

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
NELLORE | SATURDAY | 7 NOVEMBER 2020



NATION | 4

JD(U) clarifies on Nitish's lash poll

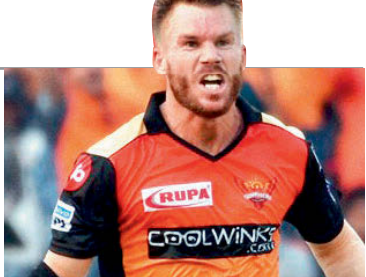


WORLD | 5

Greta recycles Trump jibe, asks him to 'chill'

SPORTS | 8

Sunrisers eliminate RCB to make Qualifier-2



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

Vol. 18 No. 122 Established 1938 | 16 pages | ₹6.00

WEATHER



Max: 32.8°C
Min: 25.6°C
RH: 77%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: clear.
Max/Min temp. 32/25 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

| CASES | DEATHS |
|----------------------------|----------|
| (+46,031) | (+524) |
| 84,56,280 | 1,25,528 |
| covid19india.org | |
| STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS | |
| (+1,602) | (+4) |
| TS: 2,47,284 | 1,366 |
| (+2,410) | (+11) |
| AP: 8,38,363 | 6,768 |

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

| 4,93,78,910 |
|-------------------------------|
| DEATHS |
| 12,44,613 |
| COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES |
| 215 |
| worldometers.info/coronavirus |

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwauya Bahula
Shasthi till 7.21 am
Star: Punarvasu till 8.02 pm
Varjyam: 4.15 pm to 5.54 pm
Durmuhurtam: 6.20 am to 7.50 am
Rahukalam: 9 pm to 10.30 am
HJRI CALENDAR
Rabbi-ul Awwal 20, 1442 AH
PRAYERS(SHAHI MASJID)
Fajar: 4:54 am
Zohar: 11:54 pm
Asar: 4:05 pm
Maghrib: 5:42 pm
Isha: 6:54 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5:40 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6:07 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 10:16 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 11:36 AM

COUNTER POINT



Who are the candidates?
Biden and Trump?

SHORT TAKES

New info panel chief to take oath

New Delhi: Information commissioner Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha will be administered the oath as the Chief Information Commissioner on Saturday, officials said on Friday. Sinha, a former diplomat, will be administered the oath of office by President Ram Nath Kovind. Journalist Uday Mahurkar, former labour secretary Heera Lal Samariya and ex-Deputy CAG Saroj Punhani will be administered the oath as Information commissioners.

Inter-state smuggler Bhasha Bhai arrested

NAGESWARA RAO BALLEDA | DC KADAPA, NOV. 6

In a major swoop, the most wanted and elusive inter-state red sanders smuggler Basha Bhai has finally landed in police custody. The Tamil Nadu native who was involved in red sanders smuggling for over two decades was reportedly arrested in Coimbatore on Friday. Recently five smugglers from Tamil Nadu were burnt alive in an accident on the Tadipatri-Kadapa highway. Police believe that Basha Bhai is the mastermind of the smuggling operation.

Three more smugglers, who fled, are also believed to be in police custody.

They belong to Kadapa, Rayachoti, and Pendlimarri. Basha Bhai, against whom three cases are pending, was earlier arrested in a previous case in Proddatur Rural.

Smugglers usually bring labourers from Tamil Nadu. They cut down red sandalwood trees in forests and take them to a point from where they are transported to the specified destination. Stolen or rented vehicles are used to carry red sandalwood logs.

■ **Page 3: Bhasha targeted vehicles with logs for 20 years**

AP FIXES ANNUAL FEE FOR MBBS, DENTAL COURSES

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

The state government has fixed the annual fee structure for undergraduate medical and dental courses for all specialties in private, unaided, non-minority and minority colleges for the block period 2020-21 to 2022-23.

Based on recommendations of the AP Higher Education Regulatory and Monitoring Commission, the government has issued GO. MS. No. 146 dated 05-11-2020, notifying the revision.

The fee fixed is inclusive of annual fee, including tuition fee, special fee, laboratory/library fee, computer/internet fee, maintenance and amenities fee, extracurricular activities fee, development and other recurring expenditure. However, the fee fixed does not include hostel, transport, mess charges, registration and admission fee and refundable laboratory and library fee. The fee structure will be applicable for the new courses/colleges sanctioned during the block period.

Institutions should not charge either directly or indirectly any other amount over and above the fee fixed and in case of any other amount is charged under any head, including donations, it would tantamount to collection of capitation fee making it liable for prosecution under Section 9 of Act 5 of 1983 apart for penalty under APHERMC Rules, 2019. Stipend will be paid to UG students on par with students from government colleges during the period of compulsory rotating internship.

■ **Page 3: Fee for 17 MBBS colleges common**

AP may ban bursting firecrackers

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

Andhra Pradesh may impose a ban on bursting of firecrackers, though subject to the final verdict of National Green Tribunal (NGT), which is going into the issue, as smoke generated during Diwali festival may worsen the health of Covid-19 patients.

NGT has issued notices to several states and Union territories including AP, seeking their response on prohibiting use of fireworks, as they may affect the health of people, especially the Coronavirus-infected patients, who may find it difficult to breathe due to high levels of pollution.

Incidentally, the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control

On election duty



Security personal carrying EVMs and VVPAT machines leave for polling booths from a distribution centre ahead of the third and final phase of Bihar Assembly elections, in Hajipur on Friday.

— PTI

Mail-in votes propel Biden closer to US Presidency

Washington, Nov. 6: Democrat Joe Biden was on the brink of winning the White House on Friday after taking the lead in the potentially decisive state of Pennsylvania but President Donald Trump showed no signs of being ready to concede.

Pennsylvania, and its 20 electoral college votes, would be enough to vault Biden, 77, past the magic number of 270 votes in the 538-seat electoral college, which determines the presidency.

With tens of thousands of mail-in votes remaining to be counted in Penn-sylvania, many from Democratic areas, Biden opened up a 9,000-vote lead over Trump, according to real-time state election results.

Biden has at least 253 electoral votes and is leading in three other states — Arizona (10 Electoral College votes), Georgia (16) and Nevada (six) — where ballots from Tuesday's bitterly contested election continue to be counted.

His margin in Georgia thinned to 1,096, and the US state said it will recount the votes. "With a margin that small, there will be a recount in Georgia," Georgia secretary of state Brad Raffensperger told reporters in Atlanta. However, a recount will have little bearing if Pennsylvania goes to Biden but could prolong the counting process.

Raffensperger, the top elected official overseeing elections, said that the presidential contest in the

state "remains too close to call." The final tally in Georgia at this point "has huge implications for the entire country," Raffensperger said.

"The stakes are high and emotions are high on all sides. We will not let those debates distract us from our work." He said that Georgia was letting observers from both campaigns watch the counting after Trump, with no evidence, alleged widespread fraud nationwide.

With a Biden victory looking increasingly likely, the US Secret Service increased its protective bubble around the former vice president, sending an extra squad of agents to his campaign headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware, *The Washington Post* said.

— Agencies

Karnataka will ban firecracks, says BSY

Bengaluru, Nov. 6: Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa on Friday appealed to the people to celebrate Diwali in a simple way, using "green crackers" after indicating that the government would ban fireworks due to the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic.

In a statement, he said several suggestions have

Board (APPCB) is also weighing the option of recommending to the state government about imposing a ban on bursting of firecrackers.

APPCB sources maintain

come from the people regarding the sale and use of firecrackers during the festival. The government has taken all measures for the control of Covid-19, and it was appropriate to celebrate Diwali in a simple and meaningful way keeping in mind the health of citizens and children, Yediyurappa said.

— PTI

So, the state PCB is poised to recommend that the state government ban bursting of firecrackers in the state once the NGT announces its stand on Monday.

Already states like Rajasthan, Odisha, Karnataka and others have imposed ban on bursting of fireworks during the ensuing Diwali festival to safeguard the health of Covid-19 patients in their states.

APPCB has decided to monitor the ambient air quality, noise pollution and presence of metals in the capital city region of Vijayawada for 15 days from November 7 to 21 and also in all 13 district headquarters from Saturday to November 14.

■ **Page 3: APPCB looks out for pollutants**

CDS cannot rule out China clash

Rawat says PLA facing 'unanticipated consequences' of Ladakh misadventure

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat said on Friday that the Chinese Army is facing "unanticipated consequences of its misadventure in Ladakh" and the possibility of border confrontations leading to a wider conflict cannot be ruled out.

"The situation along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh remains tense and the People's Liberation Army is facing unanticipated consequences of its misadventure in Ladakh because of the Indian defence forces firm and strong response," said Gen Rawat during a webinar.

He said that India will not accept any shifting of the LAC. "In the overall security calculus, border confrontation, transgressions and unprovoked tactical military actions spilling into a larger conflict cannot be discounted," said the CDS.

Gen. Rawat's statement is the strongest direct attack on China by any high-ranking Indian official. Ministers have mostly avoided naming China directly while talking about Chinese aggression.

INDIA, CHINA HOLD EIGHTH ROUND OF CORPS COMMANDERS MEETING

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

India and China on Friday held the eighth round of corps commanders-level talks on the six-month military standoff in eastern Ladakh. The meeting started at 9.30 am at Chushul in eastern Ladakh and ended at around 7 pm. This was the first meeting under the new commander of the Leh-based 14 Corps, Lt.

Gen. P.G.K. Menon. The earlier meetings were headed by Lt. Gen. Harinder Singh, who is now commandant of the Indian Military Academy.

There was no official word yet on the outcome. India had earlier rejected a Chinese proposal to move back tanks and artillery from the forward positions. India's position is that it was China which had first moved its troops at the LAC.

INDO-NEPAL PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED THROUGH DIALOGUE, SAYS NEPAL PM

Kathmandu, Nov. 6: Problems between Nepal and India would be resolved through dialogue, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli said on Friday during a meeting here with Indian Army chief Gen. M.M. Naravane who paid a courtesy call on him.

Gen. Naravane's three-day visit to Nepal was largely aimed at resetting bilateral ties that came under severe strain following a bitter border row between the two countries. The meeting between Gen Naravane and Oli, who is also defence minister, took place at his official residence.

Prime Minister Oli, according to his foreign affairs advisor Rajan Bhattarai, expressed hope that the problems between the two countries would be resolved through dialogue.

— PTI

AP freezes DA for staff, pensioners

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

The state government has issued an order freezing dearness allowance for state government employees and pensioners/family pensioners at the current rates till July.

The government issued GO MS No. 95 dated 06-11-2020 stating that the additional installment of dearness allowance payable to

state government employees and dearness relief to government pensioners/family pensioners, due from January 1, 2020, shall not be paid.

■ **Full report on Page 2**

Lashkar terrorists killed in gun battle in J&K's Palampore

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, NOV. 6

A fierce gunfight which started between a group of militants and security forces outside Kashmir Valley's highway township of Pampore on Thursday evening and continued through Friday left two suspected Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants and a civilian dead.

A third militant surrendered before the security forces before the later mounted final assault against his associates holed up in a private house during a cordon-and-search operation, the officials said.

They said that the operation was launched jointly by the J&K's police's counterinsurgency Special Operations Group (SOG), the Army's 50 Rashtriya

Rifles and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)'s 110th Battalion in Lalpora Chatlam area of Pampore, about 20-km south of Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar, "on specific input regarding presence of terrorists".

During the initial exchange of fire, two civilians were injured. One of them, identified as Abid Ahmed Mir, succumbed to his injuries in the hospital later.

However, a statement issued by the J&K police here claimed that the duo was hit when the militants fired "indiscriminately" and managed to escape from the place they were hiding at.

It said that the militants were soon tracked again and the given opportunity to surrender. "However,

they again fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter," the police said.

The operation was suspended because of darkness to avoid collateral damage but the whole area was put under strict cordon.

A heavy exchange of fire took place between the two sides at first light on Friday but before it the holed up militants were again asked to surrender, a police spokesman said. He added that one of the three militants, a local resident identified as Khawar Sultan Mir, while responding to the appeal laid down his arms and surrendered before the forces in an injured condition and was subsequently evacuated to a hospital.

BATTLE | BENGAL

Minister's visit to vocalist's home comes after Ganguly refused to be BJP's face

Bengali vocalist not in tune with Shah's plans

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, NOV. 6

A day after setting the target of winning more than 200 seats in the West Bengal elections next year, Union home minister Amit Shah on Friday met musical maestro Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty amid the BJP's hunt for a chief ministerial face with the clean image of a Bengali *Bhadrakolok* (gentleman), well-known in any field, to fight the Trinamul Congress.

A reputed vocalist of the classical music tradition, Chakrabarty was con-

ferred the Padma Bhushan by the Narendra Modi government in January this year.

Shah's move came after BCCI president Sourav Ganguly's polite refusal to bat for the BJP due to his preoccupation with cricket administration, according to party sources.

Before Shah's visit, Chakrabarty told the media: "Amit ji is coming to me as a musician. I am grateful that a person of his stature has considered visiting Kolkata for the cause of music because I am a musician and I do not know anything other than



Union home minister Amit Shah in talk with Indian classical vocalist Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty in Kolkata on Friday.

● **AFTER THE MEET**, the vocalist said, "My answer to the question if I am joining the BJP is that my only party is the music party. I do not belong to the BJP, CPI(M), TMC or Congress."

music."

Asked about the meeting, Chakrabarty said, "He will listen to music. What else can he do? I do not know anything more than that. Neither have I the guts to invite him nor have I invited him. So, as a famous person, he himself is com-

ing to me as a guest."

Recalling his long association with many leaders, Chakrabarty later said, "My answer to the question if I am joining the BJP is that my only party is the music party. I do not belong to the BJP, CPI(M), TMC or Congress. A powerful person like the Union home minister's visit to a singer is a surprise."

On the BJP's Chief Ministerial face, Shah said, "The list is not about a few, say two, names. There are many. Our party president and parliamentary board will decide the name."

SHORT TAKES

CM INAUGURATES
PRAJASAKTI
OFFICE BUILDINGDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has virtually inaugurated the new building of Prajasakti office at Tadepalli here on Friday. The Chief Minister unveiled the plaque of the Prajasakti daily office by pressing the button of the switch to declare it open.

The Chief Minister congratulated management and staff of Prajashakti daily and wished them all the very best in their endeavours.

CONG FOR STARTING
DUGARAJAPATNAM
PORT WORKSAVINASH P SUBRAMANYAM |
DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 6

Denouncing the negligent attitude of both the central and state governments in taking up the proposed Dugarajapatnam port works, the Congress workers staged a protest in front of MPDO offices at Kota and Chillakur in Nellore district on Friday.

Speaking to media persons on the lines of the protest, Congress leader Poola Chandrasekhar alleged that the state and central governments are neglecting the Dugarajapatnam port to benefit the Adani group, which have purchased major shares in Krishnapatnam port in Nellore district.

"Gujarat is having 14 sea ports and on a similar line, AP, which is having more than 1,000 km sea shore, can have at least 10 ports, which generates revenue to the state government and also provide employment to the local youth", he said, while recalling that the UPA-II government has approved in the Union Cabinet, providing a grant for the establishment of port in Dugarajapatnam.

He also recalled that the Dugarajapatnam port had carried out imports and exports activity in the 16th century and during the British regime.

He demanded that the central government start constructing the Dugarajapatnam port without any further delay, as it can generate about one lakh jobs to local youth and Nellore and Chittoor districts would be developed if the port comes into reality.

ISRO ALL SET TO
LAUNCH PSLV-C49
WITH 10 SATELLITESPATHRI RAJASEKHAR | DC
NELLORE, NOV. 6

The Indian Space Research Organisation is all set to launch its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C49) at 3.02 pm on Saturday. The rocket will be carrying the earth observation satellite EOS-01 and nine of international customers.

The 26-hour countdown commenced at 1.02 pm on Friday and is going on smoothly, sources said. The operation to fuel up the rocket is in progress during the countdown. The launch will take place at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota range, in Nellore district.

This is the first launch this year for ISRO and the flight is the 51st for PSLV, the workhorse rocket. It will be the 76th launch from Shar and 38th from the first pad from the spaceport.

The EOS-01 is intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support. The customer satellites — one from Lithuania, four each from Luxembourg and the USA — are being launched under commercial agreement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), department of space.

The Lithuania satellite, R2, is meant for technology demonstration while the Luxembourg satellites, Kleos (KSM-1A/1B/1C/1D), are designed for maritime applications.

The 4 USA satellites, named Lemur (Lemur-1/2/3/4), are meant for multi-mission remote sensing.

Sources in Shar said that ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan is driving to Sriharikota from Bengaluru, and is expected to reach the spaceport later on Friday night. He will be present for the launch on Saturday.

A team of officials went to Tirumala to seek the blessings of Lord Balaji for the mission since Dr Sivan, who used to make it a point to visit Tirumala before every launch, is directly heading to Shar, sources said.

Praja Sankala Yatra 3rd year celebrations



Guntur East MLA Md. Mustafa, along with other leaders, takes part in walkathon in the celebrations of 3rd anniversary of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's Praja Snakalapa Yatra in Guntur citu on Friday.

— TEJO ROY ELETI

Those who missed out
to get sops from today

CM particular about extending benefits to all eligible, says Krishna

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

The YSR Congress government is working closely to deliver welfare schemes to all eligible beneficiaries, including those who missed out due to various reasons, by a reapplication process.

Minister for BC welfare, Ch. Venugopala Krishna, addressing a press meet here on Friday, said that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has been implementing welfare schemes to the utmost sat-

isfaction of the beneficiaries across the state. Krishna said people who could not receive the benefits of schemes due to various reasons will get an opportunity to reapply with the help of the village and ward volunteers.

He said they will deliver all schemes beginning Kapu Nestam on Saturday, Vahana Mitra (November 9), Jaganna Chedodu (November 10), Jaganna Netanna Nestham (November 11) and November 12 would mark distribution of Cheyutha scheme benefits to those beneficiaries who had been missed out earlier.

He said they will deliver all schemes beginning Kapu Nestam on Saturday, Vahana Mitra (November 9), Jaganna Chedodu (November 10), Jaganna Netanna Nestham (November 11) and November 12 would mark distribution

of Cheyutha scheme benefits to those beneficiaries who had been missed out earlier.

He said that about three lakh beneficiaries would be covered which will be over and above the 28,19,000 who had benefited from these schemes. He said the Chief Minister was particular about extending the benefits despite global economic instability because of Covid-19.

Kapu corporation chairman Jakkampudi Raja also participated in the press meet.



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy releases the book 'Manavatvame Na Matham' at the camp office on Friday. Ministers B. Srinivasa Reddy, Government adviser Sajjala Ramakrishnareddy, I&PR commissioner T. Vijay Kumar Reddy, Government adviser (communications) G.V.D. Krishnamohan, Book Editor N. Padmaja are also seen.

CM launches Manavatvame Na Matham

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6:

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday released Manavatvame Na Matham book, published by Gandhipatham fortnightly magazine, marking the occasion of completing three years of

Praja Sankala Yatra.

The book carries various sensitive, heart touching and humanitarian events of Jagan Mohan Reddy during his Praja Sankalpa Yatra and from his childhood.

The editor of fortnightly magazine Gandhipatham Naramalli Padmaja

recounted many touching moments and incidents of Jagan Mohan Reddy like helping the needy, stopping his convoy on seeing a banner near the airport in Visakhapatnam, enquiring with youngsters who displayed banner, seeking financial help for their friend suffering

from cancer and sanctioning of Rs 25 lakh for treatment immediately, helping an old woman who lost her sandals during padayatra and Chief Minister himself lifting the medal when it was slipped down during medal distribution, were included in the book.

KURNOOL YSRC MLAS STEP OUT TO MARK 3 YEARS OF JAGAN'S PADAYATRA

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, NOV. 6

MLAs belonging to Kurnool district have also taken out a padayatra to mark Jagan Mohan Reddy's successful completion of three-year-long

padayatra. Kurnool MLA M. A. Hafeez Khan vowed to develop Kurnool city as a model for other cities in the state by implementing a master plan.

Hafeez Khan and other party activists garlanded a statue of former chief

minister late Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy at Dharmapeta in the city on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the MLA said Jagan Mohan Reddy has fulfilled all his promises made during his padayatra. As part

of it, Kurnool will also be developed into a beautiful city by taking up many developmental activities like widening of roads, permanent structure for drinking water and underground drainage system.

CHANGING TACTICS

Plans to take away 50 acres land for establishing med college
Sinister move to alienate RARS landsD. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL, NOV. 6

AP Cabinet's decision to alienate 50 acres of land belonging to Regional Agriculture Research Station (RARS) at Nandyal for establishing the proposed medical college in the town has alienated both farmers and the scientific community.

There are allegations that real estate developers, including politicians from YSRC government, have sinister designs when it comes to lands around the institute. Speculation is rife that once Nandyal is made the district headquarter and a medical col-

lege comes up there, real estate prices of the town will go up. Dealers in real estate, including politicians, will then be able to make a killing. The district collector has already given his nod for alienation of 50 acres from the agriculture research station's land.

The Regional Agriculture Research Station at Nandyal, the headquarters of Scarce Rainfall Zone, is located on fertile lands. Scientists and farmers have pointed out that RARS is doing pioneering work in developing high-yielding varieties of seeds that improve productivity of the farming communi-

ty. Nandyal station is considered the oldest agricultural research station in Andhra Pradesh as well as the country. It mainly works on improvement of cotton and sorghum crops. In 1950s, the station became headquarters of State Cotton Specialist. Thereafter, it was designated as Cotton Research Station in the year 1954.

Bojja Dasarath Reddy, President of Rayalaseema Saguneeiti Sadhana Samiti (RSSS), has vehemently opposed the move to locate the medical college on the land belonging to the research station. He pointed out that it is the only centre that is sustaining farm-

er's community in the entire Rayalaseema area. He urged the state government to drop the plans for acquiring lands of RARS. Nandyal MLA Sila Ravichandra Kishore Reddy, when contacted, said Nandyal has been allotted a new medical college and administration is scouting for lands.

RARS director Sampath Kumar said advanced research is going on at the station all of whose projects are funded by the Indian Agriculture Research Institute, New Delhi. The pioneering research at the station involves chickpea, rice, tobacco, millets and so on.

AP-Amul milk project to
take-off on November 20DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

The AP-Amul milk procurement will start in Prakasam, Chittoor, and Kadapa districts on November 20, said minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development Seediri Appalaraju. He said cheques would be given to dairy farmers by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on November 25.

Addressing a press conference here on Friday, the minister said that the government signed an MoU with Amul to encourage milk cooperative societies, especially those run by women. This will boost dairy farmers and empower them economically and socially. He further stated that nearly 5.6 lakh women, who were provided with financial assistance under YSR Cheyutha have come forward for establishing mini dairies in villages. They have been given cattle and buffaloes by the government. He mentioned that around additional 22 lakh litres of milk production is expected from the mini dairies. Appalaraju said that the

Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development Seediri Appalaraju said that the state will be spending ₹1,362 crore for infrastructure development by setting up bulk milk cooling units and milk collection centres in Rythu Bharosa Kendras.

He said that the project will be implemented in a phased manner and in the first phase about 7,121 milk collection centres and 2,774 BMCUs will be set up.

He explained that the project will be implemented in a phased manner and in the first phase about 7,121 milk collection centres and 2,774 BMCUs will be set up.

The minister said that a total of 3,639 and 3,486 BMCUs will begin in the second and third phases along with additional collection centres. He stated

that the state government also proposes to develop RBKs into a milk potential RBK.

Milk collection by Amul will cover 550 villages in the three districts. Giving details, he said that in Prakasam district alone, around 56,000 litres of milk will be procured. All these farmers will be receiving their cheques on November 25.

The minister criticised the Telugu Desam government for neglecting dairy development and cooperative societies so as to benefit private dairies.

He said that the state stands fourth in the country in milk production with a daily production of about four crore litres, but the production from the organised sector through co-operative societies and private dairies is only 26 per cent.

He asserted that the government is planning to bring most unorganised dairy units into organised sector by encouraging co-operative societies and women farmers. The tie-up with Amul is for an all-around growth of the dairy sector and to lend a helping hand to dairy farmers, he added.

TD announced
jumbo state panelDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

The Opposition Telugu Desam is gearing up towards formulating strategies to win the forthcoming local body elections in Andhra Pradesh by strengthening the party.

TD announced a state-level jumbo committee with a total of 219 members on Friday. TD Chief N. Chandrababu Naidu on Friday formed the party state committee with top priority given to the backward classes and the weaker sections in the appointment of posts.

Mr Naidu has given TD vice-president posts to 18 leaders and general secretary posts to 16. There are over 108 state-level secretaries and treasurers. Overall, the committee consists of over 219 office bearers.

The party claimed that in tune with the TD's renewed efforts to move closer to the weaker sections, over 61 per cent representation was given to them on the state committee. Of this, 41 per cent posts were given to the BCs, reflecting the TD's traditional patronage of the backward classes since its inception. Care

AUTO DRIVER THRASHED BY YSRC MEN

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, NOV. 6

An auto driver was allegedly thrashed by YSRC Congress party activists in Adoni on Thursday for making comments on the worst condition of roads during a conversation with friends. A YSRC activist who heard the conversations between auto driver, Ravi, and another person immediately mobilised people belonging to the party to the spot and thrashed him. Later, they

took him to the Adoni MLA Y. Sai Prasad Reddy's office, where they allegedly thrashed him again. The victim Ravi, however, managed to escape from them and arrived hospital for the treatment. On receiving the information, BJP, TD, CPM, CPI, and Congress party leaders reached the hospital and consoled him. The opposition party leaders alleged that YSRC party men were harassed and attacked people for asking to solve the problems.

TD: Jagan's padayatra
turned curse to stateDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

Telugu Desam accused the ruling YSR Congress leaders of shamelessly celebrating the three-year completion of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's padayatra while not stopping their misdeeds and atrocities that have been destroying Andhra Pradesh.

TD state general-secretary Panchamarthy Anuradha on Friday said that the Chief Minister does not deserve to be called a people's leader because of monumental blunders like destruction of a people's city like Amaravati Capital and non-fulfill-

ment of his promises on Polavaram and Special Category Status.

Addressing a press conference here, Anuradha asserted that the ruling party leaders had no moral right to celebrate the padayatra utsav as they had caused all-round suffering with a ₹50,000 crore tax burden and bringing over ₹1 lakh crore debt-burden. She said the padayatra was a curse as liquor, sand and mining mafias are looting the State indiscriminately.

She sought that he should step down from office owning up responsibility for this all-round destruction of the State.

IN BRIEF

**BHASHA
TARGETED
VEHICLES WITH
LOGS FOR 20 YRS**

FROM PAGE 1

Normally the smugglers dump their vehicles to escape being caught. Basha Bhai capitalized on this, formed a gang and began targeting vehicles carrying red sandalwood logs. He has been doing so for the past 20 years.

It was a similar chase that led to the accident killing five on the spot. According to information with police, Basha Bhai's gang was involved in this.

The SP appointed a special police team, who on coming to know that he had fled to Coimbatore, rushed to the city and started a manhunt. Basha Bhai was reportedly brought to Coimbatore with the help of the Tamil Nadu police.

Superintendent of Police Karur Karunapathi Nagendra Kumar Anburajan told *Deccan Chronicle* that the issue is under investigation but unable to disclose anything more about this incident.

**TWO NEW POLICE
DISTRICTS TO
BE SET UP**DC CORRESPONDENT
ELURU, NOV. 6

Eluru Range DIG K.V. Mohana Rao said that two new police districts, Narasapuram parliamentary and Amalapuram Parliamentary, would be formed in the proposed new districts. He said that there would be seven parliamentary districts under Eluru Range like Kakinada, Rajamahendravaram Urban and Amalapuram in East Godavari, Eluru and Narasapuram in West Godavari, Vijayawada and Machilipatnam in Krishna District. However, there are police offices in Rajamahendravaram, Kakinada, Eluru, Vijayawada and Machilipatnam and now Amalapuram and Narasapuram police districts would be formed soon.

**MOTOR VEHICLE
INSPECTOR
SUSPENDED**DC CORRESPONDENT
ELURU, NOV. 6

The Motor Vehicle Inspector (MVI) of Tadepalligudem E. Mrutyunjaya Raju was suspended on the charges of bribery. According to sources, Mruthyunjaya Raju collected bribes by stopping lorries and other vehicles without wearing a uniform and without giving receipts to the drivers. The video has become viral in social media and the video was paid attention of the higher officials of the Transport Department.

West Godavari District Deputy Transport Commissioner Siri Anand said that the Transport Commissioner suspended the Motor Vehicle Inspector on the bribe charges.

**CLASSES
THROUGH CABLE
TV MOOTED**DC CORRESPONDENT
SRIKAKULAM, NOV. 6

District collector of Srikakulam J. Niwas mooted the idea of conducting classes through cable TVs.

He held a meeting with the MSOs in the presence of district educational officer K. Chandrakala and other revenue officials on Friday to explore the possibility of having classes through the TVs.

The collector suggested that the classes be held from 11 am to 12 noon and 3 pm to 4 pm. He asked the DEO to announce the subject to be taught a day in advance so that the students would be prepared.

He said the courses should be prepared for a week-long programme by expert teachers and handed over to the MSOs, who would telecast the classes.

This will run parallel to the regular schools which have opened on November 2.

The collector said this would help reduce the infection and help the students who are not attending the classes due to the Covid.

Joint collector Dr K Srinivasulu, MSOs Duppala Venkata Rao, Jallepalle Sridhar, Abhishek, Dharmateja, Kanakala Rama Rao and others were present in the meeting.

55 women prisoners to be released: HM

Life prisoners who have served 5 years to be freed

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

AP, in an innovative move, decided to release 55 women life prisoners which is a first of its kind in the country. Home minister Mekathoti Sucharita addressing a press meet on Friday said that the government has decided to release women prisoners languishing in prisons humanely. She said that the government decided to release women life prisoners who have served five years.

Ms Sucharita said that there were 147 women serving life sentences in the prisons of AP and the government is going to release 55 women prisoners. She said that the GO. 131 had been issued on November 5 about the norms to release the women life prisoners. She said that the government decided to release 21 women prisoners of Rajahmundry special women jail, 27 of Kadapa prison, two in Visakhapatnam central jail and five in Nellore jail.

APPCB LOOKS OUT FOR POLLUTANTS

FROM PAGE 1

They will be looking for presence of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, particulate matter (PM) 10 and 2.5, as also metals like lead, nickel, arsenic, aluminium, barium and iron. The ambient air quality data collected in Vijayawada by pollution board during last year's Diwali from October 20 to November 3 noticed a hike in concentrations of PM 10 and 2.5 on the Diwali day compared to values of other days. The hike was attributed to bursting of crackers. However, the overall AQI value on the Diwali day was found to be within the satisfactory range.

A senior official from APPCB said, "We have made all necessary arrangements for monitoring ambient air quality, noise pollution and metals in Vijayawada and in 13 district headquarters during the Diwali season. We will find out if any major deviations are there from recommendations of CPCB and suggest necessary measures to contain them."

LT. GOVERNOR LAUDS TTD'S COVID MEASURES

Tirupati: Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha lauded the arrangements made by the TTD management keeping in view the health safety of pilgrims visiting for darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

The first citizen of the J&K, had darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

WORKERS | SAFETY

Pollution control board has inspected 42 factories

Industries violate safety norms in AP

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, NOV. 6

The special drive being conducted by the district joint committee to ensure compliance of safety protocols and environmental norms by the industries in the Chittoor district has found that many units have failed to be in compliance and violating the laid norms, thereby threatening the safety of workers.

Following a series of industrial mishaps in the state, especially in Vizag, the state government has launched a special drive to check the compliance of norms in each of the industrial units across the state. District joint committees under the



Home minister Mekathoti Sucharita addresses a press meet on Friday.

— DC

Ms Sucharita said that the government had brought reforms in prisons to make women prisoners live better through skill development programmes.

She said that women prisoners got training in tailoring, embroidery, sari painting, stationery and bakery items.

She said that the government is taking measures

for the mingling of women prisoners after releasing from jails with their families and the government is considering all factors in this issue.

KMC proposes cycling track, people oppose it

VADREVVU SRINIVAS |
DC
KAKINADA, NOV. 6

The Kakinada Municipal Corporation (KMC) has drawn up a plan for developing cycling tracks near a g a m a l l i t h o t a Junction up to Rangaraya Medical College Centre and around Raja Tank (Vivekananda Park) here to promote the habit of cycling.

The officials have developed a one kilometre long cycling track at Nagamallit-hota junction at a cost of ₹4 lakh

by widening 1.5 metres of the road. This is in tune with the endeavour of other states as a means to reduce environmental pollution levels besides bolstering health consciousness.

"The track works are going on in two places in the city. Nagamallithota Junction track is being completed while tenders have been invited for laying the track at Vivekananda Park," said KMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinkar Pundkar.

He said that if cable companies dig road sides, action will be

taken against them and also they will be restored to the actual position of the tracks. Stringent action would be taken against them.

Meanwhile, Kakinada Pura Sankshema Sangham (Kakinada Civic Welfare Forum) is strongly opposing the cycling tracks. It has demanded the KMC and also Kakinada Smart City Corporation to first save the city from inundation.

Sangham President Dussarlapudi Ramana Raju said that Smart City funds are being spent uselessly.

Fee for 17 colleges common

FROM PAGE 1

The fee structure fixed for 17 MBBS colleges is common and it is ₹15,000 for convener quota under Category A, ₹12 lakh for management quota under Category B and ₹36 lakh for NRI quota under Category C (Up to).

The 17 medical colleges include: Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences, Alluri Seetharama Raju Academy of Medical Sciences, Fathima Institute of Medical Sciences, Great Eastern Medical School, GSL Medical College, G.VPH and Medical Technology, Katuri Medical College, Konaseema Institute of Medical Sciences, Maharaja Institute of Medical Sciences, Narayana Medical College, Nimra Institute of Medical Sciences,

NRI Medical College, NRI Institute of Medical College, PES Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr P. Siddhartha Institute of Medical Sciences, Santhiram Medical College and VMC Medical College.

Similarly, the state government also fixed fee structure for 14 UG dental courses for the block period 2020-21 to 2022-23. The common fee structure for 14 colleges include ₹13,000 for convener quota under Category A, ₹4 lakh for management quota under Category B and ₹12 lakh for NRI quota under Category C (Up to). The colleges include Anil Neerukonda Institute of Dental Sciences, Care Dental College, CKS Teja Institute of Dental Sciences, GITAM Dental College, G. Pulla Reddy Dental College, GSL

Dental College, St. Joseph Dental College, Konaseema Dental College, Lenora Institute of Dental Sciences, Narayana Dental College, Sibar Institute of Dental Sciences, Dr S and NR Institute of Dental Sciences, Sree Sai Dental College and Vishnu Dental College.

The state government also fixed a common fee structure of ₹15,00,000 for super specialty courses (medical) in private unaided non-minority and minority colleges for the block period 2020-21 to 2022-23 and issued GO MS No. 145 dated 05-11-2020.

The colleges to collect such fee include: GSL Medical College, Katuri Medical College, Narayana Medical College, NRI Medical College and Dr P. Siddhartha Institute of Medical Sciences.

AP RECORDS 2,410 COVID CASES, TOLL 11

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN
| DC
VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 6

AP registered 2,410 new Covid-19 cases scaling up the tally to 8,38,363 and 11 deaths raising tally to 6,768 in the last 24 hours.

The state health authorities issued Covid-19 bulletin here on Friday reporting that out of 79,601 samples tested 2,410 were infected with Covid-19. Out of a total 85,07,230 samples tested so far in the state, 8,09,770 infected patients recovered while 21,825 patients are still active with the virus.

Among the daily cases of Covid-19, East Godavari continues to lead the state with 401 followed by 323 in Guntur, 298 each in Krishna and West Godavari, 253 in Chittoor, 161 in Anantapur, 142 in Visakhapatnam, 132 in Kadapa, 121 in Nellore, 108 in Prakasam, 79 in Vizianagaram, 71 in Srikakulam and 23 in Kurnool.

East Godavari topped the state by recording the highest number of cumulative cases of Covid-19 with 1,18,015 followed by 87,936 in West Godavari, 80,182 in Chittoor, 69,006 in Guntur, 65,408 in Anantapur, 60,321 in Prakasam, 60,123 in Nellore, 59,661 in Kurnool, 56,532 in Visakhapatnam, 52,899 in Kadapa, 44,462 in Srikakulam, 41,169 in Krishna, 39,754 in Vizianagaram, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery of Covid-19 infected patients has been steady in East Godavari with 1,12,939 followed by 85,137 in West Godavari, 77,278 in Chittoor, 65,291 in Guntur, 63,715 in Anantapur, 59,244 in Nellore, 58,963 in Prakasam, 58,891 in Kurnool, 54,305 in Visakhapatnam, 51,332 in Kadapa, 43,421 in Srikakulam, 39,162 in Vizianagaram, 37,197 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

Among the daily deaths of Covid-19 patients, Krishna registered three followed by two each in Chittoor and Guntur and one each in Anantapur, East Godavari, Kadapa and West Godavari.

Chittoor topped the state by registering the highest number of cumulative cases of death of Covid-19 patients with 792 followed by 630 in Guntur, 617 in East Godavari, 583 in Krishna, 574 in Prakasam, 571 in Anantapur, 514 in Visakhapatnam, 504 in West Godavari 487 in Nellore, 482 in Kurnool, 441 in Kadapa, 343 in Srikakulam and 230 in Vizianagaram.

The state health authorities discharged 2,452 Covid-19 infected patients after recovery from various hospitals in the state in the last 24 hours.

AP conducted Covid-19 tests on 1,59,311 samples per one million population with Covid-19 positive rate at 9.85.

Pushkaralu work going on at ghats

HOSKOTE
NAGABHUSHANAM | DC
ANANTAPUR, NOV. 6

Tungabhadra Board yet to decide about role in upcoming Tungabhadra Pushkaralu even as AP state government has top priority to perform in grand manner at Tungabhadra river bed spread in state. The state government had allocated ₹200 crore towards towards Tungabhadra Pushkaralu. Works are going at main ghats and historic areas and temples in AP.

The Tungabhadra river, after both Tunga and Bhadra rivers join and enrich at Tungabhadra dam near Hospet in Bellary district.

The river passes towards Srisailem in Kurnool district through Vijayanagar Empire Hampi in Bellary district and Raichur districts of Karnataka and splits Karnataka and AP at historic spiritual centre Mantralayam.

One side of the river is in Raichur district in Karnataka while the other bed is in Mantralayam in Kurnool district of AP where 350 year old Guru Raghavendra Swamy math is located. In addition, Bichali, another historic spot is located in AP borders in Raichur district where saint had spent more than 12 years and entered alive into Brindavan at Mantralayam.

Math pontiff Sri Subbuddendra Theertha said math was taking all necessary steps to provide facilities for devotees at Mantralayam. Pontiff was inspecting the ongoing works at river bed because huge number of devotees

expected. Math authorities had invited chief ministers of both states of AP and Karnataka to take part in inauguration of pushkaralu.

With AP government setting pushkar ghats at Mantralayam and Kurnool, the Karnataka government was also planning to provide necessary facilities at Hampi and Raichur districts, sources said.

"A big number of centuries old historic temples and tombs situated on banks Tungabhadra river in surrounding Hampi," Dhananjay from Hampi observed and added huge number of devotees and tourists likely visit Hampi during pushkara period.

Tungabhadra Board has not taken any decision about role in pushkaralu to be held after 15 years. Top official from Board said no proposals sofar about the upcoming pushkaralu. However, the AP irrigation department asked to release water into river from TB dam.

Similarly, Anantapur and Kadapa districts had no involvement in pushkaralu even as Tungabhadra High Level Main Canal flows up to Pulivendula from TB dam through Bellary and Anantapur districts. Only, Kurnool district is concentrated based on river flowing. HLMC flows for more than 100 kms in the district and fills Penna Ahobilam Balancing Reservoir, Mid Pennar Dam and five centuries old tanks with Tungabhadra water.

It may be noted Krishna pushkaram was celebrated at Jeedipalli reservoir in Belaguppa mandal two years ago.

₹6L WORTH NDPL SEIZED IN CHITTOOR

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 6

Gangavaram police have seized 730 bottles of Non-Duty Paid liquor worth ₹6 lakh and arrested two persons in connection with the case of illegal transportation of liquor into the state.

According to Gangavaram Circle Inspector Rama Krishnachary, a team led by Sub-Inspector P.V. Sudhakar Reddy conducted vehicle checking on Bengaluru-Chennai national highway-

69 near Gundrajupalli on Friday.

Police have intercepted two vehicles in which they found 730 bottles of non-duty paid liquor being smuggled into the state from Karnataka. Two persons identified as S. Hussain Basha from Sundaraiyah Nagar and Pasupuleti Bhargav from Saphthagiri nagar in Tirupati have been driving the two vehicles.

The duo had struck a deal with one Arjun.

LAKSHA KUNKUMARCHANA AT TIRUCHANNOOR ON VIRTUAL PLATFORM

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, NOV. 6

In yet another devotee friendly move, TTD has decided to give opportunity to devotees to take part in the famed Laksha Kunkumarchana fete, scheduled to be held at the Padmavathi Ammavari temple in Tiruchanoor on November 10, via virtual platform.

As the annual Karthika brahmotsavams of Goddess Padmavathi Ammavari at Tiruchanoor are slated to start from November 11 to

19, the Laksha Kumkumarchana fete will be observed a day before the commencement of the mega event. In view of Covid-19 restriction, TTD has decided to observe the Kunkumarchana fete in ekantham (solitude) in the temple.

However, the devotees were given an opportunity to participate in this ritual via virtual platform on November 10 akin to some of the arjitha sevas that are being performed in the temple of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala.

TD MLA REQUESTS STATE GOVT TO CLOSE SCHOOLS DUE TO COVID

DC CORRESPONDENT
RAJAHMUNDY, NOV 6

Rajahmundry Urban MLA Adireddy Bhavani requested the state government to close schools until Covid-19 vaccine arrives as many teachers and students had tested positive in the last four days.

She suggested the government run classes online instead of reopening schools. She said that nearly 22 states have not reopened schools. She said

that 829 teachers and 575 students had tested positive.

She said that 1.17 per cent of 70,790 teachers and 0.60 per cent of 95,763 students in 41,623 schools had been infected with the virus from November 2 to 6. Bhavani wondered how the Chief Minister who refused to hold civic body and local body elections due to Covid-19 was now agreeing to reopen schools, which was nothing but playing with the lives of students and teachers.

| VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (VMC) | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| 'E' Procurement Notice No.32/VMC/AE/2020-21, Dt.06-11-2020 | | |
| Sl. No. | Name of work | Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs |
| 1 | Improvements Vinayaka Temple road, Widening of Ambedkar road with BT road from Kummari palem Junction to Bye-pass road, Improvement to Drain at Drain Street from Ganapathy Rao Road Junction to janda chettu center in Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (With Reverse Tendering Auction)(1 Work) | 320.00 |
| Contact: Superintending Engineer (Works), VMC, Vijayawada - 520 001. Further details can be seen @ 'e' procurement market place @ www.tender.approcurement.gov.in | | |
| Download of bid documents starts from | | - 09-11-2020 @ 04.00 P.M. |
| Last date / time for receipt of tenders from | | - 23-11-2020 up to 4.30 P.M. |
| Reverse Tendering 1 work Starts from | | - 24-11-2020 from 2.00 P.M. |
| Sd/- For COMMISSIONER | | |

SHORT TAKES

5% LESS COVID CASES THAN A DAY BEFORE

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

India's overall tally of coronavirus reached 84.12 lakh on Friday with 47,638 fresh cases - which is 5 per cent lower than previous day figures.

The toll has reached 1.25 lakh after 670 new fatalities were recorded. However, the number of active cases are close to 5.21 lakh while 77.66 lakh people have recovered so far.

According to the union health ministry, the active cases now comprise only 6.19 per cent of the total positive cases of the country.

In the last 24 hours, 54,157 persons were discharged from medical care taking India's recovery rate to 92.32 per cent. Kerala and Delhi are daily logging the highest number of cases in the country.

"The declining trend of the active cases is supported by a high number of recovered cases. The gap between recovered cases and active cases is nearing 72.5 lakh," union health ministry officials said adding 80 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states/UTs.

Maharashtra has contributed the maximum with more than 11,000 single day recoveries.

Maharashtra government said that the number of Covid-19 cases has been dropping steadily in the last few days and there has been a 63 per cent decrease in the number of active cases.

Under a special campaign, the health agencies in the state have so far been able to identify 3,57,000 ILI and SARI patients.

"Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has directed that the third phase of 'My Family, My Responsibility' drive be implemented in December to aid in curbing the spread of coronavirus. As many as 12 crore citizens were surveyed and more than 50,000 cases detected during the two phases of the initiative," Maharashtra government said in a tweet.

INDIA SUMMONS PAK'S CDA

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

India on Friday evening said it had summoned Pakistan's Charge D'Affaires (CdA) in New Delhi to register a strong protest over Islamabad's reported move to "transfer the management and maintenance" of the historic Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara from the Pakistan Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (PSGPC) - a body run by Pakistan's minority Sikh Community - to the administrative control of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, a non-Sikh body. The Pakistan CdA was summoned on Friday evening, a day after New Delhi had condemned Islamabad's move.

Asking Islamabad to reverse its "arbitrary" decision, New Delhi had on Thursday said Pakistan's move "runs against the spirit of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor as also the religious sentiments of the Sikh community at large", adding that it exposes the "tall claims of preserving and protecting the rights and welfare of the religious minority communities".

NEW DINOSAUR SITE DISCOVERED IN MP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, NOV. 6

A new dinosaur habitation has been discovered in Mandla, situated in Narmada river basin in Madhya Pradesh, with recovery of 7 fossilized eggs of the now-extinct species belonging to the Cretaceous period (65 million years ago).

The huge dinosaur eggs weighing around 2.6 kg each have been unearthed in Mohantola area, nearly 4 km from district headquarters of Mandla, Prof P K Kathal, Department of Applied Geology, Dr H S Gaur University, Sagar, in Madhya Pradesh, told this newspaper on Friday.

"The fossilized eggs have been authenticated as of dinosaurian affinity with use of Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM)," the professor of the Central University said.

Faith matters



Devotees pray as the head priest (unseen) displays the holy relic on Friday following Eid Milad-un-Nabi at Hazratbal shrine, in Srinagar on Friday.

- PTI

LOCALS REMAIN OUT OF REACH FOR COMMON MUMBAIKARS

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 6

Mumbai's local trains, which are considered the lifeline of the city, will not be open for common people before Diwali.

A week after the Central Railway and Western Railway wrote letters to the Maharashtra government urging it to frame guidelines to avoid crowding in trains so that services can be opened for common people, the government is yet to hold a meeting for the discussion on it. As a result, lakhs of Mumbaiikars continue to face hardships.

Ministers of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government have accused the Centre of playing politics over the issue of local trains and not resuming the services for common people despite the state government's demand.

Rebutting the MVA government's claims, a senior official of Central Railway (CR) said that the state government did not call a meeting sought by the railways on how to go ahead with their proposal despite repeated verbal communication made by the senior officials of the Railways.

Officials in the Maharashtra government said that they do not want to rush with any decision in the wake of the second wave experienced by the European countries.

"Our priority is to avoid the transmission of the coronavirus. Even if the suburban train services are opened for common people, it will not be before Diwali," an official said. Currently, only government employees and people working in services defined as "essential services" can travel by local trains.

Modi to represent India at SCO meet of state heads

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will represent India at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of heads of state meeting in virtual format on November 10, New Delhi confirmed on Friday, adding that India would be hosting a meeting in virtual format on

November 30 of the SCO Heads of Government at the prime ministerial level.

The meeting on November 10 will be chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin during which Modi is expected to share screen-space with Chinese President Xi Jinping, the first time it will be so since Sino-Indian military

tensions began in the Ladakh sector about six months ago.

Besides this, it also remains to be seen whether Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan represents his country at the other SCO meeting.

The SCO is an eight-member predominantly Central Asian Grouping that includes China, Russia among others.

No interim relief for Arnab, HC to hear bail plea today

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, NOV. 6

Republic TV Editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami will have to spend the third night in judicial custody as the Bombay High Court on Friday adjourned the hearing on a petition filed by him for 12 pm on Saturday. While adjourning the matter, the Bombay High Court observed that it will not pass an order without hearing all parties.

The high court is hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by Mr Goswami claiming that his arrest by Raigad police in the 2018 suicide case of Anvay Naik is illegal. He has also sought bail in the same petition and the HC had heard this petition for the first time on Thursday.

On the other hand, the Raigad police have also challenged the order of the Alibaug's magistrate court that remanded Goswami to judicial custody without sending him into police custody.

A division bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and M.S. Karnik heard arguments by Mr Goswami's lawyers Harish Salve and Aabad Ponda on Friday, but said the hearing will continue on Saturday for paucity of time.

"We will assemble for this matter tomorrow at noon. Since regular court

● THE HIGH court is hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by Mr Goswami claiming that his arrest by Raigad police in the 2018 suicide case of Anvay Naik is illegal. He has also sought bail in the same petition and the HC had heard this petition for the first time on Thursday.

work will not be there tomorrow, we can hear this matter at length," the HC said.

The high court normally does not assemble on Saturdays.

The HC is also expected to hear the arguments from the state government and complainant Adnya Naik.

During the course of hearing on Friday, senior counsel Harish Salve on behalf of Goswami pointed out to HC that CJM Alibag had stated in his order that "it seems that the arrest of the accused (Goswami) is illegal."

It was further argued before the court that the conduct for abetment to suicide must be direct and proximate, which is missing in this case and hence case of abetment to suicide is not made out against Goswami. He also said there must be direct act which led the deceased to commit suicide.

The bench, during the hearing, noted that the normal practice when seeking bail is to first approach the concerned lower court magistrate or sessions court and move the high court if bail is refused. To this, Mr Salve said section 439 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) gives the high court special powers to hear bail pleas. "His (Mr Goswami's) liberty is at stake," Mr Salve said.

Mr Goswami's lawyers also argued that the Maharashtra government was trying to harass him for questioning the government on his news channel.

"This is a clear case of abuse of powers. There are multiple FIRs lodged against him. In this abetment of suicide case of 2018, the police have arrested him knowing fully well that courts will soon break for Diwali vacation." The Maharashtra government just wants to teach him a lesson," Salve said.

Mr Goswami is presently kept at a local school which has been designated as a COVID-19 centre for the Alibaug prison.

The HC on Saturday will also hear similar petitions filed by the other two arrested persons - Feroze Shaikh and Nitish Sarda.

Shah: CAA will be implemented

Seeks white paper on political killings

Kolkata, Nov. 6: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday asked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to come out with a white paper on the political killings in the state and wondered why the state government has not sent the statistics of crime to the National Crime Record Bureau.

Stating that the Citizenship Amendment Act will be implemented, Shah said the law is in place and it is the commitment of the union government.

"We aim to build a strong Bengal in a new era of development. Mamata Banerjee aims to make her nephew the next chief minister," Shah said while addressing a press meet here.

"Since 2018 the West

Bengal government has not sent the statistics of crime to NCRB. I want to ask Mamata Banerjee to come out with a white paper on political killings. Bengal tops the chart in political killings," he said.

Alleging that there has been politicisation and criminalisation of government officers in the state, the union home minister said, "In West Bengal there are three laws - one for the nephew, one for minority appeasement and one for common people".

Speaking on the faceoff between Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and the state government, Shah said the governor is working within his constitutional limits.

"The words used against the governor are unac-

ceptable. I would like to know where is the (Darjeeling) district magistrate who was removed after meeting the governor," he said.

The TMC leadership Shah over his "appeasement remark" and said communal politics has no place in Bengal.

Mocking Shah's scheduled visit to a Matua family for lunch, the party described his refugee community outreach as a "poll gimmick" to divert attention from atrocities committed on backward communities in states ruled by the saffron party. Shah had said the present "appeasement politics" in the state has hurt its age-old tradition of upholding the nation's spiritual consciousness. - PTI

JD(U) clarifies on Nitish's 'last election' remark

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, NOV. 6

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's "last election" remark has become a topic of political debate ahead of the last phase of assembly elections in Bihar.

While the opposition termed his statement as an indication of "defeat", JD(U) issued a clarification on Friday saying that he was talking about the last election campaign for the ongoing assembly elections.

"His comments cannot be seen as his announcement for retirement. He has been aggressively

campaigning for NDA candidates and during his public meeting, he simply meant that it was his last campaign for the ongoing assembly elections. A politician cannot suddenly announce his retirement. He will stay in politics as long as the public wants", JD(U) state president Basisth Narayan Singh said.

On the last day of the campaigning for the final phase of polling in Bihar, Nitish Kumar had made an emotional appeal to electors for votes with an announcement that it would be his last election.

"All's well that ends well.

Today is the last day of the campaigning. A day after there is a last phase of polls in Bihar and this is my last election now tell me will you vote for our candidate", he said on Thursday while addressing a public meeting in Dhamdaha, Purnea.

Political analysts, however, feel that there could be several political reasons behind his announcement.

A section feels that Nitish, facing massive anti-incumbency, gave the statement to emotionally attract voters especially backwards and Muslims who have been with him since 2005.

CONGRESS SAYS GOVT. BETRAYED DEFENCE FORCES

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

The Congress on Friday alleged that the Modi government has betrayed the defence forces by "snatching away" the pension of army officers. It said this reeked of "fake-nationalism".

"We demand that the Prime Minister Modi comes forward and clarifies his stand on the issue and takes back its anti-army decision of October 29," Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said.

According to the government's new proposal, only those officers who have spent more than 35 years in the armed forces shall be entitled to a 'full pension', which will demoralise the armed forces, he said. Surjewala claimed that the reality was that 90 per cent of the army officers retire before 35 years of service and in such a situation, the government is "hatching a conspiracy" to deny 90 per cent of army officers their full pension.

He alleged that the decision had hurt the morale of the forces and added that the government habitually seeks votes on the sacrifice of brave soldiers and on "fake nationalism".

TN BJP chief, workers detained

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, NOV. 6

BJP state president L Murugan was detained at Tiruttani, along with over 400 party leaders and cadre as they tried to take out their proposed statewide Vetrivel yatra on Friday, reportedly to expose the DMK's links with Karupar Kootam. They were all released later in the day.

Though the state government had not granted permission for the BJP to take out the one-month long yatra, Murugan, defying the ban, left from his house in Chennai at around 8.45 am on a custom-made van, carrying a vel (spear), followed by about 50 cars and raising slogans 'Vetri Vel, Veera Vel'.

Leaders and cadre had started gathering at the house in Koyambedu from around 8.30 am itself. When the convoy reached Nazzarpet, police blocked the road and prevented Murugan from proceeding further. He was told that the yatra has been banned. Murugan told the police that he was on his way to offer worship at the Murugan temple at Tiruttani and it was his basic right.

After a long argument, police allowed the van and five other cars to pro-

ceed further. So the vehicles moved away from there quickly. On reaching Tiruttani, Murugan, along with some top leaders of the party, including national secretary C. T. Ravi and Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy, went inside the temple.

Later he came out and addressed the cadre and functionaries who had gathered there to go on the yatra. He said the aim of the yatra was to rip the veil off DMK, which was behind the Karupar Kootam that denigrated Murugan worship.

He said as Murugan devotees they respected other religions but it was not reciprocated to them. After the coming elections, only the alliance in which BJP was part would form the government, he said.

Yatra organizer Narendran said that though the government had prohibited the yatra they were breaking the ban. Subsequently all those gathered there were whisked away in waiting vans and taken to a community hall, from where they were let off in the evening.

After their release, Murugan said that they were disappointed over the government action and that the yatra would continue.

Centre will regret abrogation of Article 370, says Mufti

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, NOV. 6

Former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti on Friday came down heavily on the BJP government at the Centre over its stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status in August last year.

While Ms. Mufti said that the Centre will only regret the "blunder" committed by it, Mr. Abdullah pledged he would not "close my eyes" before ensuring this "misstep" is rectified.

Both the leaders who are

the president and vice president of the recently launched 'People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration' - a pledge to seek restoration of J&K's special status and statehood-respectively are currently in Jammu to garner support from among local political parties and people for it.

However, they spent the day (Friday) by visiting their respective party offices in the winter capital and meeting their workers to share their thoughts with them, for the first time after their

release from post-August 5, 2019 prolonged detention. Ms. Mufti while addressing her People's Democratic Party (PDP) workers asserted, "The Government of India will regret scrapping special status of J&K and time will come when they will not only restore both Article 370 and Article 35A but also ask the people of J&K what else they want".

She reiterated that the government at the Centre "doesn't follow the Constitution of the country but the agenda of Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP). She alleged, "They (people in the government) are beating drums on abrogation of Article 370, but fail to address the problems faced by the people and eradicate poverty. "Beating drums on abrogation of Article 370 was the only thing the present regime is doing. However, it has failed to bring some respite to the people from poverty," she said.

She added, "Mark my words. I do not know about the situation that would emerge in J&K but they (BJP) will not remain in power forever. Whosoever

will be in power in Delhi, they will regret their acts in J&K and they will also admit that they had misused the Constitution."

National Conference president Mr. Abdullah while speaking at a similar rally at the party office said that if the people of J&K wanted to go to Pakistan they would have done it in 1947. "No one could have stopped it. But our nation is Mahatma Gandhi's India, not BJP's India," he said.

Terming the abrogation of J&K special status as a "misstep" by the BJP gov-

ernment, he said that it has alienated the people of the erstwhile state further.

"The abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, splitting the state up and subsequent arbitrary steps taken by the government have pushed the people to corner. They feel that they are not safe even in their own land," he said.

He added, "They call it a major step towards integrating J&K with the rest of the country and I'm afraid it has only alienated the people of the state further." He asserted that removing Article 370 and

35A will not solve the problems of J&K and that he will not die before ensuring restoration of these provisions. "I'm not 85 now but let me assure you I will not close my eyes until I get the rights of the people back to them."

As the winter capital had witnessed a series of protests by BJP and like-minded political groups against both Mr. Abdullah and Ms. Mufti over the past couple of weeks, the authorities had made elaborate security arrangements around the offices of the NC and PDP.

SHORT TAKES

BELGIUM SEIZES
11.5 TONNES OF
COCAINE IN SCRAP

Brussels, Nov. 6: Belgian police seized 11.5 tonnes of pure cocaine hidden in a scrap metal container in the country's single biggest-ever haul, prosecutors said on Thursday.

The find was made October 27 in the port of Antwerp when five scrap metal containers from South America were given a thorough inspection, a statement said.

The haul had an estimated value of 450 million euros (\$525 million) in its pure form, it said. Once cut with other products and sold to consumers, the street value would have been double that.

Antwerp is Europe's second largest goods port after Rotterdam, but is the number one gateway for cocaine to the continent, thanks to its close trade links with South America.

Investigators said the containers initially landed in the Belgian port of Zeebrugge and were then transferred by barge to the port of Antwerp.

The cocaine was concealed in a big steel container that was itself fitted inside a larger freight container which had some scrap metal parts thrown in as an attempt to disguise the load.

NZ'S ARDERN
SWORN IN FOR
SECOND TERM

Wellington, Nov. 6: New Zealand and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was sworn in for a second term on Friday, as final election results showed her landslide victory was even bigger than previously thought.

The charismatic leader and her ministers made their oaths of office in English and Maori during a ceremony at Wellington's Government House.

"I would say simply that sitting at this table is Aotearoa New Zealand," Ardern said, gesturing to her gathered team, in which women and Maori are strongly represented.

"They collectively represent a range of different perspectives, huge talent, enormous experience and, as you would expect in any time of crisis, a huge commitment to serving this country," Ardern, 40, leveraged her success battling Covid-19 into an unprecedented majority at the October 17 election, leading her centre-left Labour Party to its biggest win since World War II.

Final results released Friday showed Ardern won 50.0 per cent of the vote, up from 49.0 on election night, giving her 65 seats in the 120-strong parliament, rather than 64.

The main opposition National Party saw its seats reduced from 35 to 33, prompting campaign director Gerry Brownlee to step down as deputy party leader.

Ardern said she had a clear mandate for reform, although her priorities were containing Covid-19 and rebuilding the virus-damaged economy.

VEGANISM NOT
REQUIRED TO FIX
CLIMATE CHANGE

New York, Nov. 6: The world likely can't keep global warming to a relatively safe minimum unless we change how we grow, eat and throw away our food, but we don't need to all go vegan, a new study says.

Researchers looked at five types of broad fixes to the food system and calculated how much they fight warming. They found that sampling a buffet of partial fixes for all five, instead of just diving into the salad bar, can get the job done, according to a study published in Thursday's journal Science.

If the world food system keeps on current trajectories, it will produce near 1.5 trillion tons of greenhouse gases over the next 80 years, the study found. That's coming from belching cows, fertiliser, mismanaged soil and food waste. That much emissions — even if the globe stops burning fossil fuels which produce twice as much carbon pollution as food — is enough to likely warm Earth by more than the goals set in the 2015 Paris climate accord.

"The whole world doesn't have to give up meat for us to meet our climate goals," said study co-author Jason Hill, a biosystems engineering professor at the University of Minnesota. "We can eat better, healthier foods. We can improve how we grow foods. And we can waste less food."

The researchers from the United States and the United Kingdom found: — A nearly complete switch to a plant-rich diet around the world could slash almost 720 billion tons of greenhouse gases.

US TV networks stop airing
live Trump speech over 'lies'

President was making unfounded accusations on polls being stolen from him

New York, Nov. 6: ABC, CBS and NBC all cut away from President Donald Trump as he spoke from the White House to make an unfounded accusation that the presidential election was being stolen from him. Trump on Thursday tried to commandeer the nation's airwaves at a time when the evening newscasts are shown on the East Coast, after a day when the slow drip of vote counting revealed his leads in Pennsylvania and Georgia dwindling. MSNBC's Brian Williams also interrupted the president.

Fox News Channel and CNN aired the president's full address, after which CNN's Anderson Cooper said Trump was "like an obese turtle on his back, flailing in the hot sun realising his time was over". Network personalities had sharply criticised Trump after his angry, middle-of-the-night speech following Election Day but aired that talk in full.

Trump was more subdued on Thursday, yet offered a litany of complaints about "suppression" polls, mail-in voting and fraud that he never specified. "We have to interrupt here, because the president has made a number of false statements, including the notion that there has been fraudulent voting," said NBC's Lester Holt. "There has been no evidence of that." CBS' Norah O'Donnell broke in to ask correspondent Nancy Cordes to fact-check Trump's assertion that if "legal votes" were counted, he would easily win the election.

Cordes said there is no indication of a substantive number of illegal votes cast, and said Trump's reference to votes arriving late was "another falsehood." MSNBC cut away from Trump to anchor Brian Williams. "Here we are again in the unusual position of not only interrupting the president of the United States but correcting the president of the United States," he said. — AP

STORM ETA
KILLS OVER 50
IN GUATEMALA

Guatemala City, Nov. 6: Scores of people, including 50 in Guatemala, have died as the remnants of Hurricane Eta on Thursday unleashed floods and triggered landslides on its deadly march across Central America. Eta struck the Caribbean coast of northern Nicaragua as a Category 4 hurricane on Tuesday, tearing through impoverished coastal areas and sweeping away whole villages.

Two days later it exited Honduras as a tropical depression, although weather forecasters warned it could again strengthen into a tropical storm as it heads towards Cuba.

The storm brought heavy rain that caused deadly flooding in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Panama.

More than 50 people in Guatemala were killed in landslides unleashed by Eta, President Alejandro Giammattei said Thursday. — AFP

8 held for Vienna
hit had prior cases

Vienna, Nov. 6: Eight of those detained following Monday night's terrorist attack in Vienna had previous convictions, including for terror offences, the Austrian interior minister said Thursday, as the investigation extended to Switzerland and a second, unnamed country.

In the wake of the attack in which an Austrian-born man shot and killed four people in a popular nightlife area of central Vienna on Monday night, police arrested a total of 16 men.

Four of them had been convicted for terrorism-related offences, two for



Donald Trump supporters protest the Nevada vote outside Clark County Election Department, in North Las Vegas.

GRETA RECYCLES
TRUMP JIBE, ASKS
HIM TO 'CHILL'

London/Washington, Nov. 6: Swedish teen environmental activist Greta Thunberg on Friday mocked Donald Trump in his own words, and urged him to "chill" after the US president, trailing behind his Democratic rival Joe Biden in the election, demanded that the counting of votes must "stop".

When she was named as the Time magazine's Person of the Year in December 2019, Trump told Thunberg, a global icon of the youth climate movement, to work on her anger management problem and "go an old fashioned movie with a friend." "Chill Greta, chill!" Trump said in his tweet on December 12 in which he described her Time award as "so ridiculous".

Trump was raging on Twitter on Thursday and posted a number of tweets alleging unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud during the presidential election, the results of which are yet to be announced. — PTI

DNA might replace barcodes to
tag art, voter ballots: Study

Paris, Nov. 6: Easy-to-remove barcodes and QR codes used to tag everything from T-shirts to car engines may soon be replaced by a tagging system based on DNA and invisible to the naked eye, scientists said Thursday.

The DNA-based system could help anti-forgery efforts, according to researchers who said thieves struggle to find or tamper with a transparent splash of DNA on valuable or vulnerable items, such as election ballots, works of art, or secret documents.

In an article published in Nature Communications, researchers at the University of Washington and Microsoft said that the molecular tagging system, called Porcupine, is — unlike most alternatives — cost-effective.

"Using DNA for tagging objects has been out of reach in the past because it is expensive and time consuming to write and read, and requires expen-

sive lab equipment," lead author and a Washington University doctoral student Katie Doroschak said. Porcupine gets around this by prefabricating fragments of DNA that users can mix together arbitrarily to create new tags, the researchers said. "Instead of radio waves

or printed lines, the Porcupine tagging scheme relies on a set of distinct DNA strands called molecular bits, or 'molbits' for short," the University of Washington said in a statement.

"To encode an ID, we pair each digital bit with a molbit," explained Doroschak. "If the digital bit is 1, we add its molbit to the tag, and if it's 0 we leave it out. Then we can dry it until it's ready to be decoded later," said Doroschak.

Once the item has been tagged, it can then be shipped or stored. When someone wants to read the tag, water is added to rehydrate the molecular tag, which is read by a nanopore sequencer — a DNA-reading device smaller than an iPhone.

The name Porcupine comes from a play on words (PORE-cupine, as in nanopore) and the idea that porcupines can 'tag' objects, and critters that dare to get too close," the

New York, Nov. 6: While Donald Trump's political allies remained silent or distanced themselves on Thursday from the US president, increasingly alone in his fight against what he says is widespread election "fraud", his oldest sons declared their filial loyalty.

Donald Trump Jr., the eldest, called on his father in a tweet to wage "total war" against the cheating that he believes is tainting the presidential election.

The inflammatory tweet was framed by some, including the New York Post, as a clear sign of growing panic in the Trump camp over Joe Biden's chances of winning the White House.

"The best thing for America's future is for @realDonaldTrump to go to total war over this election to expose all of the fraud, cheating, dead/no longer in state voters, that has been going on for far

too long," Don Jr. wrote on his Twitter account, where he regularly retweets conspiracy theories. He did not provide any evidence of the cheating he alleged was going on. "It's time to clean up this mess & stop looking like a

● **THE DNA-BASED** system could help anti-forgery efforts, according to researchers who said thieves struggle to find or tamper with a transparent splash of DNA on valuable or vulnerable items, such as election ballots, works of art, or secret documents.

● **UNLIKE EXISTING** systems to tag objects, DNA tags are undetectable by sight or touch, senior author Jeff Nivala said in a press release from Washington University.

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

London, Nov. 6: A British couple have thanked their lucky stars after a garage full of bin bags they inherited from a dead neighbour yielded a trove of Star Wars toys worth £400,000 (\$525,000).

The couple, from Stourbridge in central England, were initially unsure what to make of the jumble of dolls and spacecraft their neighbour had spent decades collecting. The *Times* newspaper reported Thursday.

Their son called in an auctioneer, who found a treasure trove of Star Wars memorabilia including action figures still pristine in their sealed



Donald Trump Jr.

● **DONALD TRUMP JR.**, the eldest son, called on his father in a tweet to wage "total war" against the cheating that he believes is tainting the presidential election.

Few, however, appeared to answer his grammatically incorrect call.

Trump's eldest daughter and one of his senior advisers, Ivanka, tweeted Thursday that her father "will always go to the mat fighting for the hardworking men & women of this great Country!" But she has not tweeted or retweeted any of the fraud allegations championed by her brothers since Election Day. — AFP

Washington, Nov. 6: More than 1,20,000 Coronavirus cases were reported in the US in the past 24 hours, smashing a daily record set the day before, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

The country reported 1,23,085 new infections between 8:30 pm Wednesday and 8:30 pm Thursday (0130 GMT), and 1,226 more deaths, the tally by the Baltimore-based school showed.

On Wednesday, 99,660 new cases of the virus were reported. Thursday's tally shatters that record by 23,425 cases.

While deaths remain lower than their worst levels in the spring, Thursday was also the third day in a row that fatalities were above 1,000. The last time people were dying at that rate of Covid-19 in the US was early September.

More than 9.6 million people have been infected and 2,34,000 have died in the United States so far during the pandemic, by far the highest tolls in absolute terms globally.

The new record comes as US President Donald Trump, who survived a bout with Covid-19 in October and insists the virus will "disappear," was fighting for his political life on Thursday with vote-counting from Tuesday's presidential election still ongoing.

His Democratic election rival Joe Biden has sought to turn the vote into a referendum on Trump's handling of the crisis, and vowed to listen to scientific recommendations on handling the pandemic should he take the White House.

With Coronavirus cases surging across the country since mid-October, more than 100 million voters cast their ballot by mail or in person before Election Day — the highest number of early voters ever — as many Americans sought to avoid crowded polling booths. — AFP

Beijing, Nov. 6: Beijing on Thursday banned foreign arrivals from France and a host of other countries, the latest in a growing number of entry bans as China closes itself off from a world still battling the Coronavirus pandemic.

Covid-19 first emerged in central China late last year, but Beijing has largely brought its outbreak under control through tight travel restrictions and stringent health measures for anyone entering the country.

In March, as the virus ripped across the world, China shut its borders to all foreign nationals, although it had gradually eased the restrictions in recent months. — AFP

China bans arrivals from France

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

Collector's Delight Auctioneer finds memorabilia pristine in sealed packaging

Couple find Star Wars toys worth \$5.25 L

Pressure on WHO to invite Taiwan to meet

US registers new Covid record with 1.2 lakh +ve cases

Boris appeals for unity as England locks

Trump sons stand by their father's election claims

Facebook shuts down 'stop the steal' group

Belgium seizes 11.5 tonnes of cocaine in scrap

NZ's Ardern sworn in for second term

Storm Eta kills over 50 in Guatemala

Vienna hit had prior cases

8 held for Vienna hit had prior cases

DECCAN Chronicle

7 NOVEMBER 2020

Don't stretch CBI, put onus on police instead

Jharkhand has joined the list of states that have withdrawn their general consent to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate cases within their territory. The Kerala cabinet had taken a similar decision a day before. At present there are eight states that have chosen to restrict the CBI; West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tripura and Mizoram being the others. Andhra Pradesh had, however, reversed its decision to ban it with the change of government.

The withdrawal of general consent by the states will necessitate the CBI to seek the permission of the state government every time it investigates a case in that state. The agency can get into the job with the backing of an order passed either by the high court or the Supreme Court. The state government can also recommend to the Union government to hand over a particular case to the agency.

The CBI came into existence as an arm of the Delhi Police and is bound by the Delhi Special Police Act, 1944. Its primary mandate was to investigate cases of corruption among Central government officials but the area of operation later got expanded. At present, the agency has wings to probe economic offences as well as special crimes such as murder. It also investigates cases of corruption against public servants.

The state agencies also often face the same charge the CBI is facing now, that they are tools in the hands of the party in power. This is not an ideal situation.

The states are perfectly within their right to shut their gates on the Central agency since law and order is a state subject and every state has a police and vigilance and anti-corruption bureau that can perform the job. And all the states have cited similar reasons for their action, that the premier investigation agency has become a tool in the hands of the Union government to harass leaders who are in camps ideologically opposed to the National Democratic Alliance.

But it's not the Opposition parties alone that have pointed fingers at the coloured operations of the agency; the Supreme Court has more than once criticised it and in one instance, it went to the extent of calling it a "caged parrot" when the United Progressive Alliance was in power. The court also tried to insulate it from the interference of the government by putting in place a better and more inclusive mechanism to select the head of the agency with a fixed tenure so that it can go about its work uninterrupted. That nothing has worked to win the confidence of so many state governments reflects both on the Central government and the people who man it.

The state agencies also often face the same charge the CBI is facing now, that they are tools in the hands of the party in power. This is not an ideal situation. We need determined efforts to professionalise the investigating agencies, whether at the Centre or in the states. There are global models for the conduct of the agencies and their proper superintendence with minimal external interference. Police reforms are an often an orphan and this is the best time when the Centre and states can opt to adopt them.

Scientific shout-out

Close on the heels of a record number of women — Andrea Ghez (in physics), and Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier (in chemistry) — winning the 2020 Nobel Prize in the pure sciences — comes another significant accomplishment closer home — this year, women form exactly one-third of the IIT Delhi's PhD graduates. Seen in the light of the dystopic "social facts" of a skewed sex ratio, low literacy numbers among women (at 65 per cent compared to men's 82 per cent) and a high dropout rate, this is an important stride and cause for cheer, especially for egalitarians and votaries of women's contribution.

A share of the credit for this achievement goes to generations of modern Indian parents. Post-Independence and since the advent of smaller, nuclear families which put the focus on children, they held back no opportunity from their daughters, encouraged them to be independent, and did not negatively discriminate between them and their brothers while raising them. The unpopularity of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) among women has been pervasive in the West where the custom of differential education for girls and boys was first formalised by Charlemagne. In India, education was denied to girls altogether since the Middle Ages. But post the 1970s, brighter children in Indian middle-income homes, irrespective of sex, were encouraged to study science especially once careers for women became the norm, because in a developing economy it meant jobs and financial security. This is the milieu these women scientists have come from, and while they continue to be vastly outnumbered in labs, classes and workplaces, their success puts the spotlight on their stories.

It is pertinent to reflect that the infamous "women are right brained, men are left brained" theory — which builds on findings that the left brain favours numerical skills and the right verbal ability — has long been disproved and linked not to sex but to (left- and right-) handedness. It was once used in popular Western culture, and mindlessly bought into and promoted by the India media, to bolster the patriarchal mindset that discouraged women from studying science. Not any longer.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

K. SUBHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234
Visakhapatnam: Survey No.1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017 (A.P.), Ph: 0891-2552333/2552334; Fax: 0891-2755285
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
Anantapur: Thapovan colony, Bangalore By-Pass Road, Anantapur - 515004, Ph: 08554-276903; Fax: 08554-276904
Karimnagar: Survey No.1341, Vavilalpalay Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433
Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burunpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
Chennai: SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, Ph: 044-22254747/ 48/50/51; Advt Fax: 22254765/22254766/42305325
Coinbatore: 77, Vivekananda Road, Rammagar, Coinbatore - 641 009, Ph : 0422 2231255
Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no: No. HSD-348/2006-08

Subhani



A divided America is battling for its 'soul'



Farrukh Dhondy

Cabbages & Kings

*"So raise a glass to the losers —
In life that's all of us!
Those who think they are winners
Will inherit Destiny's cuss.
Time, they say, doesn't hang about
The years and millennia pass
O Bachchoo if all the world's stage
We're all acting out a farce."*

— From *The Son-in-Law Also Rises*, by Bachchoo

The world awaits the results of the presidential election in the United States of America. I resort to the television, radio, or the news app on my phone to check if any more states have declared a result and whether —Ahura Mazda be praised — Joe Biden has finally crossed the 270 collegiate-votes finishing line.

As I write this, and perhaps even by the time it's in print, the likelihood of a decisive result is remote. The clown prince, President Donald Trump, has already threatened, even as the election and the count is in progress, to question, dishonour and even disobey the result if it goes against him. His gang of lawyers are waiting to challenge the results announced in the "battleground" states in the courts.

The idiot Trump, unfamiliar with the Constitution's provisions or the procedures and rules of American elections, says he'll go to the Supreme Court. His lawyers and Democratic spokespersons will have told him, I hope, that that's not the first step

in any electoral challenge. The states of America each have their detailed procedures for electoral challenges and these will have to be pursued in the courts of that particular state. Donald Trump's tantrumic determination to throw the toys out of the democratic pram has made him tweet several demands to even stop the counting of ballots. He has been authoritatively informed that that won't happen. Every last vote, personal or postal, will be counted and if legal, it will be honoured.

In the 2000 presidential contest, Al Gore lost to George W. Bush by a margin of a few hundred votes. I remember that election night and the news bulletins of the following days. The decision, finally made by a Republican-manipulated Supreme Court after several lesser courts had ordered recounts in the last-to-decisively-declare state of Florida, hung on an examination of the machine-printed ballots. The TV bulletins showed the vote counters looking at pieces of paper through large magnifying glasses, presumably to determine where and against whose name the equivalent of the handwritten cross was marked. These pieces of paper were labelled the "hanging chads". I haven't heard that noun used subsequently. The ones which were unclear were declared spoilt ballots and they gave the victory to George W. (or "Dubya" — as he called himself, to distinguish himself from his father, former President George H.W. Bush.

The present election may hang in a similar

balance with similar challenges but, gentle reader, this election is certainly different from the one back in 2000. The Gore-Bush election demonstrated a nation with a divided vote. The Trump-Biden election is the drama of a nation with a divided soul. In preparation for it, barbed wire fences and fortifications have already been built around the White House. One can be sure that President Trump may have ordered a Mexican-border-style wall to be built around it but was vetoed by his restless staff. The shops and streets of the big cities, including the American capital have been severely boarded up, against the possibility of riots, arson and mayhem. There is talk of rival pseudo militia clashing.

The surveys on TV tell us that the three main issues dividing the nation with the shadow of violence threatening like a dark cloud, are the economy — meaning employment and a wage to earn, racial equality and then the exploding Covid-19 numbers. Donald Trump boasts that he has raised employment and put food on the table of households, but after the Covid-19 pandemic swept the planet, that boast is questionable. Joe Biden's economic plans, as he is the candidate whose party is taking the coronavirus and

its effect on the economy seriously and scientifically, may do even more for putting food on the table and supporting economic activity with subsidies which the arch free enterprisers of the Republican Party won't do.

On racial equality, it is clear that Mr Trump has supported the far-right groups and attacked and insulted the Latino population. Despite which, there are groups called Mexicans for Trump and Blacks for Trump and, of course, the famous group Turkeys for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The United States is not alone in its battle for its soul, by which I mean what sort of country, with progressive modern freedoms for all its citizens, do populations want to live in? If the Democrats in the United States have a majority in the Senate (though that seems unlikely at this juncture), they will not do the sort of trade deal with Brexit Britain which Donald Trump seemed to promise but never made any plans to deliver.

Post-Brexit Britain will then fall back, says the free-marketting UK chancellor of the exchequer Rishi Sunak on the free port, providing in Britain the tax-dodgers of the world, money-launderers and drug dealers a safe haven. Then he probably will propose a bill in the House of Commons to change the nation's name to Bringapore. It won't do much for food on the table or the employable dignity of very many Brits who voted for Brexit. But Rishi's hedge-fund pals will no doubt use their expanded loot to buy properties in Europe. The United States is not the only country which is battling for its soul. Ironically, it is democratic processes which expose this battle in so many nations.

Gentle reader, democracy requires you to choose your side!

On racial equality, it is clear that Mr Trump has supported the far-right groups... Despite which, there are groups called Mexicans for Trump and Blacks for Trump and, of course, the famous group Turkeys for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

LETTERS

FILM SUBSIDY

Though I welcome MAAAP and AP Film Chamber of Commerce for requesting government to enhance subsidy from ₹10 lakh to ₹50 lakh for every film shot in AP, I feel the amount is small (*Subsidy to all movies filmed in AP sought, DC, Nov. 6*). It will increase the film activities all over AP and provides good earning opportunities for many. It will bring back the subsidy spent by government through taxes.

P. Govardhana Rao

Kankipadu, Krishna district

FIRECRACKER BAN

It is encouraging to read that in view of the second wave of Covid, the Maharashtra government is also thinking of celebrating Diwali without firecrackers (*Maha may also ban firecrackers this Diwali, DC, Nov. 6*). It is a step in the right direction in this pandemic. Not only will it reduce the rise in Covid cases but it will also decrease pollution.

Dr C. Ghanshyam

Visakhapatnam

GOVT BEHAVIOUR

The manner in which the government is easing regulations allowing demand and supply to determine competition might be good for an ailing economy but not for the millions of Indians who are still reeling under poverty. It is quite clear that the pandemic has pushed more people into poverty and under this circumstances, the marginalised cannot be lifted.

Ratnaraj Jain

Rajahmundry

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

'Netaji went underground'

TRICHUR, Nov. 6. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose went underground and was not killed in a plane crash as concluded in the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee, according to Mr. A. Muhammed, who was closely associated with the Indian National Army in Malaya.

Mr Muhammed said that he based this claim on the basis of what Netaji told a select gathering in a school at Sentul a suburb of Kuala Lumpur, just before the surrender of the Japanese in the Second World War.

Edward Lucas



Did Russia try to undermine confidence in US democracy?

Russia is using a "drumbeat of disinformation" to attack the American political system. That was the stark conclusion FBI director Christopher Wray offered in his testimony to the House of Representatives homeland security committee in September. One aim, he said, was to undermine Joe Biden's campaign. But the main thrust of the attack, as we will see in the coming days and weeks, is to undermine public confidence in US democracy itself. To be fair, Russia didn't create the problem. It wasn't President Vladimir Putin who wrote the laws governing US elections, with their decentralised responsibilities, threadbare budgets and barnacled and opaque provisions. (Do you understand what the electoral college is and how it operates? Neither do most Americans.) Nor did he write the US Constitution, which is meant to be the system's backstop, but is ambiguous on vital questions about contested elections (the vice-president's role, for example). The use of antique, hackable voting machines is not the result of a Kremlin plot.

Nor, most of all, is Russia really to blame for the crippling polarisation of American politics — a landscape in which both sides treat litigation as an extension of the campaign, and where

supporters are so certain of the rightness of their cause that they regard civil unrest as the logical response to a defeat. That is the result of sustained economic, political and social failure, for which we can hold both parties responsible.

And it was Donald Trump, not Vladimir Putin, who systematically undermined the credibility of the election system. Long before this week, his party has promoted the myth of widespread electoral fraud and created legal obstacles that discourage black and poor voters or open their ballots to legal challenges. On the eve of polling day the President decreed potential "fraud" and "misuse" in two swing states, Pennsylvania and Nevada, and said: "I think it's a terrible thing when ballots can be collected after an election." As soon as the election is over, he warned: "We are going in with our lawyers". So it was hardly surprising, then, that on Wednesday morning he stoked the flames of anger by claiming on Twitter, in a fundraising email to his supporters and at a press conference at the White House, that the Democrats were trying to "steal" the election. Vladimir Putin will be cheering. For what kind of democracy operates with such frenzied mistrust?

Certainly, American woes can seem bizarre. The mechanics of Britain's electoral system have barely changed in more than a century. You make a cross on a ballot paper with a pencil. The votes are counted by tellers in public, under the watchful eyes of outside observers. Abuses are rare, litigation is even rarer.

But that's no reason for smugness. Even the UK's robust, primitive system can be attacked. The best example of election interference does not concern the question of where some Brexit donors made their fortunes. As the Intelligence and Security Committee report on Russia noted, it is from the Scottish independence referendum in 2014. Internet trolls with a record of pro-Russian activity spread the false notion that the count was rigged. A YouTube video showed what seemed to be bundles of pro-independence "Yes" votes being furtively moved to a "No" pile. Other images appeared to show a ballot box being stuffed. One video, posted by "Elite NWO agenda", was viewed more than 800,000 times. (NWO stands for "New World Order", a phrase beloved by conspiracy theorists.)

This was, of course, nonsense. The ballot papers were moved — but for an entirely innocent reason. The bal-

lot box was indeed stuffed — but the footage came from a quite different election — one in Russia.

So, from a Russian point of view, the answer is a toxic mix of nihilism and lies. One option is to stir up apathy: democracy is a farce; all politicians are liars. The other is to play on people's fears: you are being robbed and cheated.

As we saw this week, the US electoral system offers plenty of opportunity for both kinds of attack. Politics in Washington, with its gift and deadlock, can easily seem like a pointless farce: a choice between Coke and Pepsi that benefits only the insiders. But right now, it is easier to play on emotions. The election, and the country, are being stolen from under your noses. Sparks are already flying in the American tinderbox. The heavily armed, lightly informed militias who fervently back Donald Trump (and their opponents such as the black-clad implacables of Antifa) are easy prey for such tactics. Rumours and scare stories can fan their smouldering resentments into an inferno.

The intricacies of the legal system and of the electoral process offer abundant opportunities for what the US state department calls the "ecosystem" of Russian disinformation: "offi-

cial, proxy, and unattributed communication channels". In a report released quietly this summer (President Trump is notoriously allergic to any discussion of Russian interference), the state department explains how the system works. Because the messaging comes across so many different channels, there is no need for consistency. Official news outlets, for example, can decry the treatment of black voters, while clandestine ones can whip up the fears of white nationalists. The Kremlin enjoys plausible deniability.

One of the starkest examples of Kremlin political interference came in 2016 with duelling demonstrations outside an Islamic centre in Houston. Staging that, by placing pro- and anti-Islam ads on Facebook, cost the Russian puppet-masters a princely \$200. Insults were thrown, but no punches. It will be all too easy to muster groups of hotheads outside municipal buildings and courthouses in febrile swing states such as Michigan for dangerous, even bloody confrontations. American democracy, and the West's security, will be caught helplessly in the crossfire.

By arrangement with the Spectator

quick BITES

| INDICATORS | | % |
|------------------------|------------|-------|
| Sensex | 41,893.06 | 1.34 |
| Nifty 50 | 12,263.55 | 1.18 |
| S&P 500* | 3,511.17 | 0.02 |
| Dollar (₹) | 74.19 | 0.27 |
| Pound Sterling (₹) | 97.54 | -0.71 |
| Euro (₹) | 87.86 | 0.00 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹) | 51,717▲791 | 1.52 |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)* | 39.52 | -1.41 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield | 5.871 | 0.013 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.827 | 0.049 |

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Forex reserves up \$183 mn to record \$560.71 bn

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose \$183 million to touch a record high of \$560.715 billion in the week ended October 30, RBI data showed. In the previous week ended Oct. 23, the reserves had jumped \$5.412 billion to \$560.532 billion. Foreign currency assets rose by \$815 million to \$518.339 billion. Gold reserves declined \$601 million in the reporting week to \$36.259 billion.

Gold bond scheme price fixed at ₹5,177 per gram



The issue price for the Sovereign Gold Bond has been fixed at Rs 5,177 per gram of gold, the RBI said. The Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2020-21-Series VIII will be opened for subscription from Nov. 9 to 13. The RBI said the government will offer a discount of Rs 50 per gram to investors applying online and the payment against the application is made through digital mode.

Thomas Cook, SOTC to hold holiday roadshows

Travel services firm Thomas Cook India and its group firm SOTC Travel announced the first physical holiday roadshows since the lockdown. The series of customer-centric roadshows in association with Accor and Marriott hotels will be held on Sunday across key source markets—Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Pune, Kochi, Jaipur and Baroda, the travel firm said.

SEs will have to resolve investors complaints in 15 days

Markets regulator Sebi said stock exchanges will have to ensure that investor grievances are resolved within 15 working days after receiving such complaints. The move is aimed at strengthening the investor grievance redressal mechanism, the Sebi said in a circular. The Sebi said that Investor Grievance Redressal Committee would not dispose the complaint citing lack of information or complexity of case.



RBI deputy governor Rao calls for tighter oversight Big NBFCs need to scale down or become banks

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, NOV. 6

Large non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) must be subjected to a higher degree of regulation and should be incentivised to either convert into commercial banks or scale down their operations to help make the financial sector sound and resilient, said Rajeshwar Rao, deputy governor in charge of banking regulation and risk monitoring at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday.

Speaking at the Assoccham NBFC Summit, Rao battled for the principle of proportionality and recommended a graded regulatory framework for NBFCs calibrated in relation to their contribution to systemic significance.

"There is a view that any regulatory framework would ideally be designed according to the principle of proportionality. By extension, the spill-over of risks from a systematically important NBFC capable of transmitting perceptible impact on financial stability, must be dealt with in a proportionate manner. So, NBFCs with significant externalities and which contribute substantially to systemic risks must be identified and subjected to a higher degree of regulation," he said.

"One can also argue that the design of prudential regulatory framework for such NBFCs can be comparable with banks so that



BANK CREDIT RISES 5.06%: RBI DATA

Mumbai, Nov. 6: Bank credit grew by 5.06 per cent to Rs 103.39 lakh crore, while deposits rose by 10.12 per cent to Rs 142.92 lakh crore in the fortnight ended October 23, according to the RBI data. In the fortnight ended October 25, 2019, bank credit had stood at Rs 98.40 lakh crore, and the deposit was Rs 129.78 lakh crore.

In the previous fortnight ended October 9, 2020, bank credit had risen by 5.66 per cent and deposits by 10.55 per cent.

Non-food bank credit growth decelerated to 5.8 per cent in September 2020 from 8.1 per cent in

the same month previous year.

Credit to industry recorded 'nil' growth in September 2020 compared to 2.7 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

Credit to agriculture and allied activities rose by 5.9 per cent during the reporting month as against a growth of 7 per cent a year ago.

Loan growth in the services sector rose to 9.1 per cent in September 2020 from 7.3 per cent a year ago.

Personal loans registered a growth of 9.2 per cent compared to 16.6 per cent a year ago. —PTI

beyond a point of criticality to systemic risks, such NBFC should have incentives either to convert into a commercial bank or scale down their network externalities within the financial system. This

would make the financial sector sound and resilient while allowing a majority of NBFCs to continue under the regulation-light structure," added Rao.

Over the years, the NBFC segment has grown

rapidly, with a few of the large NBFCs becoming comparable in size to some of the private sector banks. Between March 31, 2009 and March 31, 2019, the total assets of NBFCs grew at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18.6 per cent, while the balance sheets of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) grew at a CAGR of 10.7 per cent.

Consequently, the aggregate balance sheet size of NBFCs increased from 9.3 per cent to 18.6 per cent of the aggregate balance sheet size of SCBs during the corresponding period.

In absolute terms, the asset size of NBFC sector (including HFCs), as on March 31, 2020, is Rs 51.47 lakh crore. As at end-March 2020, NBFCs have been the largest net borrowers of funds from the financial system, of which, more than half of the funds were from SCBs, followed by Asset Management Companies-Mutual Funds (AMC-MFs) and insurance companies.

In the aftermath of liquidity stress post IL&FS and DHFL events, the market funding conditions turned difficult for NBFCs. However the central bank acted in a swift and proactive manner to improve access to funding and liquidity by its monetary policy and liquidity measures and resultantly, the cost of funds for NBFCs and HFCs has reduced substantially for all rating categories said Rao.

LIC comfortable with unified regulator for financial sector

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV. 6

India's largest insurer Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has supported the need for a unified regulator over and above all the existing financial regulators. However, integrating the different supervisory functions in all financial services sectors into a single agency is not an easy task. The insurer feels that the regulatory process in all these sectors need to be simplified before embarking on the long road to a unified command.

At present, different financial sectors like banking, capital markets, pension fund and insurance in India are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority



M R Kumar

(PFRDA) and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), respectively. In April this year, the Centre has announced a unified regulator to regulate all financial services at the Gujarat International Finance Tec (GIFT)-City in Gandhinagar. In line with this International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), there is also a clarification call for setting up a unified regulator to regulate and integrate the different supervisory functions into a single agency.

On the concept of having a unified regulator, LIC chairman M.R. Kumar has favoured the move. "In future, we may need that, as each financial sector regulator should have a better sense of the markets. We have a long road to go before we can think of having such a regulator," he said at a virtual conference.

According to Kumar, India has been evolving over the years and regulations are important to ensure that market participants act properly. "Still, the regulatory processes need to be simplified."

Many financial experts believe the concept of a unified regulator is a necessary change crucial for making India the next big hub in the ever dynamic global financial landscape. It has been observed that many countries are now moving towards having unified regulatory authorities.

Sensex, Nifty near all-time highs

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 6

With over 5 per cent gains during the week, the market is near to its all-time high, with five straight session of gains, buoyed by good second quarter earnings, positive domestic economic data and Joe Biden taking decisive lead over rival Donald Trump.

The Sensex closed at a nine-month high at 41,893.06, up 552.90 after touching intra-day high of 41,954.93.

The Sensex's all-time high stands at 42,273.87, touched on January 20, 2020.

The Nifty-50 closed at 12,263, up 1.18 per cent or 143.25 points.

Big-time buying by foreign portfolio investors continued for the second session, with Rs 4,869.87 crore net buying on Friday, putting total buying in last two sessions to Rs 10,238 crore, with Rs 5368.31 crore invested on Thursday.

BSE's market capitalisation was back to pre-covid

days touching over Rs 163.60 lakh crore.

"Right from diesel consumption to PMI, from labour-intensive construction activities to GST collections all these major ground-level macro indicators are displaying strong recovery to pre-Covid levels. However, certain facets of the economy are still reeling under the pressure of economic contraction," Nirali Shah, senior research analyst, Samco Securities, said.

Mid-sized banks report higher Q2 profit as asset quality improves

FC BANKING BUREAU MUMBAI, NOV. 6

A host of public sector banks that declared their second quarter results on Friday reported higher profits on improved asset quality and operational metrics. Fresh slippages were lower in the absence of lumpy corporate non-performing assets. Even while the bad loan formation was lower, all the banks shored up their provisioning buffers before the asset-quality onslaught begins in the December quarter.

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) reported a net profit of Rs 148 crore for the September quarter as bad loans and provisions declined compared to a net loss of Rs 2,254 crore in July-September 2019.

Bank of India (BoI) reported over two-fold jump in September quarter consolidated net profit at Rs 543.47 crore, against Rs 257.31 crore in the year-ago quarter, as bad assets came down.

Union Bank of India reported 55.3 per cent

jump in its net profit at Rs 517 crore in the second quarter compared to a net profit of Rs 333 crore a year ago.

Similarly, Central Bank of India reported over 20 per cent rise in its net profit at Rs 161 crore for the second quarter compared to a net profit of Rs 134 crore a year ago.

There was a substantial improvement in IOB's asset quality as the gross non-performing assets (NPAs) plunged to 13.04 per cent of the gross advances as of September 30, 2020 from 20 per cent at the end of September 2019. In value terms, gross NPAs or bad loans fell to Rs 17,659.63 crore as against Rs 28,673.95 crore a year ago. Total fresh slippages (other debits to existing NPA accounts) for September quarter were contained at Rs 292 crore, the lender said. Provisions for bad loans and contingencies fell to Rs 1,192.55 crore during the quarter under review from Rs 2,996.04 crore set aside in the year-ago quarter.

BoI's gross non-performing assets fell to 13.79 per cent of gross advances as on September 30, 2020 from 16.31 per cent by the year-ago period. In value terms, gross NPAs, or bad loans, stood at Rs 56,231.76 crore against Rs 61,475.60 crore earlier. However, provisions for bad loans increased to Rs 2,133.87 crore during the quarter from Rs 1,452.09 crore parked aside for the year-ago same quarter.

Central Bank of India's also improved on its bad assets ratio with the gross NPAs falling to 17.36 per cent of gross advances by the end of September 2020, from 19.89 per cent by the end of September 2019. Provisions for bad loans and contingencies, however, rose to Rs 1,104.92 crore from Rs 791.33 crore. The provision coverage ratio also improved to 82.24 per cent from 76.68 per cent.

UBI's gross NPAs ratio improved to 14.71 per cent of the gross advances in the September quarter from 15.75 per cent a year ago. The provision coverage ratio improved to 83.16 from 74.26 per cent.

declined in the quarter, according to IDC.

The reopening of the country with fewer restrictions, pent-up demand in July-August and channel stocking in September to meet the upcoming Diwali quarter demand helped smartphone sales.

Online sales share reached an all-time high of 48 per cent, growing by a healthy 24 per cent. In contrast, offline channels registered a moderate 11 per cent growth. IDC expects growth to continue for the online channel, driven by affordability initiatives and pricing aggression during the festive months, even as supply starts to normalise for the offline channels.

Despite all the Covid blues, smartphone sales grew 17 per cent in the September quarter, making India the only growing market among the top 3. Xiaomi remained the top seller in the Indian market, though other phone-makers reported double-digit growth during the quarter.

As a record 54.3 million units were shipped during the quarter, the smartphone market grew 16.50 per cent against 46.6 million units in the same quarter last year. India was the only smartphone market in the top 3 to report a growth, as both Chinese and the US sales

Pandemic blow to Adani's \$4 bn Mundra chemical complex plan

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 6

Global economic uncertainties unleashed by the pandemic have forced Adani Group, German chemical company BASF and two other partners, to put on hold setting up of an ambitious \$4 billion chemical complex near Adani Group's Mundra port facility with access to renewable energy sources, BASF said.

"The global economic uncertainties caused by the pandemic have led the partners to review the timing for undertaking this investment. Despite all attempts to optimise the scope and the configuration, the project has been put on hold," BASF said in a statement.

"The partners remain convinced about the strong fundamentals represented by the Indian market and agreed to periodically explore market conditions and discuss any opportunity that may arise over time," BASF added.

The stalled project was conceived in early 2019 during the Vibrant Gujarat Summit and was aimed at



reducing India's dependence on imported petrochemicals.

The other two partners are Borealis, a European company specialising in base chemicals, fertilisers and the mechanical recycling of plastics and the United Arab Emirates' Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Adnoc), a diversified energy and petrochemicals groups.

A four-party memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on October 4, 2019 among Adani Group, BASF, Adnoc and Borealis AG and they had recently completed a joint feasibility study for a chemical complex in Mundra.

"BASF has large exposure in Germany and China, they wanted to move to India from China but due to the pandemic it

is put on hold. Also, they had shut down a plant in Germany which has been restarted now, so they have delayed the India project, but they will come back," said Kishore P. Ostwal, chairman, CNI Research.

BASF had earlier in May end 2020 kicked off the piling work of \$10 billion investment project in Zhanjiang, Guangdong, China, to produce engineering plastics and thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) to serve the increasing needs of various growth industries in the southern China market and throughout Asia.

Adani Enterprises shares closed 0.26 per cent down at Rs 351.75 on the BSE on Friday while Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone gained 0.64 per cent. BASF India shares closed 0.48 per cent up at Rs 1491.75.

PERFORMANCE STREET

BHEL REPORTS ₹552 CR CONSOLIDATED LOSS

BHEL reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 552.38 crore in the September quarter, due to lower revenues, against a consolidated net profit of Rs 120.95 crore in the year-ago period. Total income fell to Rs 3,793.13 crore from Rs 6,359.68 crore.

VEDANTA Q2 PROFIT SLUMPS 62% TO ₹824 CR

Vedanta reported 61.8 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 824 crore for the September quarter against Rs 2,158 crore in the year-ago period. Income declined to Rs 21,744 crore from Rs 22,814 crore.

MRF REPORTS 79% RISE IN PROFIT AT ₹411 CR

MRF Ltd reported a 79 per cent jump in consolidated profit from continuing operations at Rs 410.92 crore for Q2FY21 against Rs 228.96 crore in Q2FY20. Consolidated revenue stood at Rs 4,244.43 crore against Rs 4,007.63 crore.

VOLTAS Q2 PROFIT FALLS 26% AT ₹80 CRORE

Volta reported a 25.74 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 79.66 crore for September quarter against Rs 107.28 crore in the year-ago quarter. Total income at Rs 1,650.80 crore was up 10.45 per cent versus Rs 1,494.56 crore.

ADITYA BIRLA FASHION LOSS WIDENS TO ₹188 CR

Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail's consolidated net loss widened to Rs 188.25 crore in the second quarter compared to a net loss of Rs 2.35 crore in July-September 2019. Total income declined 49.60 per cent to Rs 1,171.32 crore from Rs 2,324.35 crore.

SHORT TAKES

Covid at home, Gambhir isolated

New Delhi: Former India opener Gautam Gambhir has gone into self-isolation, awaiting a Covid-19 test result, after revealing that someone at his home has contracted the virus. The World Cup-winning former batsman is currently a Lok Sabha MP from East Delhi. "Due to a case at home, I have been in isolation awaiting my Covid test result. Urge everyone to follow all guidelines & not take this lightly. Stay safe!" Gambhir tweeted.

The 39-year-old represented India in 58 Tests, 147 ODIs and 37 T20 Internationals. He made his foray into politics ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in 2019 by joining the Bhartiya Janata Party. Delhi recorded over 6,700 new Covid-19 cases on Thursday, pushing the infection tally in the city to over 4.16 lakh with 66 more fatalities, the highest in around four months. — PTI

Ailing Maradona still in hospital

Olivos, Argentina: Argentine soccer legend Diego Maradona is to remain in hospital for several more days to undergo treatment following surgery to remove a blood clot on the brain, his doctor said Thursday. "We saw that in the postoperative phase Diego had episodes of confusion," Leopoldo Luque told reporters, adding that therapists had linked the behaviour to "abstinence" and that the necessary treatment would last "a few days". Luque did not provide details, but Maradona has a history of drug and alcohol addition. Although he has stated he has not used cocaine in years, according to friends and media reports, he remains addicted to alcohol. The doctor said Maradona "agrees" with the diagnosis and would remain in the clinic. — AFP

Ningombam is Hockey India prez

New Delhi: Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam was on Friday elected unopposed as the Hockey India (HI) president, taking over from Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad who was asked to demit office by the sports ministry for violating the National Sports Code's tenure guidelines. Ahmad, however, remains in the federation after being elected unopposed for the senior vice-president's post at HI's Congress and Elections here. Access to the meeting through video conferencing facility was made available for member units which were unable to travel due to the restrictions imposed by their respective state governments to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. On being elected unopposed, Ningombam becomes the first President from the North East region to head HI. — PTI

Nadal make Paris Masters quarters

Paris: Rafael Nadal battled past Australian Jordan Thompson in straight sets to reach the Paris Masters quarterfinals on Thursday, as Diego Schwartzman moved within one win of securing an ATP Tour Finals debut. Top seed Nadal got the better of Thompson 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) to set up a last-eight clash with fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta. World number 61 Thompson missed a set point to force a decider in his first meeting with the 20-time Grand Slam champion. Nadal is bidding for a first Paris indoors triumph which would draw him level with Novak Djokovic on a record 36 Masters titles. — AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

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

Women's Big Bash League: Sydney Sixers vs Hobart Hurricanes from 10 am; Melbourne Stars vs Perth Scorchers from 1.35 pm; Melbourne Renegades vs Adelaide Strikers from 4.50 am (Sunday) on Sony Six

TENNIS

ATP Paris Masters: Semifinal from 6.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Everton vs Manchester United from 6 pm; Crystal Palace vs Leeds United from 8.30 pm; Chelsea vs Sheffield United from 11 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Italian League: Cagliari vs Sampdoria from 7.30 pm; Benevento vs Spezia from 10.30 pm; Parma vs Fiorentina from 11.5 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2

Williamstuns RCB

Kane crafts match-winning knock, SRH make Qualifier-2

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 6: Former captain Kane Williamson led from the front as Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by six wickets in the IPL Eliminator here on Friday.

Chasing RCB's lowly total of 131 for 7, the team from Hyderabad were in trouble at 67 for 4 in the 12th over when Williamson and Jason Holder got together to put on an unbroken stand of 65 runs to see the side home.

Williamson was unbeaten on 50 that came off 44 balls and comprised two fours and two sixes while Holder remained 24 not out off 20 balls. He hit three boundaries, including two in the last over to finish the game.

Earlier, SRH produced a brilliant bowling effort to restrict a batting-heavy RCB. Holder led SRH's attack with impressive figures of 3 for 25 and was ably supported by T. Natarajan (2/33) as Virat Kohli's side found the going difficult from the beginning.

AB de Villiers (56 off 43) scored a timely half-century to somewhat rescue RCB from a horrible start and take the team past the 120-run mark.

RCB witnessed a horrendous start to their innings as they lost two wickets for 15 runs inside four overs after being sent into bat. Skipper Kohli (6), who opened the innings along side Devdutt Padikkal (1), was the first to depart, nicking one on the leg side to injured Wriddhiman Saha's replacement Sreevats Goswami off Holder. An over later, Holder picked up his second victim when Padikkal pulled one to Priyam Garg inside the circle as RCB slumped to 15 for 2.

Aaron Finch (32 off 30), who replaced Josh Philippe, and de Villiers then tried to stabilise the innings with a 41-run third wicket stand. But twin blows in the 11th over put paid to RCB's effort. First, Finch depart-



Kane Williamson of Sunrisers Hyderabad plays a shot against Royal Challengers Bangalore during the IPL Eliminator match at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Friday.

— BCCI

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Virat Kohli c Shreevats Goswami b Jason Holder 6, D. Padikkal c Garg b Jason Holder 1, Aaron Finch c Samad b Shahbaz Nadeem 32, AB de Villiers b Natarajan 56, Moeen Ali run out 0, S Dube c Warner b Holder 8, Washington Sundar c Samad b Natarajan 5, N Saini not out 9, M Siraj not out 10. Extras (NB-1, W-3) 4. **Total (for 7 wickets in 20 overs) 131.**

FoW: 1-7, 2-15, 3-56, 4-62, 5-99, 6-111, 7-113. **Bowling:** Sandeep Sharma 4-0-21-0, Jason Holder 4-0-25-3, Natarajan 4-0-33-2, S. Nadeem 4-0-30-1, Rashid Khan 4-0-22-0.

Sunrisers Hyderabad: David Warner c AB de Villiers b Mohammed Siraj 17, Shreevats Goswami c AB de Villiers b Mohammed Siraj 0, Manish Pandey c AB de Villiers b Adam Zampa 24, Kane Williamson not out 50, Priyam Garg c Zampa b Chahal 7, Holder not out 24. Extras (LB-5, NB-1, W-4) 10. **Total (for 4 wickets in 19.4 overs) 132.**

FoW: 1-2, 2-43, 3-55, 4-67. **Bowling:** Mohammed Siraj 4-0-28-2, Navdeep Saini 3.4-0-31-0, Washington Sundar 2-0-21-0, Adam Zampa 4-0-12-1, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-24-1, Moeen Ali 1-0-4-0, Shivam Dube 1-0-7-0.

Bumrah prefers Trophy to wickets

Dubai, Nov. 6: Mumbai Indians pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah says he is reaping the reward for not worrying about results and just focusing on executing the role assigned to him by the team.

Bumrah was adjudged the 'Player of the Match' for returning with figures of 4-1-14-4 as four-time champions MI reached yet another IPL final with a 57-run win over Delhi Capitals in the first qualifier here on Thursday.

"I am okay with not getting wickets and winning the tournament, I have been given a role so I just want to execute that role," Bumrah, who regained the purple cap with a tally of 27 wickets, said in the post-match presentation.

"I am always ready when the captain wants me to bowl. I don't focus on the



Jasprit Bumrah

end result. When I have done that it's always gone downhill," he said.

Bumrah had delivered a perfect yorker to get rid of in-form Shikhar Dhawan (0) for his first wicket.

"Opening yorker was really important. I decided I will do that early in the game and when it comes off it's always nice," Bumrah added.

Rohit all praise for team

Dubai, Nov. 6: A jubilant Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma said his team produced an "absolutely perfect" performance to make the IPL finals with a 57-run decimation of Delhi Capitals in the first Qualifier here.

Mumbai posted a massive 200/5 on the board, courtesy half-centuries by Suryakumar Yadav, Ishan Kishan and some late hitting by Hardik Pandya. They then restricted Delhi to 143/8 with pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah (4/14) wreaking havoc along with Trent Boult (2/9).

"You have got to give credit to our guys, the way they turned up at the game, putting runs on the board, and getting those early breakthroughs was so much important," Rohit said, lauding his teammates after they beat Delhi Capitals.

"Our bowling has been

RAINING SIXES

ISHAN KISHAN SLAMS 700TH SIX OF IPL-13:

● Mumbai Indians' Ishan Kishan smashed the 700th six in the 13th edition of Indian Premier League. The third six off pacer Anrich Nortje during his unbeaten 55-run knock against Delhi Capitals in the first qualifier at Dubai on Thursday night (November 5) was the 700th in 113th innings of 57th match in this tournament

● Rajasthan Royals' Jos Buttler smashed the 700th six in the 11th edition of Indian Premier League, against Kolkata Knight Riders at Kolkata on May 15. This was also the fastest 700 sixes in the history of IPL.

● As far as teams are concerned Mumbai Indians have hit the most of total sixes that the tournament has seen thus far, eight players from the Mumbai Indians franchise have contributed 130 sixes of the 706 sixes in IPL 2020.

● Forty four Indian batsmen hit 379 sixes while 34 overseas batsmen smashed 327 sixes in a total of 706.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

terrific through the tournament; they have put pressure on the opposition right from the beginning. It was good to see the overall performance of the team, the way we played today was absolutely perfect," the skipper added.

He praised Yadav, saying whenever Mumbai have lost an early wicket, he has taken the pressure away from the team.

"Surya has been in terrific form and is a very crucial player for us at number three," Rohit further added. — AFP

Supernovas in a must-win game

Sharjah, Nov. 6: Defending champions Supernovas will have to get past an upbeat Trailblazers here on Saturday to stay alive in the Women's T20 Challenge.

Brimming with confidence after a crushing win over Velocity on Thursday, the Smriti Mandhana-led Trailblazers will aim for another win to finish with two victories and enter the final on November 9 with momentum behind them.

They will be up against Supernovas, a team smarting from defeat in the tournament opener against Velocity. Another loss would knock Supernovas out of the tournament.

Trailblazers came up with a stellar bowling performance to bundle out Velocity for 47 with England's left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone, the world No.1 T20 bowler, returning impressive figures of 4 for 9 in 3.1 overs.

Mandhana will be hoping that the bowlers continue

the good work against a strong Supernovas line-up led by Harmanpreet Kaur.

The southpaw will be aiming to showcase her skills and expect her batting unit to step up in a crunch encounter.

Supernovas need a win and that will bring the net run-rate into play and possibly eliminate Velocity who have a negative NRR (-1.869).

Velocity, on their part, will hope Supernovas lose allowing them to advance to the summit clash.

Kaur will look to build on her performance in the tournament opener and hope Sri Lankan Chamari Atapattu continues her good form.

Supernovas appeared to have the match under control before Sushma Verma and Sune Luus took it away from them as the bowlers crumbled under pressure. On the Sharjah pitch that has gotten slower progressively, the spinners will have a big role to play. — PTI

S. AFRICAN PACER MORKEL IN BIG BASH AS AN AUSSIE

Sydney, Nov. 6: South African fast bowling great Morne Morkel Friday signed on for the Big Bash League, but as a local hire rather than international after becoming an Australian permanent resident.

The 36-year-old, who played 86 Tests and 117 ODIs for the Proteas, moved to Australia in 2018, where he lives with his sports broadcaster wife and children.

He gained residency this year and put pen to paper with the Brisbane Heat for the Twenty20 tournament starting on December 10.

"I am still enjoying my cricket enormously and the chance to be part of the Heat squad is something I am keen to experience," he said.

"I admit it will be a bit unusual to call myself a local, but we are enjoying living and working here and this is another aspect of our lives that I am looking forward to being a part of," he added.

BBL rules allow three internationals in the same XI with Afghan spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman and English pair Tom Banton and Lewis Gregory already signed for the Heat. — AFP

Playing too long in bubble tough

Dubai, Nov. 6: India skipper Virat Kohli feels the "repetitive" nature of being in a bio-bubble can be mentally tough on cricketers and length of tours will have to be considered accordingly if playing in a protected environment becomes a norm in a world scarred by Covid-19.

The Indian team departs on a long tour of Australia right after the IPL which is currently on in the United Arab Emirates, moving into one bio-bubble from another.

"It's repetitive, it's not as tough when the group of guys is amazing, which we have. But it does get difficult at times because it is repetitive," Kohli said.

Most squad members are part of the IPL and have been in the UAE since August. The Australia tour will stretch to the new year, leaving the players on the road for more than four months, that too with little connection to the outside world.

Crickets is only being organised in bio-bubbles amid the pandemic and the situation is unlikely to change anytime soon.

These things will have to be considered. Like what length of the tournament or series one is going to play and what impact it will have on players mentally to stay in a similar environment for 80 days and not do anything different.

— VIRAT KOHLI on playing regularly in bio-bubble

Kohli said the scheduling has to factor in mental fatigue a bio-bubble can cause to the players.

"These things will have to be considered. Like what length of the tournament or series one is going to play and what impact it will have on players mentally to stay in a similar environment for 80 days and not do anything different.

"Or have space to just go and see family or small things like that. These things have to be thought about seriously. At the end of the day, you want the players to be in the best state mentally," Kohli added. — PTI



Arsenal's Eddie Nketiah (second from right) and Nicolas Pepe (right) watch as the ball goes into the net after Molde's Sheriff Sinyan (second from left) scored an own goal during their UEFA Europa League Group 'B' match at the Emirates Stadium in London on Thursday. Arsenal won 4-1.

— AFP