chief minister, or even an ordinary citizen, raises issues, casts aspersions or makes allegations against a sitting Supreme Court judge, the onus shifts to the nation’s highest court and the CJI to ensure that every citizen of this country is assured that there is no need to worry about the serious allegations by ensuring transparency, fearless introspection and ensuring fairness.

One cannot completely dismiss the views of Mr Reddy’s rivals that this could be an arm-twisting tactic at a time when serious cases of financial wrongdoing are pending in the courts, including a matter on fast-tracking such hearings, in which, if found guilty and sentenced, the young CM could face disqualification from holding office and contesting elections for a considerable time.

The court will have to undertake this testing ordeal of not getting arm-twisted into weakening its resolve to rid India of political corruption but also simultaneously stand above any shred of doubt that no one in the judiciary, much less so, someone in the highest court, is possibly guilty of allegations of extra-constitutional judicial intervention at the behest of any political leader. Given its track record and the Indian people’s overriding trust and unshakable faith in the courts, one expects this is exactly what the CJI would ensure happens. Hail the judiciary!

Indefatigable Nadal

The Spaniard Rafael Nadal’s 13th triumph in the French Open is an incredible achievement. The unforgiving clay courts of Roland Garros present a challenge that can also drain the fit and tuned-to-the-minute athletes. Roger Federer acknowledged this as “one of the greatest achievements in sport” after his great rival equalled his record of 20 Grand Slam titles on Sunday. A naturally gifted champion like Federer has only one French Open in his 20 Grand Slams. A persevering Nadal adapting his baseline game to Wimbledon grass and the hard courts of the Australian and US Open championships and conquering each of them consistently enough is a saga in itself.

Not fortunate to be gifted with the dulcet touch and graceful athleticism, Nada makes up for it by his willingness to chase down each point like a man possessed. There is a terrier-like determination to him on a tennis court that makes him a role model for fellow sportsmen who struggle to withstand the vicissitudes of form and, more importantly, fitness. Nadal has had his share of injuries, surgeries and endless queries in random drug tests, besides his self-doubts, in a remarkable journey of endurance in which the ability to stay motivated for years after raking in millions of dollars also counts.

In crushing Novak Djokovic, the third gladiator of modern tennis, Nadal not only emphasises that he is the king of the rectangle of clay. In this virtual monopoly of Grand Slams, broken only by Thiem’s victory at the US Open, the three greats are signalling they are in no hurry to make way for a generational change in men’s tennis. On the other hand, with Serena Williams not winning a Grand Slam since becoming a mother, the field is wide open on the distaff side. Young Iga Swiatek, the first ever Pole to win a Grand Slam, brings with her a powerful forehand and angled ground-strokes that makes her appear to be the one poised to emulate the likes of Nadal in exhibiting a metronomic thoroughness in tennis conquests.

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Subhani



Tackle Xi in Myanmar;  
don’t forget Rohingyas



Sunanda K.  
Datta-Ray  
Reflections

India’s foreign secretary and Chief of Army Staff may not have recently paid a joint visit to Naypyidaw, the capital of the country formerly known as Burma, if so much did not hang on the outcome of the November 8 elections. What probably influenced both Mr Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Gen. M.M. Naravane most was the spectre of “Paukphaw”, the China-Myanmar friendship that President Xi Jinping had underscored during his state visit in January.

Although India and Myanmar are distant neighbours at present, they comprised one administrative unit from 1885 to 1937. They might have been politically one now if Jawaharlal Nehru had accepted U Nu’s 1947 proposal for a “United Nations of South Asia”. The fears, hatreds and resentments that make these elections so different from the 2015 polls when Myanmar soared on the cusp of hope may signify major changes in the road ahead.

The electoral outcome is bound to leave a heavy imprint not only on Myanmar’s place on the chequerboard of Asia’s power politics but on the social and demographic character of a country that seems incapable of accepting that it must rise above tribal and religious loyalties to claim the status of a nation. It’s not just a question of more than 37 million voters choosing their parliamentary and sub-national assembly representatives or of the all-powerful military appointing its tame legislators. Empowering the people is what matters. Under Myanmar’s 2008 constitution, the Tatmadaw — Myanmar’s all-powerful military — chooses the vice-president and the home, defence and border affairs ministers, and controls 25 per cent of all parliamen-

tary seats.

The future of 1.3 million Rohingyas whom the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, calls “the world’s fastest-developing refugee emergency ... a humanitarian nightmare”, will have to be decided. So will the future of Aung San Suu Kyi, still elegantly winsome at 75, whose National League for Democracy infused the future with optimism in 2015. Today, she seems rather like a faded rose, having lost much of her shine as the global pin-up girl of Asian democracy and must justify her glory as Nobel Peace Prize laureate. For all that she is styled State Counsellor, Ms Suu Kyi seems to dance to the Tatmadaw’s tune on the Rohingyas.

Like the rest of the world, the Naypyidaw regime must also come to grips with a fast-spiralling Covid-19 crisis that may keep voters away from the polls. With nearly 24,000 infections, a meteoric rise from the 887 that were recorded on September 1, Myanmar has suddenly surged from only marginally infected to being Southeast Asia’s fourth-worst hit country.

The speculation is that pressed on so many fronts, Myanmar might feel that the future would be better protected if China’s rising influence were to be checked. That might explain reports of New Delhi’s offer of a \$6-billion petroleum refinery project and the talks

**The electoral outcome is bound to leave a heavy imprint not only on Myanmar’s place on the chequerboard of Asia’s power politics but on the social and demographic character of the country.**

**India’s national interest can never be divorced from the humanitarian cause of the Rohingya, especially not by a government that claims to go beyond ‘Look East’ to ‘Act East’**

to boost connectivity, power and energy projects, as well as joint efforts to tackle the pandemic. Worthy as these initiatives may be, one cannot but wonder why they are not components of a permanent programme binding two such physically close neighbours.

When India did take an interest in Myanmar after years of neglect, it was to deny the Naga or Mizo rebels sanctuary or prevent China and Pakistan from gaining strategic advantages. These legitimate objectives were small in themselves and appeared to reduce foreign affairs to immediate petty gains, with little inkling of the broad sweep of history. Myanmar’s expulsion of Indian labourers, clerks, doctors, teachers and lawyers prompted little reaction because the victims seemed to be culturally, socially and financially remote from the mandarins of South Block.

Rightly or wrongly, it was whispered at one time that a pragmatic approach was discouraged by India’s ethnic Myanmarese first lady. That was nearly two decades ago. A subsequently more sympathetic attitude was attributed to Ms Suu Kyi’s personal contacts in New Delhi during the years her mother was Myanmar’s ambassador and she a student at the city’s Lady Shri Ram College. Inevitably, the suffering Rohingyas are now seen as Muslim jihadists rather than victims of racism.

Myanmar’s 2014 census listed Rohingyas as illegal Bengali immigrants. Most were stripped of citizenship in 1982. They are denied education,

employment and the right to move about freely. This legal subjugation is nothing compared to the terrible atrocities of repeated military crackdowns, particularly in 2017-2018, when entire villages were burned down, men were murdered and women subject to gangrape.

Predictably, perhaps, some Rohingya groups responded with militancy. But the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation demands the right to “self-determination within Myanmar”, while the Rohingya-led National Democratic Party for Human Rights supported the 1988 democracy movement. It returned four members to Parliament in 1990 when the Tatmadaw cheated the victorious NLD of its right to form the government.

The former Army strongman, Shwe Mann, is now projecting his Union Betterment Party as the middle ground between the NLD and the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party, while the tycoon and legislator Thet Thet Khine, who left the NLD to launch the People’s Pioneer Party, focuses mainly on the economy. Meanwhile, the NLD’s promise of imported cars has invited ridicule. Unhappily, none of the 16 major parties in the fray is campaigning to enfranchise the marginalised ethnic groups like the persecuted Rohingya.

They needn’t be India’s priority either. The political challenge of “Paukphaw” — including China-backed projects like the \$4 billion Myitsone Dam, the Belt and Road Initiative, the economic corridor stretching from China’s Yunnan province to Rakhine state, and the \$15 billion Yatai New City Project at Shwe Kokko on the Myanmar-Thai border — matters far more. However, India’s national interest can never be divorced from the humanitarian cause of the Rohingya, especially not by a government that claims to go beyond “Look East” to “Act East”.

*The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author*

LETTERS

DHARANI PORTAL

NRIs and OCI card holders are at a disadvantage because they can’t upload their properties on the Dharani portal due to lack of Aadhaar card. We request the Telangana state government to consider NRIs to upload their overseas passport or Overseas Citizen Card Numbers in place of Aadhaar. It would be better to have two formats, one for Indians and the other for NRIs, in the case of LRS applications.

G. Narasimha Rao  
Hyderabad

JAGAN’S COMPLAINT

The AP CM has successfully presented his case. The CJI should have had second thoughts in appointing him by ignoring the fact that Justice Ramana was previously the legal adviser for the TD. However, it cannot be said that the massive mandate given to Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is a clear approval of TD chief and former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu’s misdeeds. We hope the CJI will take a considered view keeping the future of A.P in all respects.

L.V. Subbarao  
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN  
Chronicle

Two get letters  
of intent to  
make baby cars

NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

Letters of intent are understood to have been issued by the Ministry of Industrial Development to Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi’s son, and Mr. Madan Mohan Rao of Madras for the manufacture of small cars in the private sector.

The issue of licences to the two parties for the manufacture of baby cars would be considered by the Ministry of Industrial Development after they submit detailed project reports which would have to be scrutinised by the Directorate-General of the Technical Development, Ministry of Industrial Development.

Mr. Gandhi has already assembled a small car out of locally made components which was tested by the Directorate-General of Technical Development. His proposal envisages an initial production of 2,000 cars, per annum to be progressively increased to an annual turnout of 20,000 units.

Aakar  
Patel



If you do not  
admit there’s  
a crisis, you  
can’t solve it

If I do not acknowledge that I have a problem, then I cannot solve it. If the problem is a minor one, this is less consequential and does not affect me beyond a point. It is only an irritant that I can continue to ignore.

But if the problem is a major one, and if the problem affects not just me but many people around me, then ignoring it must have a sound reason. Ignoring it must in some way be more important than addressing it.

The sale of cars in India has not grown for the past five years. The number of cars bought by Indians in 2015-16 was 27 lakh units. The number of cars bought in 2019-20 was 27 lakh units. India’s middle class is either not growing or not spending.

The government says that stagnating car sales is not a problem because young people prefer to use Uber and Ola cabs. The United States sold two crore cars last year. Uber and Ola (and its various

equivalents) do not seem to affect any other nation.

The sale of two-wheelers in India has not grown for the past four years. Altogether 1.7 crore units were sold in 2016-17, and 1.7 crore units were sold in 2019-20. This is the vehicle of the lower middle class, the size and consumption of which has not grown for four years. What theory the government has for this we do not know as it has not been acknowledged that there is no growth.

Commercial vehicles have not shown any growth for the past four years. Sales were seven lakh units in 2016-17 and seven lakh units in 2019-20. This includes vehicles like trucks, heavy lorries, tankers and small tempos that carry products either to the manufacturers or to the market. The real meaning of four years of zero growth in this market can simply be imagined.

Real estate has shown no growth over the last four years. Indians

bought ₹2 lakh crores worth of real estate in 2016. They bought ₹2 lakh crores worth of real estate in 2019. India’s exports have not grown for six years. The country exports the same quantity that it did when Dr Manmohan Singh was Prime Minister. India was exporting about \$300 billion a year when the UPA-2 left office. It exported about \$300 billion in 2019-20. Why is this the case? We do not know because the government does not speak about it. When imports into India fell more than exports out of India, the government celebrated the moment as a singular achievement.

Employment has not only not grown in the past six years, it has actually gone down. A report produced by the government showed it to be at over six per cent in 2018, more than at any other time in history. Why are Indians losing employment? We do not know. The government has dismissed the issue and said that pakora sellers

and Uber drivers were replacing traditional employees.

It is true that Covid-19 has affected India’s economy deeply and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. We are unlikely to get back to the GDP figure that we achieved in January this year for another three years. This means that by the time Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s second term ends in May 2024, we will still only be economically where we were in January this year. The problem is that where we were in January this year was not a good space. All the numbers that have been referred to above are before the Covid-19 pandemic’s outbreak.

The stagnation in our economy had happened before the lockdown and has nothing to do with our current crisis. If and when we are able to overcome the Covid-19 related problem with our economy, we will go back only to the earlier problem.

India’s GDP growth declined every quarter for 10 quarters before

Covid. Why? We do not know. It could be one reason, and it could be many reasons. But if we do not acknowledge the issue at all, we will never solve it. You can only think about, discuss and then implement corrective measures if you acknowledge that corrective measures are needed. If you carry on like nothing has happened, then deep problems cannot be fixed by themselves and they won’t go away. The government went from saying that India was the one bright spot in the world’s economy and the fastest growing economy in the world, to not saying anything about the economy at all.

The problem is a major one, and it affects not just the Prime Minister but hundreds of millions of people across the country. Ignoring it must have a sound reason. Ignoring it must in some way be more important than addressing it.

*Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist*



## quick BITES

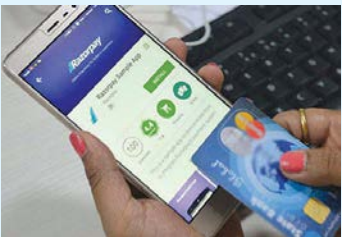
INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,593.80	0.21
Nifty 50	11,930.95	0.14
S&P 500*	3,538.30	1.76
Dollar (₹)	73.27	0.16
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.47	0.91
Euro (₹)	86.53	0.29
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,073.240	0.46
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.53	-1.32
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.899	-0.041
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.779	0.00

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

### Govt extends tenure of 3 EDs of Canara, IOB

The government has extended the tenure of three executive directors of Canara Bank and Indian Overseas Bank by two years. Canara Bank said the tenure of EDs Debashish Mukherjee and Matam Venkata Rao has been extended for two years, or until further orders, whichever is earlier. IOB said the government has extended the term of Ajay Kumar Srivastava as executive director for a period of two years.

### Razorpay joins the league of unicorns in India



Payments solution provider Razorpay Razorpay said it has gained the 'unicorn' status after having raised \$100 million funding from GIC, Sequoia Capital and existing investors. Witnessing a 300 per cent growth in its business during the past six months, Razorpay said it has raised a Series-D fundraising of \$100 million, giving the company more than \$1 billion in valuation. This round was co-led by GIC and Sequoia.

### Credai seeks fiscal sops for realty sector

Realtors' apex body Credai said the industry is going through much pain due to the pandemic and urged the government to take fiscal measures for improving the liquidity position of cash-starved developers. The industry body, which represents more than 20,000 builders from across India, has sought financial support in the form of interest waiver and extension of the moratorium period till March 2021 for the sector.

### Hiring activities up 24% in Sept: Naukri JobSpeak

With life returning to normalcy gradually, hiring activities grew 24 per cent in September as compared to the previous month, mostly driven by pharmaceuticals and education sectors. At 1,755 job postings, there was an improvement of 24 per cent in hiring activities last month compared to August with 1,413 listings, according to the Naukri JobSpeak Index for September 2020.



## ■ Meeting ends without a decision Consensus eludes GST Council again

New Delhi, Oct. 12: The stalemate over compensating states for the shortfall in GST collections continued on Monday with a meeting of the GST Council ending without reaching any consensus. The panel, which is the highest decision-making body on indirect taxes, for the second time in a week failed to reach a consensus on the Centre's proposal of states borrowing against future GST collections to make up for the shortfall.

This was the third meeting in a row that discussed compensation shortfall without a decision.

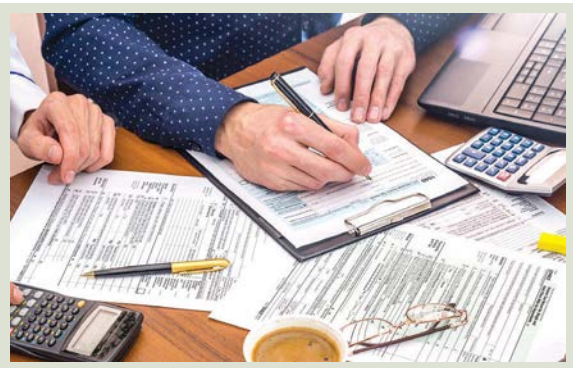
Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who heads the Council, said the Centre cannot borrow and pay states for the shortfall as it would lead to rise in bond yields, resulting in rise in borrowing costs for the government and the private sector.

However, this would not be the case if states borrowed against future GST receipts, she said, adding 21 states had agreed to borrow as suggested by the Centre.

However, other states insisted on a decision to be taken by consensus, she said.

"We were not able to arrive at a consensus," Sitharaman said.

In its previous meeting last week, the council had decided to extend the surcharge on taxes on luxury goods such as cars and tobacco products beyond June 2022 but failed to reach a consensus on



### STALEMATE CONTINUES

- FM said the Centre cannot borrow and pay states for the shortfall as it would lead to rise in bond yields
- However, this would not be the case if states borrowed against future GST receipts, she said
- Dissenting states insisted on consensus decision

ways to compensate states for loss of tax revenue.

The projected total compensation shortfall in the current fiscal stands at Rs 2.35 lakh crore.

The Centre had in August given two options to the states—to borrow either Rs 97,000 crore from a special window facilitated by the RBI or Rs 2.35 lakh crore from the market. It had also proposed extending the compensation cess levied on luxury, demerit and sin goods beyond 2022 to repay the borrowing.

Following a demand by some states, the amount of Rs 97,000 crore was increased to Rs 1.10 lakh crore.

As many as 21 states -- which are BJP-ruled or

have supported it on various issues— have opted to borrow Rs 1.10 lakh crore to meet the compensation shortfall.

The Centre has released Rs 20,000 crore to the states towards compensation shortfall so far in the current fiscal.

Under the GST structure, taxes are levied under 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent slabs.

On top of the highest tax slab, a cess is levied on luxury, sin and demerit goods, and the proceeds from the same are used to compensate states for any revenue loss. But due to a slowdown in the economy, collections have fallen short of the money needed for compensating states.

## Travel industry unhappy with redirection of LTC money

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, OCT. 12

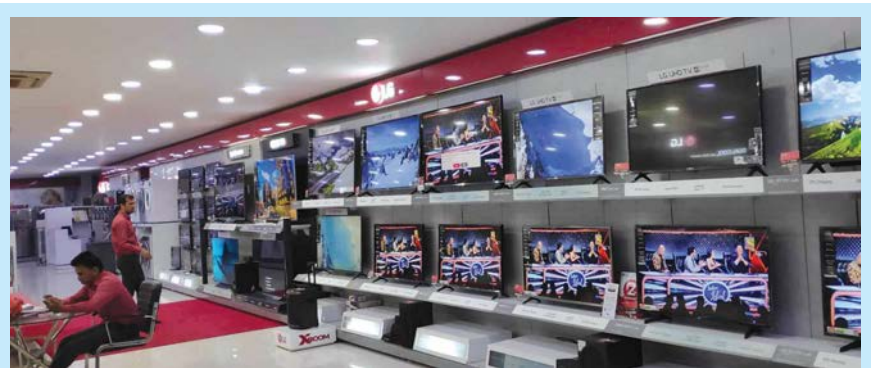
Naturally, the travel industry is unhappy with the Centre's decision to redirect the leave travel concession (LTC) allowance of government employees to purchase of consumer goods.

After the prolonged lockdown, the travel and tourism industry was expecting the festive season to boost travel demand, as people usually use the opportunity to travel to their home state.

After almost eight months of nil to very limited tourism activity, festive season was one of the few demand drivers that the travel and hospitality industry was looking forward to and the industry was hoping for more tax-based stimulus in the hands of all citizens to travel when spent against GST-rated travel agents, hotels tour operators, tourist transporters and restaurants, said the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (Faith).

"Redirecting the LTC money of government employees to buy consumer goods would dry up those funds for the travel sector. Additionally, it would also send a vote of no-confidence to the tourism travel and hospitality industry, which was looking to get back on its feet after 'Unlock'," said Faith.

Additionally, since tax-free LTC is a four-year block scheme, it will also cut away funds for future travel demand sources for the next year when the LTC block ends in 2021. The tourism ministry was



## But consumer durables are in a sweet spot

SANGEETHA G.  
CHENNAI, OCT. 12

The government's leave travel concession (LTC) scheme meant to induce demand has put consumer durables and electronics in a sweet spot.

The government has put forward a few riders for those availing the LTC scheme. The employee, who wants tax-free LTC, will have to buy goods or services worth three times the fare and one-time the leave encashment.

Further, the goods and services bought under the scheme should be carrying a GST of 12 per cent and above. This will weed out all the basic amenities that have a GST of less than 12 per cent and the focus will be on dis-

cretionary items like computers, consumer durables, smartphones, home appliances, furniture and home furnishings.

"Both in terms of price point and GST, consumer durables are in a sweet spot. People who have been deferring purchase of consumer durables, electronics, mobile phones and household electronics will have a reason to buy," said Naval Seth of Emkay Global Financial Services. Even those who had not made any festive season purchase plans will find a reason to upgrade consumer appliances with the scheme.

According to Kamal Nandi, president, Consumer Electronics and Appliances

Manufacturers Association (Ceama) and business head and EVP, Godrej Appliances, the measure will augur well for the consumer durables segment in the upcoming festive season.

"Traditionally, the Indian customer makes many of his/her big-ticket purchases, such as appliances, during the festive season. Due to the current pandemic, consumers have appreciated the value appliances add to their lives as they are looking for comfort and convenience at home with the adoption of 'work from home' format and for the overall health, hygiene & safety of their family from the coronavirus," he said.

Consumer durables have been seeing a good month-on-month recovery in sales in the past couple of months. "The category has not yet made growth over the same month last year. But we expect a positive growth during the festive season," said Seth.

planning to make 2021 the year for domestic tourism. The industry wants LTC funds to be restored and

income tax benefits be offered to citizens travelling within the country, paying up to Rs 1.5 lakh to

GST-registered travel agents, hotels tour operators, tourist transporters and restaurants.

## IIP contracts 8% in Aug; inflation spurts

FC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

Despite the gradual relaxation of lockdown restrictions, the industrial output contracted by 8 per cent in August, mostly due to minimal output from the manufacturing, mining and power generation sectors. While at the same time, consumer inflation in the September month increased to 7.34 per cent from 6.69 per cent in the previous month on account of rising food prices, according to government data released on Monday.

The Index of Industrial Production, or IIP, had contracted by 1.4 per cent in August 2019. The index had contracted 10.4 per cent in July 2020, which was better than 15.7 per cent contraction in June this year.

"It may not be appropriate to compare the IIP in the post-pandemic months with the IIP for months preceding the Covid-19 pandemic," the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said.

"The manufacturing sector production registered a decline of 8.6 per cent, while the output of mining and power segments fell 9.8 per cent and 1.8 per cent, respectively," it said, adding that with the gradual relaxation of restrictions, there has been a relative improvement in the economic activities by varying degrees as well as in data reporting.

The consumer price also went up to an unsatisfactory level, marking the highest level recorded in eight months, and it is also above the Reserve Bank's target range of 2-6 per cent. "The consumer inflation in September increased to 7.34 per cent from 6.69 per cent in the previous month on account of rising food prices. Food inflation in September rose to 10.68 per cent compared to 9.05 per cent in August," the release said.

Despite the central bank's effort to contain inflation by keeping rates low, unabated high prices have hurt the economy.

## Sahara says over ₹3,200 cr paid to co-operative society members

New Delhi, Oct. 12: The Sahara Group on Monday said it has paid Rs 3,226 crore to more than 10 lakh members of its four associated co-operative credit societies in the last 75 days, including some payments against requests from people who had complained about delayed payouts.

The group said there has been some delay in payments, primarily due to an embargo imposed for last eight years by the Supreme Court, while about Rs 22,000 crore of its funds, including interest amount, are deposited in the Sahara-Sebi account, which was created to refund bondholders of two group firms.

In a statement, Sahara said Sebi has been able to repay only Rs 106.1 crore to the investors in these eight years despite repeated attempts, which the group said only affirms its view that there are no claimants left as most bondholders were already repaid before it was asked by the regulator to deposit the money. —PTI

## Rao to man regulation department at RBI

FALAKNAAZ SYED  
MUMBAI, OCT. 12

The Reserve Bank of India on Monday rejigged the portfolios of deputy governors following the appointment of M. Rajeshwar Rao as the new deputy governor. Rao was appointed following the retirement of his predecessor N.S. Vishwanathan and has been given the charge of department of regulation, enforcement, inspection, legal department and risk monitoring. Vishwanathan's vacancy was filled after a delay of six months. Rajeshwar Rao is a seasoned central banker.

Last week, the appointments committee of the Cabinet cleared the name of Rao for the post of RBI deputy governor. With this, the RBI now has four deputy governors. The other three are B.P. Kanungo, M.K. Jain and M.D. Patra.

According to the central bank's website, Kanungo will handle ten portfolios. These include coordination, currency management, external investments and operations,

department of government and bank accounts, information technology, payments and settlements, foreign exchange, internal debt management and right to information and secretary's department.

Jain will be in charge of eight portfolios, including central security, corporate strategy and budget department, consumer education and protection department, supervision, financial inclusion and human resources.

Patra will handle the monetary policy department, department of economic and policy research, deposit insurance and credit guarantee, department of statistics, financial markets and international department and financial stability unit.

The RBI needs four deputy governors: two from within the ranks, a commercial banker and an economist to head the monetary policy department.

Prior to taking over as the ED, Rao was chief general manager, financial markets operations department.

## Singapore Air's A380 restaurant tickets sell out in 30 minutes

KYUNGHEE PARK  
SINGAPORE, OCT. 12

Singapore Airlines Ltd said all seats on its Airbus A380 pop-up restaurants were reserved within 30 minutes of bookings opening on Monday.

With flights largely grounded by the coronavirus pandemic, Singapore Airlines is trying novel ways to raise money, including using two A380 superjumbos parked at Changi Airport as temporary restaurants on Oct. 24 and 25.

A meal in a suite costs \$8642 (\$474, or roughly Rs 35,000), while seats in

business class are going for \$8321 and then dropping to \$896.30 for premium economy and \$853.50 for economy. Customers can also pay with frequent-flyer miles.

About half the seats in each aircraft will be available for dining, in line with restaurant guidelines on group limits and distancing, Singapore Airlines said in a statement. It plans to open a wait list later on Monday due to strong demand. In normal flying service, the carrier's A380s can seat as many as 471 people, according to its website.

The company will study

the wait list and see how it can "potentially accommodate some of those who are still interested in this unique dining experience," vice president of commercial operations Lee Lik Hsin said.

Singapore Airlines, which suffered a record \$81.12 billion (\$827 million) net loss in the quarter through June and is laying off about 20 per cent of its workforce, is also selling a range of first- and business-class meals and offering a service whereby a private chef reheats, plates and serves customers in their homes.

—Bloomberg

## China bans Oz coal imports as political relations sour

Oct. 12: China has suspended purchases of Australian coal, according to people familiar with the order, as Beijing continues to tightly control imports of the fuel amid soured political relations with Canberra.

Chinese power stations and steel mills have been verbally told to immediately stop using Australian coal, the people said, asking not to be identified as the matter is private. Ports have also been told not to offload Australian coal, one of the people said. China's customs administration wasn't immediately available for comment.

The ban marks an escalation in tensions that have



already jolted agricultural exports from China's biggest supplier of commodities. It isn't clear when the halt might end or how it might affect long-term contracts that are already in place.

The fossil fuel has been a previous target for China's ire with what it regards as an increasingly hostile government in Canberra, most recently in 2019 when

shipments became subject to port delays. It's one of the few resources in which China is largely self-sufficient.

China is, overwhelmingly, the key buyer of Australia's most lucrative export, iron ore, although curbs on that product would be a heavy blow to a steel industry that relies on vast – and cheap – supplies from mining heavyweights like Rio Tinto Group and BHP Group.

More broadly, China keeps a tight grip on coal imports, as it seeks to balance the needs of its miners and industrial users. The fuel still accounts for over half of its energy needs. —Bloomberg

## HERO LAUNCHES GLAMOUR BLAZE AT ₹72,000



MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, OCT. 12

Hero MotoCorp, India's biggest motorcycle maker, on Monday introduced a new special edition of the popular Glamour bike called the Glamour Blaze priced at Rs 72,200 at Delhi showroom to boost sales ahead of the festive season.

Powered by a BS 6-compliant 125cc engine, the bike is looking at making a mark in an extremely popular segment which also sees stiff competition between competing products.

The 125 cc engine comes with XSenes Programmed Fuel Injection and offers 10.7 bhp and torque of 10.6 Nm. It also gets an idle start-stop system – called i3S by Hero.

## Mahindra Alfa 3-wheeler now BS6-compliant

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, OCT. 12

Mahindra & Mahindra on Monday launched the BS6 compliant variants of Alfa, its flagship 3-wheeler brand in Asia's third biggest economy. Mahindra Alfa comes with a few cosmetic changes and enhanced performance.

The Alfa three-wheeler is available in both passenger starting at Rs 2.67 lakh and cargo variants at Rs 2.59 lakh at Mumbai showroom.





## SHORT TAKES



Para shuttler Manasi Joshi poses with the Barbie model.

## Barbie model after role model Manasi

**New Delhi:** Indian para athletes have been making the headlines lately. Weeks after an unprecedented nine Para athletes were honoured with the National Sports Awards 2020, para shuttler Manasi Joshi has now made every Indian proud becoming the first ever Para athlete to have featured in TIME magazine as Next Generation Leader. She is also the first Indian para-athlete to have a Barbie doll modelled to her likeness announced on the occasion of the International Day of Girl Child. Joshi joined the likes of Australian Paralympic medalist wheelchair para athlete Madison De Rozario and Para Swimming champion Sumeyye Boyaci among many others, in celebration of extraordinary women who inspire girls around the world to be anything they dream to be. The only other Indian to have received this laurel is gymnast Dipa Karmakar in 2019. Extremely delighted with Manasi's latest recognitions, Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) President Deepa Malik said these honours will give a great boost to the Indian Paralympic Movement.

## Football captain Carlton no more

**New Delhi:** Former India football captain and mid-fielder Carlton Chapman, who formed a deadly trio at the club level with Bhaichung Bhutia and IM Vijayan in the 1990s, died on Monday following a heart attack in Bengaluru. He was 49. Chapman was hospitalised on Sunday night at a hospital in Bengaluru and passed away early this morning. A creative midfielder, Chapman played for India between 1995 and 2001 and the country won the 1997 SAFF Cup under his captaincy. At the club level, he had two successful spells with East Bengal and one with now defunct JCT Mills. A product of the Tata Football Academy in early 1990s, Chapman joined East Bengal in 1993 and scored a hat-trick in his team's 6-2 win against Iraq club Al Zawra in a first round match at the Asian Cup Winners Cup that year.

— PTI

## Akbar elected FMSCI president

**New Delhi:** Former racer Akbar Ebrahim was on Monday unanimously elected for a second term as the president of India's motorsports governing body, FMSCI. The elections were held via video-conference amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Ebrahim had his first stint as FMSCI chief from 2016-2018 following which he was replaced by P. Prithviraj. "It is without doubt, going to be a very challenging and tough year given the unprecedented pandemic situation the whole world is facing. I am sure that the FMSCI will collectively rise to the occasion and manage the situation to the best of its ability," Ebrahim said in a statement. Farooq Ahmed was unanimously elected as the vice-president. The FMSCI boasts of more than 50 affiliates across all corners of the country and there are more than 1200 registered athletes. — PTI

## Live on TV

### CRICKET

**IPL:** Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Chennai Super Kings from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

### BADMINTON

**Denmark Open:** Matches from 12.30 pm on Star Sports 2 HD, 3

### TENNIS

**St Petersburg Open:** Matches from 3.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

### FOOTBALL

**UEFA Nations League:** Azerbaijan vs Cyprus from 9.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD; Ukraine vs Spain from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD; Germany vs Switzerland from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

# BANG ON TARGET

## AB de Villiers goes great guns as RCB crush KKR

**Sharjah, Oct. 12:** AB de Villiers hit a power-packed 73 to help Royal Challengers Bangalore outplay Kolkata Knight Riders by 82 runs in the Indian Premier League on Monday.

The South African great smashed six sixes in his 33-ball blitz and put on an unbeaten century partnership with skipper Virat Kohli, who scored 33, as Bangalore posted 194 for 2 in 20 overs.

Proteas quick Chris Morris and spinner Washington Sundar claimed two wickets each to keep down Kolkata to 112 for 9 in 20 overs.

But the evening belonged to the 36-year-old De Villiers who scored his third IPL half-century of the season to go past 3,000 runs in the Twenty20 tournament.

"Genius. Find me another word for @ABdeVilliers17. This one will do for now! Genius," veteran commentator Harsha Bhogle wrote on Twitter.

Opener Aaron Finch (47 from 37 balls) looked sluggish in the middle and struggled to find boundaries before being castled by Prasidh Krishna.

With boundaries drying up, De Villiers unleashed his array of shots against a disciplined Nagarkoti, smashing him for consecutive sixes, over midwicket, one of which hit a running car.

— PTI



AB de Villiers of Royal Challengers Bangalore plays a shot on way to his half-century during an IPL match against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Monday.

— BCCI

## SCORECARD

**Royal Challengers Bangalore:** Aaron Finch b Prasidh 47, D. Padikkal b Russell 32, Virat Kohli not out 33, AB de Villiers not out 73. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-6, NB-1) 9. **Total: (for two wickets in 20 overs) 194.**

**FOW:** 1-67, 2-94.

**Bowling:** Pat Cummins 4-0-38-0, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-42-1, Andre Russell 4-0-51-1, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-25-0, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 4-0-36-0.

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** Tom Banton b Saini 8, Shubman Gill run out 34, Nitish Rana b Washington Sundar 9, Eoin Morgan c Udana

b Washington Sundar 8, D. Karthik b Chahal 1, A. Russell c M. Siraj b Udana 16, R. Tripathi c Morris b M. Siraj 16, Pat Cummins c Padikkal b Chris Morris 1, K. Nagarkoti b Chris Morris 4, Chakravarthy not out 7, Prasidh Krishna not out 2. **Extras:** (LB-3, W-3) 6. **Total: (for 9 wickets in 20 Overs) 112.**

**FOW:** 1-23, 2-51, 3-55, 4-62, 5-64, 6-85, 7-89, 8-99, 9-108.

**Bowling:** Chris Morris 4-0-17-2, Navdeep Saini 3-0-17-1, Mohammad Siraj 3-0-24-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-20-2, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-12-1, Isuru Udana 2-0-19-1.

## IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	7	5	2	0	10	+1.327
Delhi Capitals	7	5	2	0	10	+1.038
Royal Challengers Bangalore	7	5	2	0	10	-0.116
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	4	3	0	8	-0.577
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	3	4	0	6	+0.153
Rajasthan Royals	7	3	4	0	6	-0.872
Chennai Super Kings	7	2	5	0	4	-0.588
Kings XI Punjab	7	1	6	0	2	-0.381

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

## Teen nabbed for threatening Ziva

**Ahmedabad, Oct. 12:** A 16-year-old boy was nabbed on Sunday from Mundra in Gujarat for allegedly issuing threats against cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni's minor daughter, police said. "The class 12 student from Nanna Kapaya village was detained for questioning in connection with a disgusting threat message that was posted on the Instagram account of Dhoni's wife Sakshi Dhoni a few days back," Kutch (West) superintendent of police Saurabh Singh told reporters.

The teenager "confessed" to have posted the threatening message on the Instagram account after the IPL 2020 match between KKR and CSK cricket teams, police said.

Ranchi police had shared information regarding the boy with Kutch (West) police and asked them to con-

firm if he was the one who had posted the threat message, Singh said.

"We detained him for questioning after Ranchi police informed us that the accused hails from Mundra in Kutch district.

"We have confirmed that the boy is the same who had posted the message. He will be handed over to Ranchi police as the FIR was lodged in that city," the SP said, adding that a team of Ranchi Police is likely to reach Kutch tomorrow to take custody of the teenager.

Dhoni is captaining the CSK cricket team in the ongoing Indian Premier League. The nature of the threat had caused a huge outrage on social media, with several cricketers, politicians and celebrities expressing disgust and demanding action.

— PTI

## ISHANT OUT OF IPL WITH RIB CAGE INJURY

**Dubai, Oct. 12:** Veteran pacer Ishant Sharma has been ruled out of the Indian Premier League with a rib-cage injury, his team Delhi Capitals said on Monday.

The 32-year-old Test specialist had played only one of the seven games that the Capitals have played so far, finishing his four overs wicketless for 26 runs against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Abu Dhabi. "Fast bowler Ishant Sharma experienced an acute episode of left rib cage pain while bowling at a team training session on October 7, 2020 in Dubai.

"Subsequent investigations revealed that he sustained a left internal oblique muscle tear. This injury will unfortunately rule him out of the remainder of the IPL," Capitals said. Ishant has played 97 Tests, 80 ODIs and 14 T20Is for India and is set to spearhead the ace attack during Test matches in Australia.

— PTI

## Depleted Dhoni side face SRH

**Dubai, Oct. 12:** Time is fast running out for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led Chennai Super Kings, a team which desperately needs its batting to click when it takes on Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Tuesday in a battle to keep its IPL hopes alive.

CSK with five defeats in seven games are currently at the penultimate position in the eight-team standings halfway into the tournament. While Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis have had decent outings so far, CSK need a stronger show from its faltering middle order to.

SRH, on the other hand, are a only a tad better-placed than CSK at the fifth spot with three wins from seven games.

But the five-wicket defeat to RR on Sunday would be hurting the Hyderabad outfit badly.

Batting has not been SRH's concern at all as the likes of Jonny Bairstow, skipper David Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane

## NUMBERS GAME

### HEAD TO HEAD

- Matches: 13
- Chennai: 9
- Hyderabad: 4

### MEETING IN 2019

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Chennai Super Kings by 6 wickets at Hyderabad
- Chennai Super Kings beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6 wickets at Chennai

### MEETING IN CURRENT EDITION

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Chennai Super Kings by 7 runs at Dubai

### FOR THE RECORD

- Faf du Plessis is the highest run-getter for Chennai Super Kings in the current edition. The South African batsman scored 307 runs at a strike rate of 147.59 in seven innings of as many matches.

— S. PERVEZ QAISAR

Williamson are all among runs and have the ability to shoulder the responsibility on their own. But it is the bowling unit which let Hyderabad down on Sunday.

— PTI

## ICC SETS DEADLINE FOR NOMINATION OF ITS CHAIRMAN

**Dubai, Oct. 12:** The ICC on Monday set October 18 as the deadline for its Board of Directors to propose candidates for the chairman's post to succeed Shashank Manohar, ending a nearly three-month-long impasse on the nomination process.

"The process, which is being overseen by the Independent Chairman of the ICC Audit Committee, has commenced and the first stage is for the nominations of potential candidates to be made by current Board Directors by 18 October 2020," ICC stated in a release.

The candidate would require two thirds of the 17 ICC Board member votes, which roughly comes to 11 or 12.

— PTI

## NBA | CHAMPIONSHIP

# Lakers crack the whip to win title

**Orlando, Oct. 12:** Kobe Bryant's spirit could be felt by the Los Angeles Lakers as they finished a run to the NBA title on Sunday, nine months after Bryant's death in a helicopter crash.

The Lakers completed a championship run dedicated to the late LA legend by defeating Miami 106-93 to capture the NBA Finals four games to two in a quarantine bubble at Orlando, Florida.

"Kobe, I know he's looking down on us super proud. We miss him, and this is definitely for him," Lakers star forward Anthony Davis said.

"I think Kobe and Gianna have guided this team the entire year," Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka said.

"Kobe's voice is always in my head, always, every day, every minute... for us to be able to win this championship doesn't take away the sting of the loss, but what it does is it helps us add to their legacy.

Bryant's widow, Vanessa Bryant, posted a congratulations message on Instagram, saying: "Wish Kobe and Gigi were here to see this."

The Lakers captured their first NBA title since 2010, when Bryant led them to the last of his five career crowns.

"There would be times in my hotel room here — when you're in a bubble for 100 days, it's tough — there would be times in the middle of the night, I would hear his voice: 'Stay the course. Finish the task,'" said Pelinka.

**Kobe, I know he's looking down on us super proud. We miss him, and this is definitely for him.**

— ANTHONY DAVIS after winning the NBA title

"He said, 'I'll give you two, three years, you'll fix this. You'll get the Lakers back on top.'

Pelinka looked to the heavens and said, "I guess you were right, man. You gave me the energy to do it."

Outside the Lakers' home arena, the Staples Center in Los Angeles, fans took to the streets chanting, "Kobe, Kobe," despite being urged to celebrate at home due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

## JAMES SAVOURS MVP TITLE

The sight of LeBron James hoisting an NBA championship trophy as Most Valuable Player of the title series was no surprise — but the path he took to a fourth career crown was anything but usual.

"I can't sit here and say one is more challenging than the other or one is more difficult than the other," James said after capturing his fourth NBA title with a third team, and his fourth Finals MVP award.

He posted a triple-double of 28 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists in the title-clinching 106-93 victory over the Miami Heat in Game Six.

— AFP



LeBron James (centre) of the Los Angeles Lakers is jubilant as he holds his MVP and the NBA Championship trophy after winning the NBA title at AdventHealth Arena at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Sunday.

— AFP

## No direct entry for badminton Finals

**New Delhi, Oct. 12:** India ace P. V. Sindhu will not get a direct entry in the rescheduled World Tour Final as the Badminton World Federation (BWF) has decided against handing automatic invitations to current world champions in the season-ending tournament.

According to the BWF rules, world champions have always enjoyed a direct qualification to the prestigious World Tour Finals but with the Covid-19 pandemic disrupting the international calendar, the world body has decided to do away with the criteria this year.

"Players will qualify for the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2020 in Bangkok (Thailand) according to the current regulations. The exception to that is current world champions will not get an automatic invitation (World Tour Regulations, Clause 8.2.3) and only

points earned from World Tour tournaments will be taken into account," BWF said.

"The remaining Grade 2 tournaments counting towards qualification are: DANISA Denmark Open 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 750), Asia Open I 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 1000), Asia Open II 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 1000)," the statement added.

Sindhu, who won the World Championship gold medal last year, had pulled out of the Denmark Open and will now have to perform at the Asia Legs to make it to the World Tour Finals. "We don't regret the decision to pull out of Denmark Open. Now that the BWF has laid down the criteria, Sindhu will try to do well in the Asia leg if there are no more post-nominations and qualify," Sindhu's father P. V. Ramana said.

— PTI

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