

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | THURSDAY 8 | OCTOBER 2020

## WEATHER



**Max:** 34°C  
**Min:** 26°C  
**Rainfall:** 1 mm

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Purattasi 22  
**Tithi:** Shashti/ Saphthami  
**Star:** Mrigashirsham  
**Rahukalam:**  
1.30 pm to 3 pm  
**Yamagandam:**  
6 am to 7.30 am

### PRAYERS

**Fajar:** 4.48 am  
**Zohar:** 12.02 pm  
**Asar:** 3.18 pm  
**Maghrib:** 5.56 pm  
**Isha:** 7.06 pm

**SUNSET TODAY 5.54 PM**  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.59 AM**  
**MOONRISE TODAY 10.38 PM**  
**MOONSET TOMORROW 11.53 AM**

## CORONA COUNT

| CASES     | DEATHS   |
|-----------|----------|
| (+78,467) | (+960)   |
| 68,32,646 | 1,05,551 |

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+5,447)  
TN: 6,35,855 9,984

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

3,62,85,813

### DEATHS

10,57,992

COUNTRIES  
AREAS WITH  
CASES 214

worldometers.info

## Woman ends life as family tests +ve for Covid

**Chennai:** A 48-year-old woman in Adambakkam took her life as her husband and two children were tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the local police said.

According to police, the deceased has been identified as, Vijayakumari, the wife of Kumaravel (52), staffer at a private company in the city. The couple lived at an apartment building in New colony in Adambakkam, with two children aged, 19 and 17.

Official sources said that Kumaravel had tested positive for the virus recently and was admitted to a private hospital in Kelambakkam. A few days later, two children were confirmed to have contacted the infection from Kumaravel. However, Vijayakumari tested negative.

As per directions of healthcare workers, Vijakumari's son and daughter quarantined themselves in the house.

## COUNTER

## POINT



**It's not costly, sir! You can enjoy the luxury of a vacant seat!**

## STATE | 3

**Tamil Nadu BJP president congratulates Palaniswami**



**Biden against second debate if Trump still suffers from Covid**

## WORLD | 5

## FINANCIAL CHRONICLE | 7

**Rajeshwar Rao appointed RBI deputy guv**



## ‘America first’: US tightens H-1B rules on pay

Washington, Oct.7: US President Donald Trump's administration on Tuesday unveiled a tightening of rules for immigration visas used widely by technology firms, claiming the new system would be better for American workers.

The Department of Homeland Security announced the new regulations for so-called H-1B visas for highly skilled workers, which allow up to 85,000 immigrants annually. The move marked a new step aimed at tightening immigration under the Trump administration, which sought to block the H-1B program in a move halted last week by a federal judge.

Tuesday's new regulations, details of which were not disclosed, would narrow the definition of "specialty occupation" which according to DHS "allowed companies to game the system."

The plan, to be implemented after a 60-day comment period, would also seek to require firms to make 'real' offers to US residents before seeking to bring in foreigners and add new compliance mechanisms.

The visa programme has been widely used by Silicon Valley firms to bring in engineers and other skilled workers, many coming from India. Critics have said the program has depressed salaries in some professions. "We have entered an era in which economic security is an integral part of homeland security," acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf said in a statement.

— Agencies

## 9 hurt in major fire at IOC petrol pump in Bhubaneswar

**Bhubaneswar, Oct. 7:** Nine people were injured, two of them critically, in a major fire that broke out at an Indian Oil Corporation petrol pump near the Raj Bhavan here on Wednesday, police said.

Five fire engines along with Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force personnel doused the flame after fighting it for about two hours, fire department sources said.

The explosion caused by the fire was so loud that it caused people to rush out of the nearby buildings fearing that there was an earthquake.

Police said some nearby shops and houses suffered damages due to the blast. Under the impact of the explosion several vehicles which were near the site at the time were found to have been thrown away, eye witnesses said. The petrol pump itself was damaged in the fire, whose cause is yet to be ascertained.

— PTI

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**

CHENNAI, OCT. 7

With sweets and fire-crackers, it was early Deepavali at the AIADMK headquarters premises on Wednesday morning soon after the party coordinator, O Panneerselvam, named the incumbent Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami as the Chief Ministerial candidate for the 2021 Assembly elections.

The meeting, scheduled for 10.00 am, started a little ahead of time with the party headquarters wearing a festive look since morning and the first announcement was on the formation of the 11-member steering committee, which had been Pannerselvam's long time demand.

Party deputy coordinator KP Munusamy, who was among those working till 3.30 am to bring about a rapprochement between Pannerselvam and Palaniswami, read out the names of the members of the steering committee, which he said was formed on the basis of a decision taken at the General Council. Also Panneerselvam put his stamp of approval on the list by signing on it in front of the crowd.

The steering committee



AIADMK coordinator O. Panneerselvam (left) greets Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami during the announcement of party's chief ministerial candidate name for the upcoming 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, at the party office in Chennai, on Wednesday.

— N. SAMPATH

members are Forest Minister Dindigul C Seenivasan, Electricity Minister P Thangamani, Municipal Administration Minister SP Velumani, Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar, Law Minister C Ve Shanmugam, Food and Civil Supplies Minister R Kamaraj, former MLA J C D Prabakar, former MP

Manoj Pandian, former Minister P Mohan, former MP R Gopalakrishnan and Sholavandan MLA K Manikkam.

Munsamy and Vaithilingam, another deputy coordinator, had shuttled between the official residences of Panneerselvam and Palaniswamy to finalise the name of the committee members till the wee

hours as that was the last hitch to be ironed out to bring both the leaders together to make the announcement they were united.

Once the truce was called, the entire party leadership geared up for the meeting and trooped to the venue. Pannerselvam arrived by around 9.40 am and he was followed by Palaniswami in another five minutes. Musical bands heralded their arrival with welcome notes and supporters, some of them wearing full face masks with the images of the leaders, cheered them with slogan shouting.

Then the two leaders, along with the other party functionaries, chatted for some time before the meeting was called for order. It was rumoured that they wanted the announcements to be made at an auspicious hour that came before 10 am.

Whatever be the reason, the meeting turned out to be a simple affair with the presentation of shawls, brief expression of thanks and appreciation and several rounds of applause without slipping into long winded harangue that normally marked political meetings. ■ P2

## BILATERAL MEETING

## India, Japan sign pacts on 5G, AI

**DC CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI, OCT. 7

External affairs minister S. Jaishankar met his Japanese counterpart Toshimitsu Motegi for a bilateral meeting in Tokyo on Wednesday as part of the 13th India-Japan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue where-in they agreed that a "free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region must be premised on diversified and resilient supply

chains" and welcomed the "Supply Chain Resilience Initiative between India, Japan, Australia and other like-minded countries".

India and Japan also finalised an ambitious agreement that provides for cooperation in 5G technology, artificial intelligence and an array of other critical areas as the two strategic partners vowed to further broaden their ties, including in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Ex-CBI director commits suicide: Officials

**New Delhi/Shimla, Oct. 7:** Former CBI director Ashwani Kumar allegedly committed suicide by hanging at his residence in Shimla on Wednesday, officials said.

The body of Kumar (69), a 1973-batch IPS officer, was found hanging at his residence in Brockhurst, near Chhota Shimla, in the evening, they added.

Himachal Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Sanjay Kundu, Shimla Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohit Chawla and other senior police officials reached the spot.

A forensic team has also reached the spot.

"We recovered a suicide note, in which he had written he is embarking on a new journey. His family members were present when he went inside the room, locked it and committed suicide by hanging himself with a nylon rope. The family does not suspect any foul play. We have seized the items in the room. The post-mortem will be conducted on Thursday morning," the DGP told PTI.

A preliminary probe indicates that a sudden

change in Kumar's active life over the last six months because of confinement at home could be a probable reason behind the drastic move, but the police are looking into all probabilities, the officials said.

One of his neighbours told PTI that Kumar had gone for his evening walk as usual. After returning home, he went to the attic, where he hanged himself. The body was first found by a family member, who went to the attic to call Kumar for dinner, the neighbour said. — PTI

## BENAMI PROPERTIES

## Sasi's assets worth ₹2,000 cr attached

**A. ARUL PALANI | DC**

CHENNAI, OCT. 7

When the ruling party leaders were engrossed in selecting Chief Minister candidate for the forthcoming Assembly Poll on Wednesday the Income Tax department attached properties worth ₹2,000 crore belonged to ousted AIADMK leader VK Sasikala, former close aide of late CM J. Jayalalithaa and former party supremo.

The department also attached the properties of Sasikala's sister-in-law Ilavarasi and VN Sudhakaran and all three are serving a four-year sentence in a disproportionate assets case. Sasikala's nephew Sudhakaran was Jayalalithaa's once 'foster son' and later 'disowned son'.

These properties includes farm house in Siruthavur and Kodanadu, are in the name of Jaya's aide Sasikala, Ilavarasi and Sudhakaran. The Benami Prohibition wing of the I-T department has pasted notices outside these properties. Jaya's niece Depa and Deepak also reportedly received notices.

According to sources I-T department served a notice to Sasikala at the Parappana Agrahara Prison in Bengaluru.

● **The I-T department also attached the properties of Sasikala's sister-in-law Ilavarasi and VN Sudhakaran and all three are serving a four-year sentence in a disproportionate assets case**

Notices also served to the benami company and the various Sub-Registrar Offices (SROs) under whose jurisdiction the properties are situated.

The provisional order of the attachment has been issued under section 24(3) of the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988. The tax department had conducted raids against Sasikala and others in 2017 and it is understood that the documents about these assets were recovered then. The assets were attached by the Benami Prohibition wing of the Income Tax Department.

Earlier, the Benami Prohibition Unit in Chennai provisionally attached 65 properties in and around the city worth ₹300 crore. Sasikala said to have purchased these properties, including a site across the road from late J Jayalalithaa's Veda Nilayam residence, through shell companies.

## It's Knights' night in Abu Dhabi

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 7:** Tamil Nadu spinner Varun Chakravarthy's impressive spell (4-0-28-1) helped Kolkata Knight Riders defend a total of 167 against Chennai Super Kings in an IPL game in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday. KKR won by 10 runs. Varun, a mystery spinner, took the wicket of CSK skipper M.S. Dhoni. CSK looked on course in their chase until Shane Watson perished after making his second consecutive fifty. It was Sunil Narine who trapped the Aussie opener to change the tide in KKR's favour.

Earlier, CSK bowled out Kolkata Knight Riders for 167 after opener Rahul Tripathi's fine knock of 81. No other KKR player crossed the 20-run mark. Tripathi's 51-ball knock had eight fours and three sixes. ■ P8



Chennai boy Varun Chakravarthy (left) bowled an impressive spell, taking the wicket of M.S. Dhoni, in Kolkata Knight Riders' 10-run win over Chennai Super Kings in an IPL game on Wednesday.

— BCCI

# 2 women share Chemistry Nobel for gene-editing

**Stockholm, Oct. 7:** Two scientists won the Nobel Prize in chemistry Wednesday for developing a method of genome editing likened to "molecular scissors" that offer the promise of one day curing inherited diseases and even cancer.

Working on opposite sides of the Atlantic, Frenchwoman Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna developed a method known as CRISPR/Cas9 that can be used to change the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with extremely high precision.


"There is enormous power in this genetic tool, which affects us all," said Claes Gustafsson, chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry. "It has not only revolutionized basic science, but also resulted in innovative crops and will lead to groundbreaking new medical treatments." Gustafsson said that, as a result, any genome can now be edited "to fix genetic damage," adding that the tool "will provide humankind with great opportunities." But he cautioned that the "enormous power of this technology means we have to

use it with great care."

It has already raised serious ethical questions in the scientific community. Most of the world became more aware of CRISPR in 2018, when Chinese scientist Dr. He Jiankui revealed he had helped make the world's first gene-edited babies, to try to engineer resistance to future infection with the AIDS virus. His work was denounced worldwide as unsafe human experimentation because of the risk of causing unintended changes that can pass to future generations, and he's currently in prison. — AP



Jennifer A. Doudna (left) and Emmanuelle Charpentier. — AP




**VIT**  
Vellore Institute of Technology  
(Deemed to be University under section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

**Hearty welcome to the**  
**35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVOCATION**

**VIT, VELLORE ON 9<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020, FRIDAY**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Chief Guest:**



**Dr. K. KASTURIRANGAN**  
Former Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation &  
Former Chairman, National Education Policy Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dr. G. VISWANATHAN**  
Chancellor

will preside.

**VELLORE | CHENNAI | AP | BHOPAL | www.vit.ac.in**



## SHORT TAKES



## EPS, OPS pay homage to MGR, Jaya at memorials

From P1

Then the top brass of the party, including Palaniswami and Panneerselvam, drove down to the MGR memorial. Both of them paid homage to MGR and also J. Jayalalithaa at their respective samadhis and then drove away.

When Jayakumar was asked by the media on the steering committee having more Palaniswami supporters, he said that the names were chosen unanimously. He said the show of unity in the party was a huge blow to betrayers and opponents of the AIADMK.

Vaithilingam, to a question on some senior leaders not figuring in the committee, said that there were other vacancies in the party and they would be soon filled up with the senior leaders who were not part of the panel.

AIADMK cadre, both men and women, cheered the leaders for putting up a show of unity with their jubilant gigs and slogan shouting. A marked sense of relief and celebration filled the air as they distributed sweets and lighted firecrackers.

Later in the evening, Palaniswami, along with the 11 members of the steering committee, called on Panneerselvam at his residence. They also met the Assembly Speaker P Dhanapal at his house.

## Dollar sets up 4 MW solar power plant in Tirupur

**Tirupur/Kolkata:** Dollar Industries Limited, one of the leading apparel brands in India, has commissioned a 4 MW solar power plant at their manufacturing facility in Tirupur. The solar plant is a part of Dollar's 'Green Mission' initiative and has a capacity of generating 75 lakhs power units annually. Dollar's objective for installing the solar plant is to not only reduce costs but also make the spinning unit at Tirupur sustainable and self-reliant. To produce 1kg of cotton yarn, the cost of power is approximately Rs. 27-28 which is expected to feed almost 50% of the daily consumption at the spinning unit. Moreover, the solar plant will help in curbing the CO2 emissions by 9000kgs/per day with a sustainable environment. Sharing his thoughts about the initiative, Vinod Kumar Gupta, Managing Director, Dollar Industries Limited stated, "We have always been a responsible corporate with a substantial focus on environment friendly practices. With the current pandemic situation, it is imperative to reduce costs and at the same time also create a clean and eco-friendly manufacturing facility protecting the environment. We at Dollar have been making constant efforts to operate in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner."

## Girl's birthday ends on tragic note as she, two kin drown

**Coimbatore, Oct. 7:** A girl's 12th birthday celebrations with a visit to a temple turned tragic when she got swept away, along with her sister and brother-in-law, in a canal near Palladam in Tirupur district, police said on Wednesday.

The incident happened on Tuesday evening when the 12-year-old went to wash her feet and fell into the canal, the police said.

Seeing this, her sister Devi jumped into the waters and the latter's husband followed suit to rescue the two, they said.

Soon, all the three got drowned, the police said. Devi's mother standing on the banks of the canal raised an alarm and the people around alerted the police and the fire service personnel.

This morning, Saranya's body was recovered while search was on for the bodies of the two others, they said.

— PTI

## GOLU DOLLS



With Navarathri nearing, women thong Kuralagam in Parry's corner where a huge array of Kolu dolls is kept for sale. — E.K. Sanjay

## Pharma exporter held for sending banned drugs to US

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

A pharma exporter in Madurai was arrested by the Chennai air customs on Tuesday for smuggling psychotropic drugs to USA.

According to the official press release from the department, based on intelligence, Chennai air customs intercepted two postal parcels suspected to contain psychotropic drugs which were destined for USA at Foreign Post Office.

The first parcel was found to contain 20 strips of ALPRAZOLAM concealed inside a cardboard packet wrapped with black carbon paper. Total 300 tablets of Alprazolam were recovered.

In second parcel 155 tablets of LORAZEPAM, CLONAZEPAM and DIAZEPAM were found concealed in similar manner. Total 455 tablets of psychotropic drugs were recovered and seized under the NDPS Act, 1985.

The parcels were destined to Gallatin, Alexander cities in Tennessee and Arkansas states of USA and were booked from Madurai. On follow up search, it was found



that the parcels were booked by a person who is running a pharmaceutical export firm in Madurai and which is exporting Ayurvedic, Siddha & Allopathic medicines.

The exporter has sent psychotropic drug to overseas buyers using fake sender name without having authorization from Narcotics commissioner and the payments were received through Paypal. He has been arrested.

These are psychotropic drugs falling under

Schedule 'H' & 'Hi' of Drug and Cosmetic Rule 1945 and are also covered under NDPS Act, 1985. For legal export of these drugs, license is required from the narcotics commissioner. These drugs belongs to class of medicine known as Benzodiazepine, which is used in the treatment of anxiety, seizures and panic attack. The abuse of these drugs is common among youth. Further investigation is in progress.

## 490 new corona cases in Pondy

**Puducherry:** The overall Covid-19 caseload in Puducherry shot up to 30,161 on Wednesday following addition of 490 new cases while two more succumbed to the illness. Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said in a release that two people belonging to Pondy died.

**Her husband, Kuha Raj Sithamparanathan, was found with severe stab injuries and died at the scene soon after. The police believe the 42-year-old fatally injured himself when officers entered the property**

Poorna and Kailash had been dead for some time.

This is a murder investigation and my team will work diligently to establish the sequence of events that led to their murders and the death of Kuha Raj Sithamparanathan," said Detective Chief Inspector Simon Harding from the Met's Specialist Crime Command, who is leading the investigation. He said that their initial enquiries had established that Poorna and Kailash had not been seen or heard from for some days, perhaps since around the September 21.

— PTI

# HC upholds MCI order discharging 65 students

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

Condemning the attitude shown by six medical colleges (3 private medical colleges affiliated to Pondicherry University and 3 remaining colleges coming under the category of "Deemed to be University") in Puducherry in taking advantage of the situation and enriching themselves in the matter of PG medical admission during the academic year 2017-2018, the Madras high court has imposed a cost of Rs 5 lakh each on them for the illegal methods adopted by them in filling the seats.

Upholding the orders of the Medical Council of India, discharging 65 illegally admitted PG medical students during the academic year 2017-18 from the six medical colleges, Justice N.Anand Venkatesh dismissed a batch of petitions filed by the medical colleges and the candidates, challenging the order of the MCI.

The judge imposed a cost of Rs 5 lakh each on Arupadai Veedu Medical College, Vinayaka Mission Medical College, Mahatma Gandhi Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Manakula Vinayagar Medical College and Hospital, Venkateswara Medical College and Hospital and Pondicherry Institute of Medical

**Cost of ₹5 lakh imposed on 6 medical colleges each in Pondy for illegal admission**

Sciences and directed them to deposit the cost within four weeks.

The judge said in these batch of petitions, this court was dealing with 65 candidates, who have been unilaterally admitted by the institutions without being sponsored by Centac in the common counselling. This was per se violative of Regulation 9A. Whatever may be the explanation given by the institution, the MCI cannot disregard the Regulation and withdraw the discharge orders based on the explanation given by the institutions. Therefore, in the considered view of this court, the MCI has strictly acted in accordance with the regulation and the ground raised by the petitioners that the orders suffers from violation of principles of natural justice, was totally unsustainable, the judge added.

The judge said it was quite a painful exercise that was undertaken by this court while deciding these writ petitions. This court was conscious of the fact that all these petitioners numbering 65 have undergone the courses for nearly 3 years and the

course period was also over and they have also been allowed to write their final examinations. The time spent by these candidates in undergoing the course and the efforts put in by them can never be given back. Having said so, it was seen that the institutions and the candidates had taken a calculated risk and having undertaken such a risk, they must also be prepared for the consequences.

Probably, if these writ petitions had been decided in the year 2018 itself, the damage faced by them would have been lesser and by now, they could have pursued their career by again participating in the selection. Since the writ petitions were being decided only in the year 2020, the damage was even more for these candidates. The candidates were not genuine enough in getting the writ petitions heard at the earliest point in time and they continued to enjoy the benefit of the interim order passed by this court. Ultimately, they started showing interest in the case only after completing the course and when they were not permitted to write the examinations. That was how all these writ petitions got themselves revitalized in the year 2020. In the absence of the same, these writ petitions would have con-

tinued to hibernate for some more time. Therefore, even though the dismissal of these writ petitions was going to cause a great damage to their career, it was something which was not totally unexpected and more so due to the fact that they undertook before this court that they will not claim any equity on the ground of interim orders passed in their favour, the judge added.

The judge said, "It is high time that courts start showing more seriousness in cases of this nature particularly coming under medical education since the institutions and the candidates must be given a very clear message that any admission that is done in violation of the Regulations, will not be tolerated by the courts and the courts will not deal with such cases with kid gloves.

Any misplaced sympathies shown by courts in the field of education and more particularly in medical education, will send a wrong signal and institutions and candidates will fall into a wrong notion that ultimately the courts will come to their aid even where the initial admission is illegal.

The courts will have to adopt this stern stand consistently to bring about certainty while dealing with illegal admissions, the judge added.

## Jobless post Covid: 3 held for peddling drugs

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

Three men fired from their jobs during the lockdown started peddling drugs to make living, the police said. They were arrested.

Police said Basha (21), Muthulingam, (28) of Guduvanchery and Saravanan (24), of Urupakkam were arrested by police when they were trying to sell the contraband near Chromepet bus stand on Tuesday night. The arrested yielded two kg of ganja, police added.

The three men worked for a private firm in the city, before being fired during the lockdown. As they were struggling for cash and found it meagre to meet their expenses they decided to make money by selling ganja.

They allegedly smuggled the contraband from other states and began selling the banned substance here, police said. They established their network of customers, including college students and techies, and made some fast buck.

On Tuesday night, when the trio was waiting to deliver the drugs to a customer near Chromepet, the police on routine night inspection, intercepted them and checked their motorbikes. Several ganja parcels were possessed by them.

The contraband was seized and the accused were arrested. Chromepet police registered a case.



Krishnan, 80, from Dindigul, who was admitted to the emergency ward of government corona hospital in Guindy for Covid a week ago has recovered and celebrated his 80th birthday on Wednesday along with hospital director Prof Dr K Narayanasamy, ward doctors and staff nurses inside the ward. The National Institute for Ageing, located on the King Institute campus, Guindy, has been converted into a government corona hospital. Inaugurated by the chief minister on July 7. The hospital has 750 beds including 100 ICU beds and 300 oxygen beds. Many high-risk cases, including Covid positive, are getting admitted every day.

— N. Sampath

## Bike-borne men rob man at knife-point

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

In shocking CCTV visuals of a robbery incident in Chennai's Kundrathur area, two bike-borne miscreants were seen robbing a man of his mobile phone, purse and gold chain at knife-point. Police have launched a hunt for the suspects.

The footage released by police shows how the man was left perplexed and pet-

rified by the incident. According to police, the victim identified as, Suresh of Madanahapuram near Porur, owns an eatery in Kundrathur. The incident happened a week ago, when the victim was smoking outside his closed shop. One of two bike-clad men threatened him at knife-point to part him with his belongings.

The video that went viral on social media

viewed showed the other suspect too getting off the two-wheeler and threatening the man. They snatched his belongings and went absconding on their bike.

After Suresh lodged a complaint with Mangadu police, a team reached the spot and retrieved CCTV footage available from a camera in the vicinity. A manhunt has been launched to nab the two suspects.

# SRM hospital to begin phase 3 of Covaxin trial on humans

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

The phase 3 human indigenous Covid-19 vaccine, Covaxin, is to begin at the SRM Medical college hospital and research centre in Kattangulathur. About 1,500 volunteers will be administered the Covaxin shot in the third phase at SRM, read an official statement from the institute.

The first phase human trials at SRM MCHRC began in July with 30 vol-

"We are in the process of selecting the volunteers for the phase 3 trial. Physical examination for Covid symptoms and required laboratory investigations will be done. Only those found eligible after detailed investigations will be selected to participate in this process"

unteers receiving the shot. The second phase was started in September where 45 volunteers received the shot.

Speaking about the third phase that will happen soon at SRM MCHRC, Dean (Medical) Dr. A. Sundaram said, "We are in the process of selecting the volunteers for the phase 3 trial. Physical examination for Covid symptoms and required laboratory investigations will be done. Only those found eligible after detailed investigations will be selected to participate in this process."

Explaining the process of the clinical trial, Dr. A.

Sundaram said, "This vaccine contains the inactivated virus and every subject must take two doses. The second shot will be administered 28 days later. The volunteers will be kept under observation for a few hours and then can resume their usual activities."

The success of the vaccine can be determined only after observation of volunteers for six months. The volunteers' safety and health conditions will be checked to see the effectiveness of the vaccine, he

added.

Those who are more than 18 years of age and willing to volunteer for the clinical trial can approach SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre in Kattankulathur. The Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) is collaborating with Bharat Biotech for the development of the Covid vaccine Covaxin. SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre is the only centre in Tamil Nadu to be selected for this trial.



## SHORT TAKES

## 2 walk-in Covid kiosks set up in Nilgiris

DC CORRESPONDENT  
OOTY, OCT. 7

With Covid-19 positive count nearing the 5,000-mark, the Nilgiris district administration has installed a few more walk-in kiosks to collect samples to speed up the isolation and treatment process of the infected.

As part of enhancing testing facility, the district administration, in collaboration with Club Mahindra, has installed two walk-in sample collection kiosks at Katteri junction on the Ooty-Coimbatore NH and at Kunjapanai on the Ooty-Kotagiri-Coimbatore road to collect samples from the travellers in the buses locally as well as from neighbouring districts and states. This is to track the travellers and their contacts, if the samples tested positive for Covid-19.

J. Innocent Divya, Collector of Nilgiris, said that as of now 7 sample collection centres function across the Nilgiris. Three mobile units are criss-crossing the containment zones to collect samples from those who show symptoms. Efforts are being taken to install 10 more walk-in sample collection kiosks, she added.

Stating that due to the rainy season in the hills the threat from dengue and typhoid is also looming large, Ms.Divya added that in order to contain it, the district administration is taking steps for sanitisation in human habitations and markets in the hills and chlorination of water sources. Till date, Nilgiris recorded 4,940 Corona positive cases. Out of which 4,098 were discharged. While 29 deaths have been reported so far due to Covid-19, there are 813 active cases undergoing treatment in Nilgiris.

## No Covid protocol at airport building construction site

P.A. JEBARAJ | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

Amid the Covid-19 crisis, construction of a new building at the Chennai airport premises has become a daunting challenge.

The new building is being constructed at a cost of Rs 2,500 crore. Workers, mostly from the North India, are employed at the site. Due to the lockdown, the construction was stopped once. After the government lifted lockdown curbs, work resumed since June. However, complaints regarding lack of social distancing and unhygienic behavior by the contract workers have surfaced.

An airport official said, "with the number of Covid-19 cases spiralling in the city, these workers are behaving in a careless manner. Some people don't wear masks properly. Such actions increase the burden on the government in controlling the spread of the virus. Though construction site safety is the responsibility of the contractor, the civic body also should keep a strict check on various construction activities to ensure the Covid-19 norms."

## Tamil Nadu reports 5,447 new Covid cases

Chennai, Oct 7 Tamil Nadu on Wednesday reported 5,447 new COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 6,35,855 while the death toll mounted to 9,984 with 67 more fatalities.

The active cases stood at 45,135 with 5,524 patients getting discharged from various hospitals and cumulatively, 5,80,736 people have got cured.

Of the fresh infections, Chennai shared 1,369, Coimbatore 473, and Chengelpet 324 while the others were scattered over the state, a health department bulletin said. Out of the total 6.35 lakh plus cases, the state capital's tally stood at 1,76,779 and the adjoining districts of Chengelpet and Tiruvallur, 38,103 and 33,977 respectively.

Those dead include two men aged 92 and 40 and in total 61 had co-morbidities and six no chronic illnesses.

The death count of 9,984, included Chennai's 3,336, Chengelpet 579 and Tiruvallur 570.

As many as 93,242 samples were tested (RT-PCR) and in total 79,57,106 specimens have been examined in the 190 COVID labs of Tamil Nadu.

— PTI

## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Is the problem in AIADMK over?

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR | DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 7

Does the Wednesday morning bonhomie between Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palanisami and Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam point to the blowing away of the crisis that had gripped the AIADMK in the last two months, threatening to wreck its electoral prospects totally?

This is the question that people all over the country have been asking ever celebrations broke out at the AIADMK headquarters after the two leaders, who were involved in an acerbic dogfight at the same building just nine days ago, patted each other on the back, exchanging shawls and pleasantries.

Of course for the party cadre, who distributed sweets and lighted firecrackers, there was something to be jubilant about: Better sense had prevailed upon their two top leaders, who were not only steering the government but also the party to at least put up a show of unity.

The cadre always knew that a discord at the highest echelon of the party at a time when the next elections were just about seven months away would not augur well for the poll prospects. That, too, 2021 would be the first time the party would go to polls without a charismatic icon as the head.

The party started by matinee idol MGR was succeeded by J Jayalalithaa, who enjoyed a considerable following for various reasons. Her death in December 2016 had left a void in the party and the present government was inherited by Palaniswami as a legacy of Jayalalithaa.



Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam pay floral tributes at Jayalalithaa's memorial in Chennai on Wednesday. AIADMK ministers and members also seen.

— DC

When Palaniswami, who managed to take over the mantle, was running the government, to put it mildly, to the best of his ability, why did the man who was appointed as his deputy mid-way, suddenly raise a banner of protest as though he was destined to be the Chief Minister?

Perhaps he revealed his heart at the closed door deliberations

that were held since August 15 with many party functionaries trying to console him and some trying to incite him to go for the kill. Whatever it was, he knew that creating a rift in the party, which is otherwise perched precariously in the electoral domain, would lead to its total debacle.

Yet if he had gone ahead and demanded his pound of flesh,

which is what he believed it was, he thinks he is more entitled for it than the one now holding it. On the other side, if his bete noire was a man keen about keeping aloft the party's flag high in the air, he would not have resisted the bid of another leader, equal to him in the party earlier, in such a trenchant manner.

By taking an adamant stand,



Workers at airport building construction site.

— DC

## State awaits ASI nod to resume excavations

M. ARUL OLI | DC  
TIRUNELVELI, OCT. 7

The state archaeology department is expecting an approval from the central advisory board of archaeology of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), to resume the next phase of excavation works at Adichanallur and Sivagalai in Tirunelveli district and at Keeladi in Sivagangai district.

Having completed the first phase of the excavation works at Adichanallur and Sivagalai and the sixth phase at Keeladi site by September 30, the Tamil Nadu department of archaeology, according to its deputy director Dr R. Sivanandham, is documenting the excavated artefacts.

Claiming to have unearthed more than 500

artefacts from these sites from May 20 to September 30, Dr Sivanandham said the findings include earthen pipes, glass beads, terracotta figures, ancient burial urns and human skeletons.

Dr Sivanandham said the findings in the six phases of excavation work at Keeladi and its nearby sites at Aagaram, Manalura and Konthagai in Sivagangai district and in the first phase of works at Adichanallur and Sivagalai sites in Thoothukudi district brought to light an ancient civilisation that existed in the Vaigai and Thamirabarani basins in 600-900 BC.

The state archaeological department officials said the excavation works at Adichanallur and Sivagalai were delayed by two months due to the

Corona pandemic. The 72 trenches dug at Adichanallur and 23 trenches dug at Sivagalai sites have been covered using plastic sheets to protect them during the ensuing monsoon days.

"We have applied for approval from the central advisory board of the Archaeological Survey of India for the next phase of excavation at these sites after the monsoon," said Dr Sivanandham, who added that the state department of archaeology is awaiting permission from the Indian Institute of Ocean Technology for an underwater archaeological exploration at Korkkai in Thoothukudi district.

"We are hopeful of resuming the next phase of our work in these sites probably by next January," he said.

## AIADMK cadres happy over OPS-EPS thaw

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUNELVELI, OCT. 7

The AIADMK cadres heaved a sigh of relief over the amicable settlement of the chief minister candidate issue.

Bursting crackers and distributing sweets in front of their district party office in Tirunelveli, Nanguneri

Reddiarpatti Narayanan, who did not go to Chennai as he has just been cured from Corona, felt that the issue was blown out of proportion by the media.

"Now it has turned a blessing for us as the party's face for the ensuing assembly election in 2021 has been settled amicably."

"If not you people (referring to media) will keep on badgering and confusing our cadres," said a Thoothukudi district party functionary, Sathya Lakshmanan, who was a staunch supporter of O. Panneerselvam, when the latter launched the 'Dharma Yudham'. "As the issue has been settled by both, the party co-ordi-

nator and the joint co-ordinator themselves, we can now on work for the victory of our party in the 2021 assembly election in a focused manner," added Sathya Lakshmanan.

The cadres in Kanyakumari district too welcomed the settlement of the issue by distributing sweets and bursting crackers in Nagercoil.

## Hairdressers' association strike on Oct. 9

DC CORRESPONDENT  
RAMANTHAPURAM, OCT. 7

The hair dressers' association in Rameswaram has declared a statewide strike on October 9 protesting against the acquittal of a rape and murder accused by the Dindigul mahila court citing lack of evidence.

Association general secretary Muruganandham said here on Wednesday that they have announced the strike to wake up the public sentiment against rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl, whose father is a hair dresser at Vedachandur in Dindigul district, in April last year.

"The accused was acquitted by the court as the police failed to gather proper evidence," said Muruganandham, who condemned the police lethargy in the investigation and demanded a reinvestigation of the case.

## TN-Puducherry roads get ₹11,000cr: Gadkari

New Delhi, Oct 7: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said highway works worth ₹11,000 crore were underway for Tamil Nadu-Puducherry connectivity.

Dedicating to the nation ₹35 crore road-over-bridge on NH 45-A at Puducherry, the minister said this will ease traffic congestion. Inaugurating the one-kilometre long Road-Over-Bridge across Railway Level Crossing on NH 45-A at Arumparthapuram, Puducherry, built at a cost of ₹35 crore, the minister said the project is envisaged to bring relief to public from traffic jam resulting in saving of time and fuel, safe commutation, reduction in pollution, closure of level crossing, and unhindered passage of railway traffic. The Road Transport and Highways Minister said the work under progress is in an aggregate length of 287 km for an amount of about ₹11,000 crore for Tamil Nadu - Puducherry Connectivity.

The four-laning of NH-45 shall provide unhindered

connectivity of Puducherry with Karaikal port as well as the road which is leading up to Kanyakumari. This will also give impetus to agriculture and fishing, he said. During the last six years, the minister said Rs 70 crore has been spent on national highway construction in Puducherry. These include the Mahabalipuram to Mugaiyur section of NH-332 A, Mugaiyur to Marakkanam section of NH-332 A, Viluppuram to Puducherry section of NH-45A, Puducherry to Poondiyanakuppam section of NH-45A, Poondiyanakuppam to Sattanathapuram section of NH-45A, and Sattanathapuram to Nagapattinam section of NH-45A. Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways V K Singh said the ministry is trying to provide full connectivity of Puducherry with Tamil Nadu and other regions of the country. He said the work on strengthening of 8 km long road from

Madagadipet state border to Ariyur Village at an expenditure of Rs 9 crore is likely to be completed by the coming December. He further said detailed project report preparation is in progress for Marakkanam - Koonimedu Section of NH 332 A and Puducherry Bypass, construction of Grade separator at Rajiv Gandhi Square, and construction of Grade separator at Indira Gandhi Square, at a tentative cost of Rs 1,354 crore. Lt Governor of the UT of Puducherry Kiran Bedi complemented the central government for fulfilling the aspirations of the people of the UT. She cautioned against the cost over-run of delayed projects, as it causes further delay. She proposed conducting refresher courses for road construction engineers, including PWD officers.

Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy and Minister for Public Works A Namassivayam also addressed the event.

— PTI

## Greens, NGOs redflag Noyal river pollution



Effluents let into a water body in Coimbatore.

— DC

DC CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE, OCT. 7

A study conducted by the Bharathiar University on the pollution level exceeding in the Noyal river has worried the greens and NGOs of Coimbatore.

The Noyal river starts from rain forests of Western Ghats and flows through Coimbatore, Tirupur, Erode and Karur districts and finally mixes with the Cauvery river.

Professor T.Murali Shankar said, according to United States Environmental

Protection Agency (USEPA) standards 0.5 MG zinc can be present in 1 litre whereas in Noyal river it has exceeded more than 2.75 MG.

According to the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the level of chloride should be 250 MG while it has exceeded 1,010 MG here. The nitrate remains as 250 MG while the standard limit is 45 MG.

The hardness of water is 1,075 MG whereas the prescribed limit is not more than 200 MG.

Apart from this, other metals including lead and

mercury are present in dangerous levels in the crabs taken for study from the river, added Prof Shankar.

NGO Osai president Kalidasan said the Pollution Control Board claims that 70 million litres of effluent can be treated per day at Ukkadam treatment plant whereas only 30 to 35 litres are being treated now.

The Ondipudur treatment plant is presently treating only 10MLT per day whereas its capacity is 40MLT. The effluents and

sewage water flow into the river without being treated.

An official from Pollution Control Board said once the UGD works gets completed the Najundapuram treatment plant will start functioning which would help in treating the entire sewage water. A few residential associations including Sai Nagar, Fathima avenue and Rail Nagar together had got a stay order for the sewage pumping station that was about to be constructed for Nanjudapuram treatment plant.

## BJP president congratulates Palaniswami

DC CORRESPONDENT  
PUDUKKOTTAI, OCT. 7

Tamil Nadu BJP president L.Murugan congratulated Chief Minister Edappadi K.Palaniswami for being nominated as AIADMK's Chief Ministerial candidate for the next year's election to the Assembly.

Addressing a press conference at Nachandupatti near Pudukkottai on Wednesday,

Murugan said the NDA will definitely win in the next year's election and the AIADMK will once again form the government in Tamil Nadu.

He said the Tamil Nadu BJP is preparing itself to face the next year's assembly elections and they are also identifying the favourable constituencies for the BJP and they will concentrate on such constituencies, he added.

He said the DMK and other political parties are politicising the Hathras incident and the Uttar Pradesh Government had already initiated action against the errant police personnel and other culprits in connection with the incident.



SHORT TAKES

EX-CBI DIRECTOR  
ASHWANI KUMAR  
FOUND DEAD

**Shimla/New Delhi, Oct. 7:** Former CBI director and Nagaland Governor Ashwani Kumar was found hanging at his residence in Shimla on Wednesday, officials said.

Kumar became CBI director in 2008, succeeding Vijay Shanker, in the midst of the agency's probe into the Aarushi Talwar murder case that hogged the headlines.

Kumar later became Governor of Nagaland, they said.

He was presently Vice Chancellor of a private university in Shimla, they said.

The body of Kumar, a 1973-batch IPS officer, was found hanging at his residence in Shimla Wednesday evening, they said.

BAIL TO RHEA,  
DOMESTIC AIDES  
OF RAJPUT

**Mumbai, Oct. 7:** The Bombay High Court on Wednesday granted bail to actor Rhea Chakraborty in a drugs case related to her boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The court rejected the argument that celebrities deserve specially harsh treatment in such cases so as to "send out a message".

After spending 28 days in jail, Rhea stepped out of the Byculla women's prison here around 5.30 pm amid a scrum of mediapersons.

While granting her bail on a personal bond of Rs 1 lakh, the court asked the actor to appear before the Mumbai police for 10 days and before the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB, which had arrested her) once a month for the next six months.

Justice Sarang Kotwal of the High Court also granted bail to Rajput's domestic aides Dipesh Sawant and Samuel Miranda, but rejected the bail plea of Rhea's brother Showik Chakraborty.

The court also rejected the bail plea of alleged drug peddler Abdel Basit Parihar.

The HC observed in its order that Rhea did not have any criminal antecedents, and it was unlikely that she would tamper with evidence or affect the probe while out on bail.

The HC said simply paying for a particular drug transaction does not qualify as financing drug traffic.

"The allegations against the applicant of spending money in procuring drugs for Sushant Singh Rajput will not, therefore, mean that she had financed illicit traffic," the court said. It also noted that harbouring an offender as described under the Act would mean providing money for that person's drug consumption while also giving him shelter and food.

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UGC DECLARES  
24 UNIVERSITIES  
AS FAKE

**New Delhi, Oct. 7:** The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Wednesday announced a list of 24 "self-styled, unrecognised institutions" in the country, terming them as "fake" with the maximum of them operating from Uttar Pradesh followed by Delhi.

"Students and public are informed that currently 24 self-styled, unrecognised institutions are functioning in contravention of the UGC Act, which have been declared as fake universities and these are not empowered to confer any degree," UGC Secretary Rajnish Jain said.

The majority of eight of these universities are from Uttar Pradesh — Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Varanasi; Mahila Gram Vidyapith, Allahabad; Gandhi Hindi Vidyapith, Allahabad; National University of Electro Complex Homeopathy, Kanpur; Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Open University, Aligarh; Uttar Pradesh Vishwavidyalaya, Mathura; Maharana Pratap Shiksha Niketan Vishwavidyalaya, Pratapgarh and Indraprastha Shiksha Parishad, Noida.

Delhi has seven fake universities — Commercial University Ltd, United Nations University, Vocational University, ADR Centric Juridical University, Indian Institution of Science and Engineering, Vishwakarma Open University for Self Employment and Adhyatmik Vishwavidyalaya (Spiritual University). Odisha and West Bengal have two such universities each. Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Puducherry and Maharashtra have one each.

# Kerala's Covid tally crosses 10K-mark for the first time

## Karnataka reports highest single day spike of 10,900 new infections

DC CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
OCT. 7

Kerala on Wednesday reported the highest single day spike with 10606 Covid-19 positive cases even as the total number of active cases in the state inched towards the 1 lakh.

With the new cases, the number of people infected with the virus in the state so far has reached 92,161. The single day highest spike is also attributed to the increase in testing. During the last 24 hours, a total of 73816 samples were tested in the state which is a higher figure compared to the testing carried out in the previous days.

Of the new cases 9542 contracted the infection through contact, the source of infection among 741 is yet to be traced, 54 came from abroad and 164 from other states and 98 health workers also got infected.

The state also recorded 22 deaths on Wednesday taking the official death toll to 906.

Kozhikode district reported the highest number of cases at 1576 followed by Malappuram 1350, Ernakulam 1201, Thiruvnanthapuram 1182, Thrissur 948, Kollam 852, Alappuzha 672, Palakkad 650, Kannur 602, Kottayam 490, Kasargod 432, Pathanamthitta 393, Wayanad 138 and Idukki 120.

At present 2.67 lakh persons are under surveillance across the state including 2.38 lakh are under home/institutional quarantine.

**2,154 new cases in TS:** Telangana on Wednesday recorded 2,154 fresh cases, along with eight more deaths from Covid-19. The



A health worker wearing a PPE kit collects a sample from a woman for the Covid-19 Rapid Antigen Test, at a city market in Bengaluru, Wednesday

total Covid-19 cases in Telangana reached 2,04,748, while deaths rose to 1,189, the department said.

Fresh cases of Covid-19 have clambered back into their three hundreds in Hyderabad the GHMC

area recorded 303 new cases.

**AP reports 5,120 cases:** Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday registered 5,120 new Covid-19 positive cases scaling up the overall tally to 7,34,427 and 34 deaths taking the toll to

6,086 in the last 24 hours. Out of 62,83,009 samples tested so far in the state, 6,78,828 patients have been discharged after recovery from various hospitals while 49,513 patients are still active and undergoing treatment.

**10,900 cases in K'ataka** Karnataka on Wednesday reported its highest single-day spike of over 10,900 CCovid-19 cases and 113 fatalities, taking the total number of infections to 6,68,652 and the toll to 9,574. The day also saw 9,832 patients getting discharged after recovery and the active cases stood at 1,16,153, the health department said. On Wednesday a total of 1,04,348 tests were done, taking the cumulative to 55,24,302. The previous biggest single-day spike was recorded on September 29 with 10,453 cases. Cumulatively 6,68,652 Covid-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state, which includes 9,574 deaths.

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## INDIA' COVID TOLL DROPS BELOW 1000-LEVEL

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 7

With 72,049 fresh cases, India's overall tally of Coronavirus cases reached 67.57 lakh on Wednesday. In the last 24 hours 986 deaths were recorded taking the total toll to 1,04,555.

Union health ministry

data said so far close to 57.45 lakh persons have recuperated taking the national recovery rate to 85.02 per cent. The Covid-19 case fatality rate in the country has declined to 1.55 per cent.

"India has crossed a significant milestone. The national recovery rate has jumped past 85% on

Wednesday with the continuous streak of high number of recovered cases being reported in the past few weeks. The recovered cases have exceeded the new confirmed again during the past 24 hours. As many as 82,203 recoveries were registered in the last 24 hours in the country.

# India, Japan discuss high-speed rail project

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, OCT. 7

Japan has said the two ministers "reaffirmed the importance of implementing Japan-India cooperation in third countries such as Asean and Southwest Asian countries and making steady progress on the high-speed rail project" (between Mumbai and

Ahmedabad).

Reaffirming the similarities in their respective Indo-Pacific visions "based on rule of law and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Japanese side agreed to be the lead partner in the connectivity pillar of the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative and jointly take both countries' respective visions for the Indo-

● **THE JAPANESE** side agreed to be the lead partner in the connectivity pillar of the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative and jointly take both countries' respective visions for the Indo-Pacific forward"to the incident, India said in a statement.

Pacific forward", New Delhi said.

Both India and Japan have separate territorial disputes with China.

"Reaffirming the mutual trust and shared values, they (the two ministers)

turing, skill development, connectivity and infrastructure, health and wellness, Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative and UN Reforms," the MEA said, in a statement.

Japan meanwhile issued a separate statement which also mentioned that the two foreign ministers "exchanged opinions regarding the issue of North Korea".

# POCSO accused done to death

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
OCT. 7

A 37-year-old Kerala man, who was an accused in POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act) case and out on parole, was hacked to death by unidentified persons in Thrissur district.

The accused had carried out the alleged sexual assault on a tribal girl in Pazhayannur in Thrissur. His body was found in a vacant plot. The police has registered a case and the probe has begun.

The local police said Sathesh was found with injuries in a vacant house near his home in Elanad in Thirumani village. He was taken into custody about eight months ago in connection with the case of sexual assault on a tribal girl. After being released on parole, he was residing in Malappuram.

However, of late he was often seen near the spot where the tribal girl was sexually assaulted. There were also reports that some people used to visit the village looking for him which led to the suspicion that he might have committed something wrong in Malappuram.

Local residents told police that two persons from Malappuram district had visited the village recently enquiring about the whereabouts of Sathesh.

The cops are trying to find out if they are linked to the incident in any way.

● **LOCAL RESIDENTS** told police that two persons from Malappuram district had visited the village recently enquiring about the whereabouts of Sathesh.

● **THE COPS** are trying to find out if they are linked to the incident.

The cops are also in the process of collecting the details of persons who visited the village to ascertain their identity. The local police is in touch with the Malappuram police to check whether any case is registered against Sathesh in any of the police stations, especially in the area where he used to live.

Though the house where Sathesh's body was found was abandoned, a group of persons used to assemble there for drinking sessions. According to villagers they used to create ruckus in the house.

Sathesh was on parole as part of the government decision to release under-trials and remand prisoners in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Kerala high court had earlier permitted parole for prisoners who are serving less than 6 years term in jail.

The Poojappura central jail in Thiruvananthapuram had reported the highest number of cases with over 470 inmates and about a dozen officials getting infected with Covid-19.

# Scribe, 3 others booked for sedition two days after being held by UP cops

**Lucknow/Mathura, Oct. 7:** The Uttar Pradesh police on Wednesday booked four persons including Kerala journalist Siddique Kappan on sedition and other charges at Maant police station in Mathura, two days after they were held while on their way to Hathras.

Charges under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the IT Act have also been filed against the four who were later remanded in judicial custody for 14 days by a Mathura court, officials said.

The FIR claimed that police recovered pamphlets "Justice for Hathras victim", six mobiles and a laptop from them, and during the initial probe it was found that they were going to Hathras with an intention to breach the peace as part of a conspiracy.

The four were held on Monday when they were on their way to Hathras, where a Dalit woman had died after allegedly being gangraped — an incident that has sparked widespread outrage.

Police had earlier claimed that the four, identified as Kappan, a journalist of Malapuram in Kerala, Atiq-ur-Rehman of Muzaffarnagar, Masood Ahmad of Bahraich and Alam of Rampur, had links with alleged radical group Popular Front of India and its affiliates.

They were on Wednesday booked under various sections of the Indian Penal Code including 124A (sedition) and



Police produce journalist Siddique Kappan and three others, suspected to have links with the Popular Front of India and its affiliate in Mathura, in a court in Mathura on Wednesday.

PTI

153A (Promoting enmity between different groups on ground of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), according to the FIR. They have also been charged with IPC Section 295A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious belief).

The recovered pamphlets, Am I not India's daughter, made with Carrd.co, encourage social discord and public unrest," the FIR said.

The FIR alleged that internet platform Carrd.co and website Justice for Hathras were being used to instigate cast violence, riots and collecting donations.

Such websites are spreading anti-national propaganda in the country and distorting facts to create tension and disturb law and order, it alleged.

In this way, it is clear that prima facie internet platform Carrd.co and website 'Justice for Hathras' have committed offences under various sections of the IPC and other Acts.

The four persons and other unidentified persons have been found to be involved in these criminal acts and an investigation is necessary to find the details of their actions, it said.

It has to be probed from where and why these websites are being operated, how much money is being collected through this platform/website, where was this amount used and

# Security forces kill 3 militants in Shopian fight

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC  
SRINAGAR, OCT. 7

Three militants were killed in a 20-hour-long gunfight with the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's southern Shopian district, the authorities said here on Wednesday.

They said that all the slain men were local Kashmiris. They were identified as Sajad Ahmad Malla, Junaid Rashid Wani and Waseem Ahmad Magray. While Malla was associated with Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, the two others were Al-Badar cadres — "all part of groups involved in planning and executing several terror attacks on security forces establishments and inflicting atrocities on civilians," the police said.

Meanwhile, a large number of mourners attended the funeral of J&K policeman Altaf Hussain who fell to the militants' bullets while foiling an attempt on the life of a local Bharatiya Janata Party leader in central district of Ganderbal on Tuesday night. One of the

two or three assailants was also killed in the PSO's retaliatory fire, the police said.

The officials said that fighting broke out in Shopian's Sukan area late Tuesday evening after the J&K police's counterinsurgency Special Operations Group (SOG) with the Army's 44 Rashtriya Rifles and the 178th Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) laid siege to it to conduct a search operation.

A police spokesman here said that the militants holed up in a private house during the cordon-and-search operation at Sukan were asked to lay down their arms and surrender before the security forces but they preferred to fight.

"During the search operation, as the presence of terrorists got ascertained they were given the opportunity to surrender. However, they instead fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter," he said.

## 3 CHARGESHEETED IN GOLD SMUGGLING CASE; NO CLEAN CHIT TO CM'S EX-SECY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI, OCT. 7

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday filed a chargesheet in the special court for cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in Ernakulam against three main accused in a case of smuggling gold through diplomatic channel in the Thiruvananthapuram airport. The agency said that it had to thoroughly investigate the role of M. Sivasankar, former principal secretary to the Kerala Chief Minister, "in the entire episode" and indicated that it may submit a supplementary chargesheet on completion of the on-going investigation.

The ED said the money amounting to Rs 1.05 crore and gold weighing 982.5 grams which were recovered from two bank lockers belonging to one of the accused, Swapna Prabha Suresh, in Thiruvananthapuram

were part of the money she earned through smuggling of gold, which began in 2019. The other two accused are P.S. Sarith and Sandeep Nair, both residents of Thiruvananthapuram. The trio smuggled gold 21 times through the airport, the chargesheet said.

The ED quoted Ms Swapna that her appointment in the Space Park, a project of the state information technology department, was "in the knowledge of" Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. Mr Vijayan also holds the IT portfolio and Mr Sivasankar was its principal secretary before being suspended for violating the service rules for all-India service officers by facilitating her appointment with a consultancy managing the project.

At present the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Customs are also investigating the case.

## SIT PROBING HATHRAS CASE GETS MORE TIME TO FILE REPORT

**Lucknow, Oct. 7:** The UP government has given an additional 10 days to the three-member SIT investigating the alleged gangrape and killing of a 19-year-old Dalit woman in Hathras as the "probe is not complete", a senior official said Wednesday.

The special investigation team, constituted on September 30 and led by Home Secretary Bhagwan Swarup, was initially given seven days to submit its report.

But the UP government later sought a CBI probe into the case and the criminal conspiracy to spread caste conflict it has suspected. On Tuesday, it told the Supreme Court it wanted an apex court-monitored CBI inquiry into the incident to ensure "no vested interests will be able to create fake, false narrative with oblique motives".

"Yes...the time for submitting report for the SIT has been extended by 10 days," said Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi. Asked about the reasons for the extension, he added, "The reason is one. The probe is not complete." The Yogi Adityanath government is fighting severe criticism for its handling of the case, particularly after the local police burnt the woman's body at night without the family's approval.

PTI



## IN BRIEF

**N. Korea ex-envoy to Italy defected**

**Seoul:** A senior North Korea diplomat who had vanished in Italy in late 2018 lives in South Korea under government protection, a lawmaker said Wednesday. If confirmed, Jo Song Gil, the North's former ambassador to Italy, would be the highest-level North Korean official to defect to rival South Korea since the 1997 arrival of Hwang Jang-yop, a senior ruling Workers' Party official who once tutored leader Kim Jong Un's father, late leader Kim Jong Il. South Korea's spy agency earlier told lawmakers that Jo had left his official residence in Rome with his wife in November 2018 and was under protection at an unspecified location outside the European country. Lawmaker Ha Tae-keung, who sits on the intelligence committee of the National Assembly, wrote on Facebook that Jo arrived in South Korea last year and is under the protection of the South Korean government.

**40 nations flay China over HR**

**United Nations:** Nearly 40 mainly Western countries criticised China's treatment of minority groups, especially in Xinjiang and Tibet, on Tuesday and expressed grave concern at the impact of its new national security law on human rights in Hong Kong. The US, many European countries, Japan and others called on China to allow "unfettered access" to Xinjiang for independent observers, including UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet, and to urgently refrain from detaining Uighurs and members of other minorities. The 39 countries also urged China in a joint statement read at a meeting of the General Assembly's human rights committee, "to uphold autonomy, rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, and to respect the independence of the Hong Kong judiciary". It was immediately followed by a statement from Pakistan on behalf of 55 countries opposing interference in China's affairs when it comes to Hong Kong.

**Guitar legend Eddie Van Halen dies**

**New York:** Eddie Van Halen, the guitar virtuoso whose blinding speed, control and innovation propelled his band Van Halen into one of hard rock's biggest groups and became elevated to the status of rock god, has died. He was 65. A person close to Van Halen's family confirmed the rocker died Tuesday due to cancer. The person was not authorised to publicly release details in advance of an official announcement. "He was the best father I could ask for," Van Halen's son Wolfgang wrote in a social media post. "Every moment I've shared with him on and off stage was a gift." With his distinct solos, Eddie Van Halen fuelled the ultimate California party band and helped knock disco off the charts starting in the late 1970s with his band's self-titled debut album and then with the blockbuster record "1984," which contains the classics "Jump," "Panama" and "Hot for Teacher". Van Halen is among the top 20 best-selling artists of all time, and the band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2007.

**PM FOR A DAY: TEEN FILLS TOP JOB IN FINLAND**

**Helsinki, Oct. 7:** Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin faced a quieter day than usual on Wednesday after handing power to a 16-year-old as part of a campaign to promote girls' rights. Aava Murto, from Vaasky in southern Finland, said she was having an "exciting day" as she faced media on the steps of parliament after meeting with the chancellor of justice. Murto added that she had "learned some new things about legislation". In the afternoon, the student who actively campaigns on climate and human rights issues was to speak with MPs and the minister for development and foreign trade. Her message to decision-makers has been that girls "need to realise more how important they are, and how they are just as good at technology as boys," she said. "I think young people could teach adults to be more innovative and think more about the future," she added. The swap is part of a global "Girls Takeover" campaign by children's rights charity Plan International, which aims to raise awareness of girls' digital skills.

# Pence, Harris all set for one-off V-P debate

## Biden against second debate if Trump still suffers from Covid

**Washington, Oct. 7:** Vice President Mike Pence and his Democratic challenger Senator Kamala Harris are all set for a crucial debate, which comes as President Donald Trump is ill with Coronavirus that has claimed over 200,000 American lives and battered the country's economy. Harris, whose mother was from India and father from Jamaica, scripted history in August when she was picked up by the Democratic Party as its vice presidential nominee. She is the first Black woman and the first Asian-American woman to be selected as the vice presidential nominee of a major political party in the US. It will be for the first time in the American history that an Indian-origin person will be taking up the podium for a vice presidential debate in Salt Lake City, Utah on Wednesday night.

Political analysts believe that an aggressive Harris, 55, who aspires to be the first woman vice-presidential in history, will easily

prevail over Pence, 61, during the only vice-presidential debate and help Biden, 77, to widen his lead over Trump, 74. The debate comes nearly a week after the first of the three presidential debates in Clevel-

and on September 29 wherein Biden termed Trump a "liar" and a "clown" as the two candidates fiercely clashed over a number of issues, including racism, economy and climate. Following the first presi-

dential debate, Trump was tested Covid positive and admitted to a military hospital, a development that upended his hectic campaign just weeks before the presidential elections on November 3. He returned to the White House on Monday night after spending four days at the hospital, but his doctors say the president may not entirely be out of the woods. Biden, in the last few days, has widened his lead over Trump by double digit. However, the Trump Campaign believes that Pence could come out with a stellar performance during the debate. The debate gains added significance, given the Covid-19 infecting Trump, triggering speculation that Pence may be taking over the reigns of the country temporarily. —PTI

# Belarus Oppn asks Germany to mediate

**Berlin, Oct. 7:** Belarus opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya said Wednesday that German Chancellor Angela Merkel has not indicated whether she would be willing to take on such a role, and even if she did, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko has rejected repeated calls for dialogue with the opposition. Tsikhanouskaya went into exile in Lithuania after the Aug. 9 presidential election in Belarus, which election officials claimed that Lukashenko won in a landslide. Opposition figures and some poll workers say the results were fraudulent and tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets to protest. —AP

# Court: Greek party criminal body

## Guilty verdicts delivered against many of the far-right Golden Dawn party's ex-lawmakers

**Athens, Oct. 7:** A Greek court has ruled that the far-right Golden Dawn party was operating as a criminal organisation, delivering a landmark verdict in a marathon five-year trial. The court on Wednesday delivered guilty verdicts against several of the party's former lawmakers for participating in a criminal organisation, and deemed others guilty of leading a criminal organisation. The 68 defendants in the trial include 18 former lawmakers from the party that was founded in the 1980s as a neo-Nazi organisation and rose to become Greece's third largest party during the country's decade-long financial crisis.

The court was assessing four cases rolled into one: The fatal stabbing of Greek rap singer Pavlos Fyssas, attacks on migrant fishermen, attacks on left-wing activists and whether Golden Dawn was operating as a criminal organisation. The presiding judge of the three-member panel delivered a guilty verdict against Giorgos Roupakias for the murder of Fyssas.

That prompted applause inside the courtroom and among the crowd outside. —AP



Thousands of people gather for a protest outside a court in Athens on Wednesday.

— AP

# Virus stimulus bill after poll: Don

**Washington, Oct. 7:** President Donald Trump has instructed his officials to stop negotiating with the Democrats on another stimulus package for the coronavirus-hit US economy until the November 3 presidential election, alleging that Speaker Nancy Pelosi was not holding talks in good faith.

Trump's sudden decision on Tuesday to pull the plug on the negotiations is a major blow to millions of Americans still struggling with the fallout from the pandemic that has badly hit the economy and killed over 210,000 people in the country. "I have instructed my representatives to stop negotiating until after the election when, immediately after I win, we will pass a major stimulus bill that focuses on hardworking Americans and small business," Trump said in a series of tweets on Tuesday. Trump's instructions came a day after he was discharged from a military hospital where he was treated for Covid-19.

For the past a few weeks, senior officials from his administration were nego-

## ISRAELI PM'S WIFE MAY HAVE VIOLATED CURBS

**Jerusalem, Oct. 7:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's wife may have violated the country's Coronavirus lockdown by inviting a hairdresser into the official residence last week to prepare her for a public service video advocating the wearing of masks. The incident, first reported by the Yediot Ahronot daily, was the latest in a string of lockdown violations by Israeli leaders and public figures — drawing widespread criticism. —AP

tiating with the House Democrats on a major stimulus package before the presidential election. Analysts have warned that the recovery of the world's largest economy risks stalling without further aid. While the US has regained about half the jobs lost in

## Another Trump aide tests positive for virus

**Washington, Oct. 7:** Stephen Miller, a top aide to President Donald Trump, tested positive for Covid-19, taking the number of White House staffers infected by the deadly virus to at least 10. "Over the last five days I have been working remotely and self-isolating, testing negative every day through yesterday. Today I tested positive for Covid-19 and am in quarantine," Miller said in a statement. President Trump, along with First Lady Melania Trump, tested positive for Coronavirus last Thurs-

day, soon after it was known that their close aide Hope Hicks contracted the infection. Trump was admitted to a military hospital on Friday and was discharged on Monday. White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany and three of the staff from the press office also tested positive.

At least three journalists working at the White House tested positive for the infection. On Tuesday, the White House issued an updated guideline on health and safety of the residence staff. —PTI

March and April, more than 10 million people remain unemployed.

"Nancy Pelosi is asking for \$2.4 trillion to bailout poorly run, high crime Democrat states, money that is in no way related to Covid-19. We made a very generous offer of %1.6 tril-

lion and, as usual, she is not negotiating in good faith," the Republican president alleged. "I am rejecting their request and looking to the future of our country," he said.

Trump said he has asked Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell not to

delay but to focus full time on approving his outstanding nominee to the US Supreme Court, Amy Coney Barrett.

"Our Economy is doing very well. The Stock Market is at record levels, JOBS and unemployment also coming back in record numbers. We are leading the World in Economic Recovery, and THE BEST IS YET TO COME!" Trump said.

In another tweet, he alleged that "crazy" Nancy Pelosi and "the radical Left" Democrats were just playing "games" with the desperately needed workers' stimulus payments. "They were never in it to help the workers and they never will be!" he alleged. But Pelosi accused Trump of "putting himself first at the expense of the country". "He shows his contempt for science, his disdain for our heroes... and he refuses to put money in workers' pockets, unless his name is printed on the cheque," she added.

"Clearly, the White House is in complete disarray," the top Democrat said. —PTI

# T-Rex fossil sells for record \$31.8 mn

**New York, Oct. 7:** One of the most complete specimens of a T-Rex fossil in the world was sold for a record \$31.8 million Tuesday by Christie's in New York, nearly quadrupling the previous highest price for a dinosaur at auction.

The apex predator made mincemeat of Christie's opening price of between six and eight million dollars, showing off the last-minute power of the T-Rex.

It then shredded the previous record set by a specimen called Sue that was sold for \$8.4 million in October 1997 by Sotheby's to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. Only around 50 Tyrannosaurus fossils have been discovered since the first was unearthed in 1902. Bids hit the \$9 million mark in less than two minutes after the start of the auction, but after 14 minutes there were just three bidders left in the race, until the hammer came down on an offer of \$27.5 million, to which were added costs and commissions.

The sale was organised in New York, where the expert assessor was located, but with lines open to Hong Kong and London, where Christie's specialists were taking calls from collectors. The fossil, nicknamed Stan, stands 13 feet (four metres) high and 40 feet long, with puncture marks in the skull and neck that experts believe show evidence of fights with fellow T-Rexes. He would have weighed in at around eight tonnes when alive, some 67 million years ago.

The fossil was discovered in South Dakota in 1987 and named after the amateur paleontologist who came across the remains, Stan Sacrison.

Paleontologists from the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research in South Dakota spent more than 30,000 hours excavating and then assembling the 188 bones of the skeleton. Casts were then taken for dozens of museums around the world. —AFP

# Google, Oracle meet in copyright clash at SC

**Washington, Oct. 7:** Supreme Court justices discussed restaurant menus, computer keyboards, songs and even the periodic table Wednesday in trying to resolve a copyright dispute between tech giants Google and Oracle.

The justices were hearing arguments Wednesday in a dispute that is worth billions and important to the future of software. It wasn't clear how the justices would rule, but some of the justices seemed at least concerned about what a ruling for Oracle could mean.

The case before the jus-

tices has to do with Google's creation of the Android operating system now used on the vast majority of smartphones worldwide. Google says that to create Android, which was released in 2007, it wrote millions of lines of new computer code. But it also used 11,330 lines of code and an organization that's part of Oracle's Java platform.

Google has defended its actions, saying what it did is long-settled, common practice in the industry, a practice that has been good for technical progress. But Oracle says



Google "committed an egregious act of plagiarism" and sued, seeking more than \$8 billion.

Chief Justice John Roberts expressed some skepticism, telling Oracle lawyer Joshua Rosenkranz to imagine opening a new restaurant and creating a menu. "Of course you're going

to have, you know, appetizers first, then entrees and then desserts. Now you shouldn't have to worry about whether that organization is copyrighted," Roberts said.

The case has been going on for a decade. Google won the first round when a trial court rejected Oracle's copyright claim, but that ruling was overturned on appeal. A jury then sided with Google, calling its copying "fair use," but an appeals court disagreed.

Because of the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, only eight jus-

tices are hearing the case, and they're doing so by phone because of the coronavirus pandemic. The questions for the court are whether the 1976 Copyright Act protects what Google copied, and, even if it does, whether what Google did is still permitted. Oracle, for its part, says the case is simple. "This case is about theft," Oracle's chief Washington lobbyist, Ken Glueck, said in a telephone interview ahead of argument. He compared what Google did to plagiarizing from someone else's speech. —AP

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| <b>PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited</b><br>Regd. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001<br>Phone No. - 0175-2207649, Email Id:- se-it1@pspcl.in<br>Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033913, Website: www.pspcl.in  |  |
| <b>Tender Enquiry No. 238/DIT-1054 dated 05.10.2020</b>   |  |
| <b>Short Description:</b> Providing 4G (LTE/VoLTE) mobile phone services in Punjab State Power Corporation Limited under corporate plan   |  |
| <b>Start date for downloading of Specification/tender documents:</b> Date of uploading of tender (5.10.20).   |  |
| <b>Last date for downloading of Specification/tender documents:</b> 20.10.2020 upto 11:00AM   |  |
| <b>Last date for Bid Submission:</b> 20.10.2020 upto 11:00AM  |  |
| <b>Bid Opening date:</b> 21.10.2020 upto 11:00AM  |  |
| <b>Note:</b> - The prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office and/or GePNIC representatives in case of my difficulty regarding uploading of the tender well in time. It is also requested to get their digital signature and registration well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only. |  |
| It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on official. PSPCL, website. (https://eproc.punjab.gov.in)   |  |
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| <b>SE/IT (A&amp;PM), PSPCL, Patiala</b>   |  |



# DECCAN Chronicle

8 OCTOBER 2020

## Quad's future: Too early to talk of an 'Asian Nato'

While the physical gathering of the foreign ministers of India, the United States, Australia and Japan in Tokyo this week — fairly unusual in these Covid-19 times — sent an unmistakable signal to China that these nations were determined to stand up to its bullying in the neighbourhood and beyond, and uphold the principle of a “rules-based international order” in a “free and open Indo-Pacific region”, which India’s external affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said meant “respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty and the peaceful resolution of disputes”, it was left to US secretary of state Mike Pompeo to really turn the heat on Beijing. In a direct attack not only on the Chinese government but also the Communist Party of China, America’s chief diplomat — who made it a point to go ahead with his visit despite the churn back in election-eve Washington — blasted China’s “exploitation, corruption, and coercion” in the “South (China Sea), East China Sea, Mekong, the Himalayas and the Taiwan Straits”. He also openly accused China of initially “covering up” the coronavirus pandemic in Wuhan and “silencing the very brave Chinese citizens who raised the alarm”.

The Quadrilateral, the grouping of the four nations that met in Japan, has been around for a while, but what has given the strategic partnership new heft is China’s renewed aggression of late — most visibly in the People’s Liberation Army’s intrusions into Indian territory in eastern Ladakh — which Mr Pompeo pointedly referred to in his remarks, but also in its newfound claims to the South China Sea, which mostly lies in international waters, and its blatant attempts to intimidate the democratic government in Taipei through an excessive show of force in the Taiwan Straits. India has a direct interest in ensuring freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, through which so much of our trade transits, which recently prompted New Delhi to send naval warships to show the Indian flag in these waters.

Everybody is well aware that the “Quad” is aimed at countering China, but it was noticeable only the US leader explicitly targeted the People’s Republic, while India, Australia and Japan were more circumspect. That doesn’t mean they don’t share the same views about Beijing’s aggression, which affects them far more than it does the US, but they also don’t want to aggravate China beyond a point — to ensure, say in India’s case, it doesn’t adversely impact the ongoing negotiations over the Ladakh de-escalation process. Japan too has become more vigilant as China has got increasingly assertive about its claims to some islands. All four nations are united on the need to counter the waves of disinformation from Beijing, such as over the source of the coronavirus, or the use of so-called “wolf warrior diplomacy” by which the PRC targets smaller nations — like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh or Nepal — to name just a few in our neighbourhood.

Where is the “Quad” headed? Will it, as some commentators predict, evolve into a kind of “Asian Nato”? Or will it focus not just on security, but also try to counter China’s Belt and Road Initiative and help develop 5G networks that don’t depend on Huawei? There are many in India who may welcome an “Asian Nato”, but we should remember that if we want an independent foreign policy, we have to safeguard our borders ourselves, this can’t be easily outsourced even to our closest allies.

## AIADMK: Who really won?

In what was a win-win situation, a long drawn imbroglio in Tamil Nadu’s ruling party, AIADMK, came to a close, on expected lines and at the expected hour on Wednesday. Deputy chief minister O. Panneerselvam, who started it all on Independence Day when some posters made an appearance in his hometown expressing his followers’ desire to see him as the next chief ministerial candidate of the party, concluded it by announcing his rival Edappadi K. Palaniswami as the chief ministerial candidate.

But the acrimony with which the two leaders fought the battle for supremacy and fact that unlike many other political parties in the State or the country, AIADMK is no more a personality oriented or ideologically driven party give rise to the doubts if the differences can really blow over.

For, what we have is a cabal of leaders, who had been chosen to whatever positions they held by the former supremo J. Jayalalithaa, or by default her confidante V.K. Sasikala. Of them, many aspire to lead the party or the government run by it, though the opportunity has come to only two of them through cruel twists of fate.

Those two on whom the mantle had fallen agreed among them to one being chief minister and the other deputy chief minister, ensuring that the rest remained in the sidelines. But when the deputy became more ambitious on seeing the chief minister cornering all the glory and anything else that came along with the job, the fight started.

With the rest of the leaders on the sidelines sensing the dangers such an in-fighting could engender, put an end to it. But the fact that the parleys went into the small hours of Wednesday and that there are some loose ends to be tied up, too, only indicate that it can erupt again. For it is not clear as to who the victor is now.

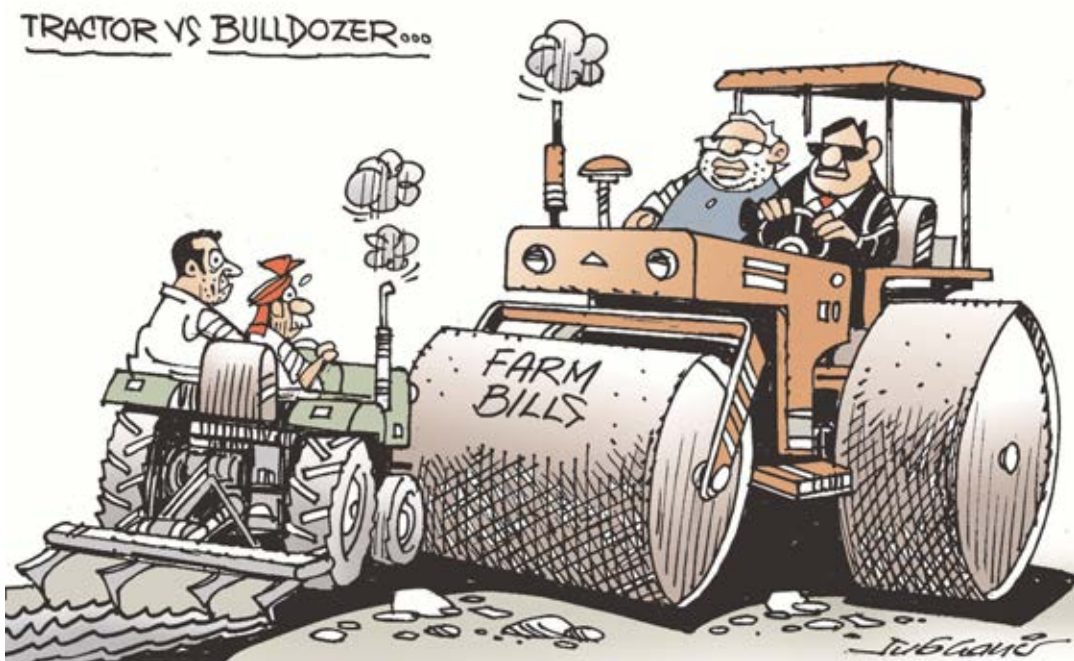
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Subhani

## Empower IAF to fight aerial war on 2 fronts



Abhijit Bhattacharyya

At 88, the Indian Air Force (born in 1932 as the Royal Indian Air Force) can certainly look back with pride as it evolved into an outstanding professional force, which is the nation’s pride and the envy of our neighbours.

Even before the RIAF was born, an 18-year-old Indian pilot, Lt. Indra Lal Roy of the Royal Flying Corps, had downed 10 German fighters in just 14 days in the skies over France, and laid down his life while still in his teens, on July 22, 1918. Posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Roy was India’s sole flying ace in the First World War. The standard set in 1918 continues to date.

The IAF officers of today remain worthy torchbearers of their legendary predecessors, notwithstanding a few hiccups over the pace of its fleet modernisation. War or peace, they operate with great élan. Their offensive as well as defensive ops over the “forward edge of battle area” in the 1965, 1971 and 1999 wars have been true to the Latin dictum “Per Ardua ad Astra” (Through adversity to the stars). However, India faces a major challenge today from an aggressive Communist Party of China, and the IAF, and India, have to be adept at tackling it.

Forty years ago, in 1980, China’s infant aviation industry was based mainly in Shenyang and Harbin; with the Soviet-licensed Yak-18, AN-2 biplane and Mi-4 helicopter; besides the F-6 (MiG-19), and F-7 (MiG-21) under production. With the start of the 1978 Deng Xiaoping era, by 1990, things had changed visibly. “Chinese factories carry out sub-contract work on Airbus A-300, A-310 and A-320; ATR-42; British Aerospace 146; Boeing-737, 747, and 757; McDonnell Douglas MD-

80 series” (*Jane’s All the World’s Aircraft 1991-92*). A Chengdu factory develops the JJ-5 (MiG-17), J-7 (MiG-21F); multi-role helicopter Zhi-8; Harbin made SH-5 maritime bomber; China-France joint ventured Z-9 Haitun helicopter; Nanchang made Q-5 close-air-support fighter (also exported to Pakistan); Shaanxi Aircraft developed Y-8 (derivative of Soviet AN-12 transport); Shenyang Aircraft built J-8 air-superiority fighter; and Xian Aircraft produced (Soviet-licensed Tupolev-16) strategic bomber.

From early on, China made its intent to build indigenous aircraft quite clear. It was determined to be self-sufficient and reduce its dependence on imported aircraft to fight its foes, just like the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union earlier. It would build its own war machine, keep the best for its own forces and give the second best to its friends, allies and followers with a lower price tag; keeping them militarily and financially dependent on the CPC. Military hardware is an effective tool of foreign and defence policy and serves as an instrument of geostrategic influence by putting smaller client states under pressure, enhancing their non-planned expenditure.

Indeed, China aggressively pursued an unfriendly posture from the start of the twenty-first century — with self-production, market distribution (selling it to smaller, friendly foreign customers) and consumption of its own product, thereby cutting import costs. This entire area needs a thorough relook by the Indian ruling class, as imported equipment still rules the roost in this country. Mass scale indigenous defence hardware/software production eludes the IAF.

By 2001, China had exported its J-7 single-seat fighter and close air support machine to India’s neighbourhood — Bangladesh (16), Pakistan (24), Sri Lanka (4). The Pakistan Air Force too started acting “big” — “Number 2 Squadron Masroor, Numbers 18 and 20 Rafiqi and Number 25 Mianwali” (*Jane’s All the World’s Aircraft 2000-01*). A clear signal was given to New Delhi two decades ago — that the Dragon was working in tandem with the Pakistani military-ISI — but the Indian government failed to react, and in fact opened its economic and commercial doors to China around the same time.

After Islamabad made a mockery of Atal Behari Vajpayee’s Lahore bus diplomacy, the Kargil misadventure followed, and though it led to a “victory” for India, it was over the dead bodies of over a thousand soldiers. The history of 1995 was repeated in 1999, when the initial loss and subsequent recapture of our own territory couldn’t be hidden behind India’s “Kargil Vijay Diwas” celebrations. It was not an inspiring message for citizens.

China must have made a careful note of India’s plight in tackling Pakistan. By 2010, Beijing moved further up the aerial ladder. It set up a helicopter hub at Tianjin, general aviation at Zuhual and aero engines at Shanghai. Its long-term aviation policy was aimed not just at competing, but also challenging the West by stealing its technology and “compelling” it to “voluntarily” cooperate with Beijing. The West was lured into Beijing’s trap over its greed for profits.

Beijing was deeply embedded to Airbus for commercial aircraft

development, and a key supplier of fighters to Pakistan. Of 19 multi-role fighter types in the world, China, with four types (CAC J-7, CAC J-10, SAC J-8 AND SAC J-11B), stood joint second with Russia (MiG-29/MiG-35, Su-30M, Su-35, Su-50) as the United States remained number one, with five types (Boeing F-15E, Boeing F/A-18E/F, Lockheed F-16, Lockheed F-22 Raptor and Lockheed F-35 JSF). Regrettably India, with its sole (developing) light combat aircraft, was nowhere in global aircraft production competition. A big country like India can’t expect to win long-drawn battles only with imported fighters.

China’s PLA Air Force banks heavily on indigenous research, development and production of combat aircraft. This can be seen from *Military Balance 2020 (London)*, the “2,517 combat capable aircraft” of the PLA Air Force comprise indigenous (and not imported) inventory — bombers, fighters, electronic warfare, tankers and transporters. India’s slow indigenisation process, and its unplanned forced expenditure due to the rising threat from China, poses a major hurdle for this country: our excessive reliance on imported fighter jets will have its repercussions.

The Indian Air Force, with its back to the wall, needs to give high priority to the production of multi-combat craft, as it is the actual user, and boost its in-house research and development capabilities. No time should be lost. The fighter, transport and rotor-craft production base must be widened, because otherwise the country’s indigenous production capacity and capability will not proceed at battle speed, retarding its readiness for multi-front conflicts. The IAF must make the fullest use of its human resources, the sooner the better.

**The Indian Air Force, with its back to the wall, needs to give high priority to the production of multi-combat craft, as it is the actual user, and boost its in-house research and development capabilities**

*Today, October 8, is Indian Air Force Day*

*The writer is an alumnus of the National Defence College. The views expressed here are personal.*

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## LETTERS

### AMICABLE SETTLEMENT

The AIADMK cadre should feel happy about the amicable settlement reached between EPS and OPS on the projection of its candidate as CM in the ensuing Assembly elections to the State. There had been unnecessary speculations about the possible splitting of the party in social media though such internal rift is quite common in every party. A man of my age who has seen such competition for the CM post in the second rung leaderships whenever vacuum occurred in the past. Therefore, the aspirations of both for projection as CM candidate seem to be a normal internal affair of the party, which would pave the way for selection in a democratic way. As an ordinary man of prudence beyond politics and those like me can have no second opinion that the present government is doing its best in the service of people.

**R. Murali Kumar, Chennai**

### FLIRTING WITH DANGER

THIS REFERS to the report that Motor Sich, a Chinese majority-owned company, is set to get a contract to overhaul engines of Indian Air Force’s Mi-17 V5 helicopters. According to IAF, the company is qualified to be given the contract by virtue of being the lowest bidder. Following the India-China face-off at the border, the government has done away with all kinds of investments and tie-ups with Chinese firms. One, therefore, cannot understand why the IAF has chosen to award the contract to the Chinese company — that too, in a sensitive area like overhauling of engines of frontline helicopters. Let’s not hand over the key to the thief.

**P.G. Menon, Chennai**

### RIISING COVID CASES

APPROPOS REPORT 57-year old *SI dies of corona* (Oct.7). It is indeed not only pathetic but also worrying that the police personnel, the protectors of the public are getting infected with coronavirus and dying. The reason could be that they are moving with many who are symptomatic or asymptomatic Covid-19 infected ones. Since the government is not strict enough, the public is showing scant respect to its diktat. Many are not wearing face masks and those with masks are leaving their noses outside and a few even carry them in their hands as a show-piece out of sheer arrogance. Hence the increasing cases of Covid-19. Unless the government gives full powers to the police department to tackle maskless persons, including the power to detain, would instil fear. Otherwise, corona cases will increase further affecting all.

**A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai**

Dilip Cherian  
Dilli Ka Babu



## Ex-DGP Pandey and the power of 'good offices'

The three-month mandatory cooling-off period has been waived for IPS officer Gupteshwar Pandey, who was DGP Bihar and sought voluntary retirement (VRS). This was done to allow him to join politics and possibly contest the upcoming state Assembly elections. Mr Pandey, who shot into the headlines with his controversial comments on the investigation into actor Sushant Singh Rajput’s suicide, applied for VRS and received the approval from the Bihar government within 24 hours!

Normally, an officer seeking VRS has to give a three-month notice to the government before quitting. Sources say that it takes up to two months for the government to clear the paperwork before granting retirement. In Mr Pandey’s case,

however, there was an unseemly hurry to grant his request.

Few, however, were surprised at Mr Pandey’s resignation from the IPS. His political ambitions had been the subject of much speculation weeks before he actually took the plunge. He has gone down this road earlier in 2009 when he took VRS to fight the Lok Sabha elections that year. He lost and was reinstated into the IPS. It pays to be well-connected.

### HARYANA TO SEE CHANGES AT THE TOP

With the retirement of Haryana chief secretary Keshni Anand Arora and the appointment of principal secretary to the chief minister, Rajesh Khullar, as executive director of the World Bank, observers expect a major adminis-

trative change in the state.

According to those in the know, several senior IAS officers are in the succession race. Among them, Vijay Vardhan, a 1985-batch IAS officer and current home secretary, is the strongest claimant for the post of chief secretary. Others in the fray are 1986 batch IAS Sanjeev Kaushal, and 1987 batch IAS Rajeev Arora. V. Umashankar, a 1993 batch IAS and additional principal secretary to CM, is reported to be very close to the CM Manohar Lal Khattar. Apparently, being close to the CM makes one a good contender for a plum posting.

Some observers point out that the caste factor may play an important role. Both Keshmi Anand Arora and Rajesh Khullar are Punjabis, as is chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar. So, will he choose babus

from the Punjabi community to fill the slots? Will the caste factor play a role? Any guesses?

### BABUS AND OTHER VIP SQUATTERS

There is nothing new about the reluctance of public servants to move out of the residential accommodation allotted them after retirement from service. It has been debated in public and private by citizens and VIPs, discussed in the courts who have issued directions to governments, but not much has changed.

The latest effort to ensure that government accommodation is not misused by babus is a directive from Delhi high court to the Centre to ensure that it gets illegally occupied houses vacated and recovers the rental dues for the period of the

illegal occupation. Apparently, according to the data submitted by the ministry of housing and urban affairs, the government has managed to wrest 565 government accommodations that were illegally occupied by retired public servants and recovered Rs 3 crores in rental dues. However, it also stated that Rs 9 crores was still outstanding from other illegal occupants and it has issued notices to the offenders.

For now, the dispensers of justice seem to have been appeased but this issue is not off the table. And won’t be until babus, and our worthy netas, learn to let go of their official trappings once they no longer have the privilege to enjoy them.

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







## SHORT TAKE

## Nadal breezes into French Open SF

**Paris:** Rafael Nadal reached his 13th Roland Garros semi-final early Wednesday with a straight sets win over Italian teenager Jannik Sinner but claimed it was "dangerous" to finish at 01:30 in the morning when the temperature had plummeted to 12 degrees (53F). Nadal, the 12-time champion, defeated 19-year-old Sinner 7-6 (7/4), 6-4, 6-1 to clinch a 98th victory in his 100th match at the French Open. He will next face Diego Schwartzman, the diminutive Argentine over whom he holds a 9-1 career advantage, as he moves closer to equalling Roger Federer's all-time record of 20 majors. However, Nadal was unhappy with organisers who scheduled five matches on the main Court.

## Live on TV

## CRICKET

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

## TENNIS

**French Open:** Matches from 2.30 pm on Star Sports, Select 2

## FOOTBALL

**Euro Qualifiers:** Georgia vs Belarus from 9.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD; Iceland vs Romania from 12.15 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3, HD; Slovakia vs Ireland from 12.15 am (Friday) on Sony Six, HD

**International Friendlies:** Sweden vs Russia from 10 pm on Sony Six, HD; England vs Wales from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

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## KNIGHTS PIN KINGS

KKR ride on Tripathi knock; Chennai misfire yet again

**Abu Dhabi, Oct. 7:** Alukata Knight Riders defeated Chennai Super Kings by 10 runs in an Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. Batting first, KKR were all out for 167 despite Rahul Tripathi's 51-ball 81. In reply, CSK were stopped at 157 for 5 in the stipulated 20 overs.

Chasing a tricky target of 168 on a pitch that seemed to have slowed down, CSK were off to a brisk start with Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis adding 30 runs in less than four overs.

Watson made 50 off 40 balls, while Ambati Rayudu contributed 30 off 27 balls, but the others could not do much as CSK fell short.

Earlier, batting first, KKR lost three wickets in the last over with Dwayne Bravo removing two of them.

Bravo, a CSK veteran, celebrated his 37th birthday by returning impressive figures of 3/37 in his quota of four overs.

Tripathi enjoyed his promotion to the top with an excellent fifty but Chennai Super Kings bowlers applied the brakes to bundle out Kolkata Knight Riders.

Tripathi picked up from where he left off against Delhi Capitals and raced to his fifth IPL fifty in 31 balls to give KKR a solid foundation after Dinesh Karthik called it right at the toss.

At 93 for two at the midway stage, KKR looked set for a big score but Bravo struck after that.

Leg-spinner Karn Sharma (2/25), Shradul Thakur (2/28), Sam Curran (2/26) claimed two wickets each as the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led side bounced back in the back 10 by taking eight wickets while giving away just 74 runs.

— PTI



Rahul Tripathi of Kolkata Knight Riders plays a shot against Chennai Super Kings during their Indian Premier League at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday.

— BCCI

## IPL POINTS TABLE

| Teams                       | P | W | L | N/R | Pts | NRR    |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-----|-----|--------|
| Mumbai Indians              | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0   | 8   | +1.488 |
| Delhi Capitals              | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0   | 8   | +1.060 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders       | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0   | 6   | +0.002 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0   | 6   | -1.355 |
| Chennai Super Kings         | 6 | 2 | 4 | 0   | 4   | -0.371 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad         | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0   | 4   | -0.417 |
| Rajasthan Royals            | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0   | 4   | -0.826 |
| Kings XI Punjab             | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0   | 2   | +0.178 |

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

## SCORECARD

**Kolkata Knight Riders:** R. Tripathi c Watson b Bravo 81, S. Gill c Dhoni b Thakur 11, N. Rana c Jadeja b Sharma 9, S. Narine c du Plessis b Sharma 17, E. Morgan c Dhoni b Curran 7, A. Russell c Dhoni b Thakur 2, D. Karthik c Thakur b Curran 12, P. Cummins not out 17, K. Nagarkoti c du Plessis b Bravo 0, S. Mavi c Dhoni b Bravo 0, V. Chakravarthy run out 1. **Extras:** (LB-4, W-6) 10. **Total:** (all out in 20 overs) 167. **FoW:** 1-37, 2-70, 3-98, 4-114, 5-128, 6-140, 7-162, 8-163, 9-166. **Bowling:** Deepak Chahar 4-0-47-0, Sam Curran 4-0-26-2, Shardul Thakur 4-0-28-2, Karn Sharma 4-0-25-2, Dwayne Bravo 4-0-37-3.

**Chennai Super Kings:** Shane Watson lbw b 50, Faf du Plessis c Karthik b S. Mavi 17, A. Rayudu c S. Gill b Nagarkoti 30, M. S. Dhoni b Varun 11, S. Curran c Morgan b Russell 17, K. Jadeja not out 7, R. Jadeja not out 21. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-2) 4. **Total:** (for 5 wks in 20 overs) 157. **FoW:** 1-30, 2-99, 3-101, 4-129, 5-129. **Bowling:** P. Cummins 4-0-25-0, S. Mavi 3-0-32-1, C. Varun 4-0-28-1, K. Nagarkoti 3-0-21-1, S. Narine 4-0-31-1, A. Russell 2-0-18-1.

## Bottom placed KXIP face SRH

**Dubai, Oct. 7:** Their bowling attacks struggling to find form, Kings XI Punjab and Sunrisers Hyderabad will look towards their power-hitters to do the job when the two erratic teams go head to head in an IPL match here on Thursday.

KXIP are currently languishing at the bottom of the table after losing four of their five games, while SRH are only slightly better at sixth following two wins and three losses so far.

KXIP's strength has been in a formidable opening duo. Skipper K. L. Rahul has been in scintillating form this year, scoring two fifties and a century, while Mayank Agarwal also has a half-century and a ton to his credit. The two have done the heavy-lifting for the team.

But despite the solid batting performances, KXIP have been unable to win because of their disappointing bowling attack. Apart from Mohammed Shami, all the other bowlers have failed to take wickets.

And come Thursday, Sunrisers, who are blessed with a strong top order comprising Jonny Bairstow, David Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane Williamson, will look to

## NUMBERS GAME

## HEAD TO HEAD

## OVERALL:

● Matches: 14

● Hyderabad: 10

● Punjab: 4

## MEETING IN 2019

● Kings XI Punjab beat

Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6

wickets at Mohali.

● Sunrisers Hyderabad beat

Kings XI Punjab by 45 runs at

Hyderabad.

## FOR THE RECORD

● Sandeep Sharma who took

97 wickets at an average of

24.21 in 81 innings of as many

matches for Kings XI Punjab

and Sunrisers Hyderabad,

needs just three wickets to

become the 15th bowler to

complete a century of wickets

in IPL.

● Lokesh Rahul with 302 runs

at an average of 75.50 and a

strike rate of 141.78 in four

innings is only batsman to

cross 300-run mark in this IPL.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

exploit a low-on-confidence KXIP's bowling unit.

However, the Orange Army was dealt a massive blow when senior pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar was ruled out of the tournament with a thigh muscle injury. In Bhuvneshwar's absence, Sunrisers struggled with their bowling.

— PTI

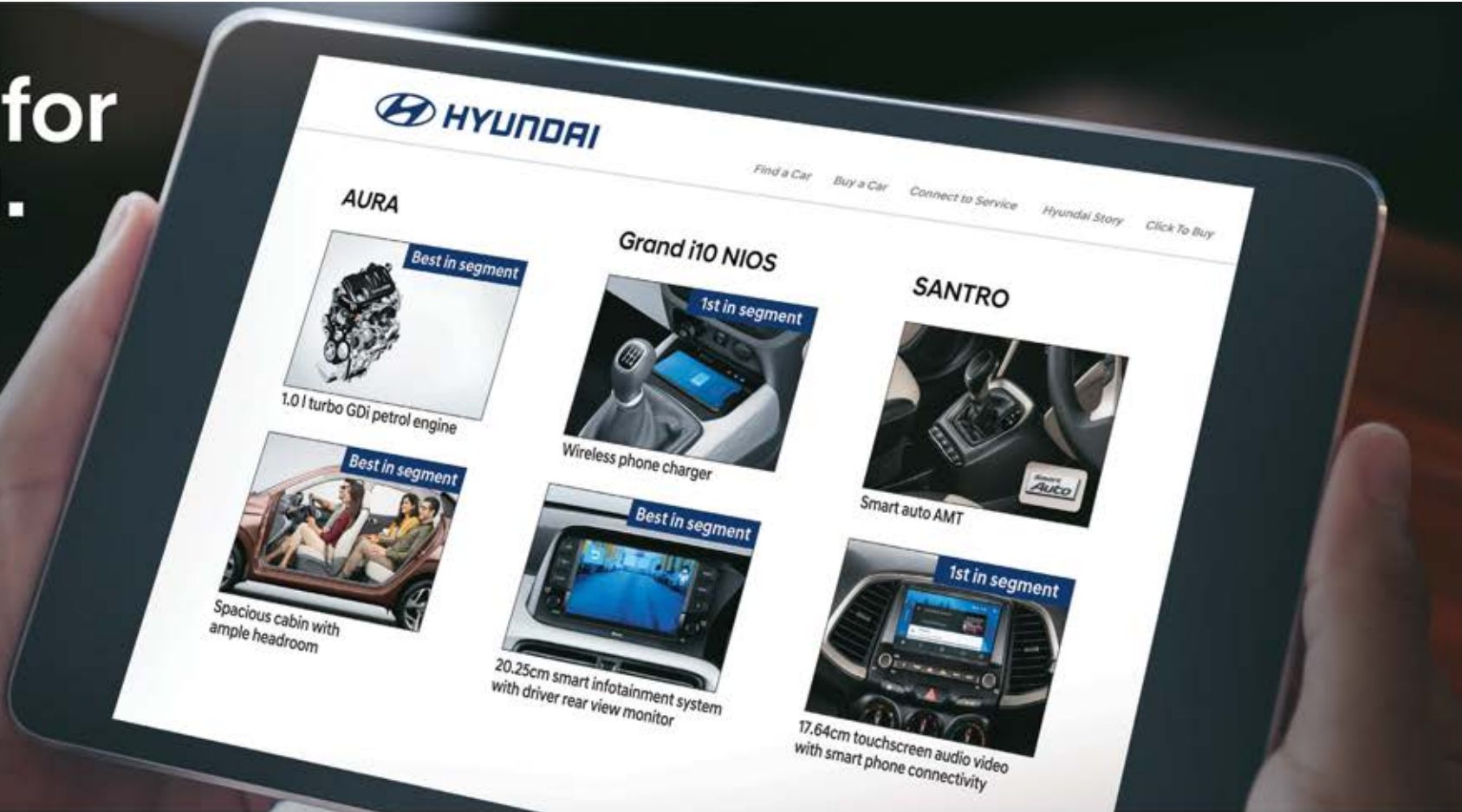


This photo released by the Melbourne Cricket Club shows a small group of family members attending a ceremony for late Australian cricketer Dean Jones as a hearse transporting his coffin makes one last lap around the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Melbourne following his death at the age of 59 on September 24 in Mumbai. — AFP

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