

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | SUNDAY | 20 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 32.8°C
Min: 22.5°C
RH: 89%
Rain: 0.3 mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 30/22 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+87,279)	(+1,078)
53,92,666	86,699

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,123)	(+9)
TS: 1,69,169	1,025
(+8,218)	(+58)
AP: 6,17,776	5,302

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,08,70,093

DEATHS

9,58,856

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/
coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Adhika-Ashvina Suddha Chaturthi till 2.28 am (Monday)
Star: Swathi till 10.54 pm
Varjyam: 6.22 am to 7.49 am;
4.01 am to 5.29 am (Monday)
Durmuhurtam: 4.34 pm to 5.22 pm
Rahukalam: 4.30 pm to 6 pm
HILIRI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 2, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.05 am
Zohar: 12.19 pm
Asar: 4.30 pm
Maghrib: 6.20 pm
Isha: 7.28 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.13 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.04 AM
MOONSET TODAY 8.49 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 8.45 PM

COUNTER POINT

Finally, they are staying at home!

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IN BRIEF

External debt up 3% to \$558 billion

New Delhi: India's total external debt increased by 2.8 per cent to \$558.5 billion at the end of March mainly on account of a rise in commercial borrowings, according to a report released by the finance ministry. It stood at \$543 billion at end-March 2019. The ratio of foreign currency reserves to external debt stood at 85.5 per cent as at end-March 2020, as compared to 76.0 per cent a year ago, the report said. External debt as a ratio to GDP rose marginally to 20.6 per cent as at end-March 2020 from 19.8 per cent a year ago, 'India's External Debt: A Status Report: 2019-2020' showed.

No decision taken on ₹2,000 note

New Delhi: The finance ministry on Saturday informed the Lok Sabha that no decision has been taken to discontinue the printing of ₹2,000 denomination currency notes. In a written reply, minister of state for finance Anurag Thakur said printing of bank notes of particular denomination is decided by the government in consultation with the RBI to maintain desired denomination mix for facilitating transactional demand of public. During the year 2019-20 and 2020-21, no indent was placed with the presses for printing of ₹2,000 notes. "There is no decision to discontinue its printing," he said.

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RS nod for changes to insolvency law

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US liberal icon Ruth Ginsburg dies

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Simona sails into Italian Open semis

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Rayudu rules



Ambati Rayudu of Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in action during the first IPL match of season 13 against Mumbai Indians (MI) at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Saturday. Rayudu scored 71 runs of 48 balls to help CSK beat MI by five wickets.

■ **Report on Page 8**

GHMC wards to be redesignated on basis of caste

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Reservations for over 30 per cent of wards in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) are to be changed for the upcoming polls in January. The GHMC has 150 wards. According to GHMC officials, reservations for all categories including Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), Backward Classes (BCs) and women will be changed on the basis of their population in the wards.

This has made many of the corporators and aspirants nervous. They fear that their divisions would be reserved and they may not get a chance to contest. Most corporators belonging to all parties have begun staying away from developmental activities and charity programmes despite their respective leaderships asking them to hit the streets in the run-up to the polls.

The parties will also need to redraw their plans in terms of fielding candidates. Some fancied aspirants may lose out if their wards are reserved. The reservations would be based on the BC voters in the ward, according to the voters list. The corporation has the caste-wise voters list that was prepared during the Lok

Sabha elections in 2019. It will be updated and published in January.

The population figures will be taken from the 2011 Census and the subsequent annual revisions. In the 2016 GHMC polls, the state government had reserved 10 wards for Scheduled Castes (SCs), two wards for STs and 50 for BCs, totalling 62. In each of these categories, half the wards were reserved for women. Besides, 44 wards were set aside for women in the general category and 44 were left unreserved.

Taken together, 75 of the 150 divisions were reserved for women. This may also be revised.

This apart, there is confusion prevailing on the mayor, which was initially reserved for a woman from the BC category. Sources said that the new Municipal Act, which specifies this, cannot be implemented due to certain provisions in the GHMC Act.

According to the GHMC Act, the mayor's post will be given out on rotation based on the updated population census. The new Municipal Act says that out of all mayors in the state, including the GHMC, 50 per cent will be reserved for STs, SCs and BCs. Of this number, half will be reserved for women belonging to these categories.

MIM CONTESTING BIHAR ELECTIONS WON'T HELP BJP, SAYS OWAISI

ATHER MOIN | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

MIM president Asad-uddin Owaisi rejected the charge that the BJP will gain in case the MIM contests the Bihar Assembly elections. He was speaking in Patna after announcing the formation of the United Democratic Secular Alliance (UDSA) with the Samajwadi Janata Dal (Democratic) of former Union minister Devendra Prasad Yadav for the Bihar polls.

The MIM had won the Kishanganj Assembly byelection in Bihar last year. Owaisi said the UDSA will contest the polls under the leadership of Yadav. Reacting to the Rashtriya Janata Dal charge that the MIM was a 'vote-cutter', Owaisi said, "those who call us 'vote-katwa' should remember their fate in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Nobody has any right over Muslim voters. It is not understandable that in what capacity they lay claim on Muslim votes."

Owaisi said the record showed that the MIM was not afraid of anyone. "If our party did not contest Kishanganj, the Congress would not have won from there. For the BJP's win, RJD is responsible. We defeated the BJP in Hyderabad and the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra," he said, adding the Grand Alliance in Bihar is no longer there.

KCR tells MPs to oppose farm Bills

CM says Bills will be big injustice to farmers

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao on Saturday asked party MPs to vote against the farm Bills in the Rajya Sabha, saying the legislations would cause great injustice to farmers.

The TRS has seven members in the Upper House, including D. Srinivas who is miffed with the party. The Bills are expected to come up for voting in the Rajya Sabha next week.

Talking with TRS Parliamentary Party leader Dr K. Keshava Rao over phone on Saturday, the Chief Minister said the Bills would severely harm the farming community and were meant to benefit the corporates.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill were passed by Lok Sabha on Thursday, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill on Tuesday.

The controversial legislations have sparked protests

● **THE CM** asked how it was possible for farmers who produce in small quantities to hire lorries to transport their yield to faraway places at high expense to earn profits

● **HE SAID** the Bills are nothing but sugar-coated pills and asked TRS MPs to oppose them at all costs. He found fault with the Centre's decision to reduce the import tax from 50 to 15 per cent while allowing the import of one crore tonnes of maize.

In Punjab and Haryana and has seen Shiromani Akali Dal leader Harsimrat Kaur Badal resign.

"For public consumption, it was stated in the Bills that farmers could sell their produce anywhere in the country. But, in reality, farmers seldom go to faraway places. The traders and corporate companies travel around in the country to buy or sell their goods," the CM said. "The Bills will throw open the flood gates for corporate companies and private traders to expand their operations across the country."

The Chief Minister asked: "How is it possible for farmers who produce in small quantities to hire lorries to transport their yield to faraway places at high expense in their attempt to earn profits." He said the Bills are nothing but sugar-coated pills and asked TRS MPs to oppose them at all costs.

He found fault with the Centre's decision to reduce the import tax from 50 to 15 per cent while allowing the import of one crore tonnes of maize. "What will happen to our farmers and their produce if the Centre opens doors for imports," Chandrashekar Rao asked. Stating that the Centre had procured 70-75 lakh tonnes of maize, he pointed out: "Whom does the Centre want to benefit at a time when the nation is facing an economic slowdown? We have plenty of maize produced in the country."

The Chief Minister instructed the MPs to oppose and vote against the Bills in the Rajya Sabha since they would cause huge losses to the agriculture sector and were against the interests of farmers in the country.

RAINS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TILL SEPT. 23: IMD

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Thunderstorms, lightning and heavy rain are expected in the state till September 23, according to an Indian Meteorological Department forecast.

In its weather warning issued on Saturday, the IMD said heavy rains and thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places across the state till Wednesday.

The IMD said that the monsoon has been active over Telangana and heavy rain occurred at isolated places in Ranga Reddy, Kumarambheem, Jogulamba-Gadwal, Nagarkurnool districts between Friday and Saturday.

The heaviest rainfall of 13 cm was recorded in Ibrahimpatnam of Ranga Reddy district, while Sirpur in Kumarambheem and K. Agraharam-Jurala in Jogulamba-Gadwal districts received 8 cm of rain each, followed by 7 cm each in Chinnna Chintakunta in Mahbubnagar and Achampeta in Nagarkurnool districts.

KTR urges Centre to release ₹1,434 cr TS dues

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao has urged Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman to release ₹1,433.95 crore that is due to the state under the 15th Finance Commission, immediately.

He wrote a letter to her on Saturday stating that the non-release of statutorily mandated grants and the Covid-induced shortfall in state revenues have affected the government no end.

He told the finance minister that the Finance Commission had recommended that grants amounting ₹468 crore to the million-plus city like Hyderabad and ₹421 crore to non-million plus cities in the state should be released in two equal instalments in June and October. This recommendation had been accepted by the Centre and an action taken report (ATR) to that effect was placed in Parliament.

Stating that the grant to million-plus cities is yet to be released, Rama Rao said that grant to non-million

● **HE TOLD** the finance minister that the Finance Commission had recommended that grants amounting ₹468 crore to the million-plus city like Hyderabad and ₹421 crore to non-million plus cities in the state should be released in two equal instalments in June and October.

● **STATING THAT** the grant to million-plus cities is yet to be released, he said the grant to non-million plus cities was split into four instalments, ignoring recommendations

plus cities had been split into four instalments, in contravention of the recommendation of the Finance Commission. The first of four instalments amounting to ₹105.25 crore was released on May 19.

The additional budget provisions matching the Finance Commission grants that were made in the state budget pending the report of the first state finance commission, clearly demonstrates the commitment of the state to urban development, the

LOK SABHA MAY CURTAIL SESSION FEARING COVID

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, SEPT. 19

Faced with a surge in Covid-19 cases and more than two dozen MPs testing positive, the ongoing monsoon session of Parliament might be curtailed most likely by middle of next week.

The session in Lok Sabha is likely to wrap up by Wednesday next week. Rajya Sabha, the upper House of parliament, is expected to follow suit. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of the Lok Sabha called by Speaker Om Birla on Saturday where floor leaders of most parties backed the move, sources said.

The session started on September 14 and was scheduled to conclude on October 1. The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs, however, would take a final call. More than two dozen MPs have tested positive for Covid-19 since the time the session began and daily tests were carried out in Parliament premises.

Seventeen members of the Lok Sabha and eight from the Rajya Sabha had tested positive for the Coronavirus before the monsoon session of Parliament started.

Fraud in Youth Congress elections

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The ongoing elections to the state Youth Congress appear to be caught up in unseemly controversies including allegations of membership enrolment fraud that involve buying voter ID card data from Mee Seva centres, and violations of the Congress youth wing's policy of not allowing anyone facing criminal charges to contest the polls.

According to a party insider, at least two of the contestants face serious criminal charges but they have managed to exert

influence both at the state and central party levels to ensure that they are not barred, as well as filling the party coffers with funds generated through the ongoing membership drive.

The Youth Congress polling ends on Sunday. The top three contestants are expected to be summoned to Delhi to face an interview with the party bosses, following which one would be appointed as state Youth Congress president. There are at least seven candidates for the post. Two of these are facing criminal cases.

■ **Full report on Page 4**

In AP, some babus ignore Covid threat

Senior officials in the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister's Office have been getting infected with the Coronavirus one after the other. It started with CM's secretary Solomon Arokhyaraj followed by principal secretary Praveen Prakash and now it's the turn of additional secretary K. Dhanunjay Reddy. Arokhyaraj behaved in a highly responsible manner and opted for self-quarantine, he also informed other officials with whom he had interacted a few days before he tested positive about his infection. He suggested that the officials get themselves tested. Dhanunjay Reddy is the most trusted confidant of the Chief Minister and handles several important subjects. Aware that the Coronavirus is highly contagious, Dhanunjay Reddy decided to skip official duties and informed all department heads about his health status. He did not think that he is indispensable nor did he try to project that he is committed to work by coming to office, putting not only his life but that of others at risk. Is someone hearing this?

In rankings race, one bureaucrat moves ahead

Often, we see rival political parties compete with each other to take credit for the state's progress, and its rankings at the national and international levels. In Andhra Pradesh, the story is different. It all happened after Andhra Pradesh was ranked first in the Ease of Doing Business recently. Two senior bureaucrats, Karikal Vallevan and Rajat Bhargav, claimed credit for the ranking. Bhargav worked as principal secretary in the industries department for more than six months in the YSRC government before Vallevan replaced him. As Bhargav had served for most of the time during the period which was taken into consideration for the rankings, he showed up during the celebrations. He met Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and presented him a bouquet before joining industries minister Goutham Reddy and Vallevan at a media briefing. Doubtlessly Bhargav stole the attention, leaving his colleague red-faced. Sources close to the minister said they can perceive the disinterested attitude of the incumbent head of industries at recent meetings. Does it mean the return of Bhargav to the industries department?



KCR scores another goal against Naidu

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao once again proved that he will not lose any opportunity to target TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu, even if the Telugu Desam has all but vanished in the state. This time, KCR adroitly dribbled past a question by CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka in the Assembly over the safety of digital land records to score the goal. The CLP leader said the Dharani portal of land records could be hacked. KCR rose and said Hyderabad has become a safe destination and has its own geographical advantages. In KCR's words, some experts told then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi about the advantages of placing servers in Hyderabad to store ultra-secret and crucial data in Hyderabad. The city is in a non-seismic zone and faces little threat of natural calamity. That, KCR said, is the reason IT companies looked to Hyderabad. It was due to Rajiv Gandhi that Hyderabad became an IT destination, but "somebody" claims that he made Hyderabad an IT hub, KCR said. Whether or not this answered Mallu Bhatti's question is another matter, but "somebody" may still be looking for a quick riposte.

Cong outsmarted by fleet-footed TRS

Congress members of the Telangana state Legislative Assembly appear to have failed to understand the strategy of the TRS while conducting the monsoon session of the Assembly. The government had indicated on August 17 that it would hold the session from September 7. Later the government indicated that all major issues including Covid-19, the fire mishap at the Srisaillam hydel project, achievements of the government in the power sector, the New Revenue Act, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) devolutions and the illegal construction of projects by the AP government would be taken up for debate. The Business Advisory Committee of the Assembly decided to hold the session for 18 working days. The ruling party took up all the issues listed, except the one on water disputes between the two Telugu states in the first eight days. The House was then adjourned sine die, citing the threat of Covid-19. Congress leaders alleged that the government had run away, afraid of facing the Opposition in the House, instead realising that the ruling party had clearly ambushed them.



LEISURE

BRIDGE | Susanna Gross

Dealer South		NS vulnerable	
		♠ 10 6 5	
		♥ 6 4 3	
		♦ Q 7 4 2	
		♣ K 7 4	
♠ A 3	♥ K J 7 4	♠ K J 7 4	
♥ J 7	♦ 10 9 5 2	♥ 10 9 5 2	
♦ J 9 7 6	♣ 10 3	♦ 10 3	
♣ 10 8 6 5 3	♠ A 9	♣ A 9	
		♠ Q 8 2	
		♥ A K Q 8	
		♦ A K 8	
		♣ Q J 2	
West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	2NT

My friend Ollie Burgess has just made the bold move of quitting his job in Manchester, and moving to London to manage the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Ollie is a fantastic player, as well as being popular and dynamic — exactly what's needed. The YC is much loved by its members, but its numbers have been dwindling in recent years. It would be a huge shame if it ever closed, not just because it attracts such a high standard of player, but also because it has a long and rich history. It first opened its doors in 1968, and for decades enjoyed a reputation as the best and most exciting club in the country. The stars of the game would flock there, and stay long into the night. I still remember the time Bill Gates, visiting London, rang and asked whether the club might find him a partner (he ended up playing with its chairman, Ian Payn).

If anyone can restore the club's fortunes, it's Ollie. Already, the Monday and Friday evening online duplicates are buzzing, and he's introduced online teaching, too. I've been lucky enough to partner Ollie many times. Here he is in action at the last Spring Fours.

West led the ♠5. East won, and returned the ♠J. Ollie did well to duck. When East continued the suit, he played low again, and West won with the ♠A. West switched back to clubs. Ollie won with the ♠Q and played ♠AK and a third diamond to dummy's ♠Q. East showed out. Instead of pinning his hopes on a 3-3 heart break, Ollie rectified the count for a possible major-suit squeeze against East: he played a fourth diamond, discarding his ♠Q. West won, and played another club to dummy's ♠K. East, down to ♠K ♥10952, was squeezed: nine tricks were in the bag.

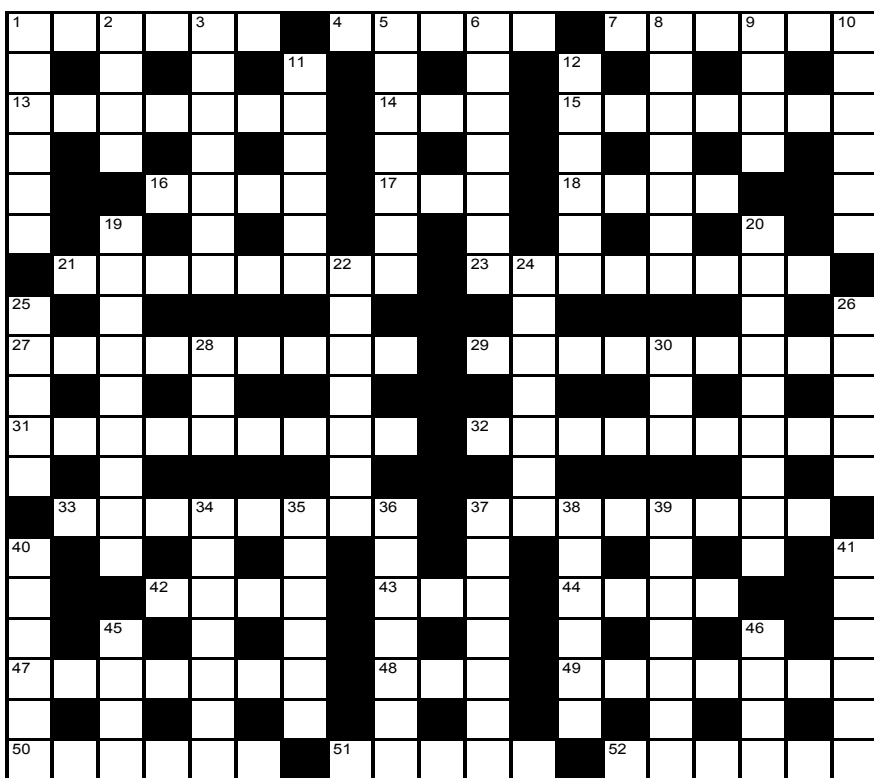
SUNDAY CROSSWORD — 952

ACROSS :

- Former Kiwi wicket keeper Adam (5)
- Baby beds (5)
- Proposals or bids (6)
- Flat pasta sheets (7)
- Thai language - "Ola" anagram (3)
- Ideal, utopian or flawless (7)
- Hit out at cricket (4)
- Marking fluid (3)
- up : consumed or finished the whole quantity? (4)
- Evacuating, abdicating or pulling out (8)
- Contri-bution to a cause (8)
- Retired Indian off-spinner (9)
- A son or a daughter; even a lamb or a colt? (9)
- Expressed with frankness (9)
- Minute trace (9)
- Competitions (8)
- Fire-raiser (8)
- Engrave (4)
- Pair (3)
- Run with a long stride (4)
- Messenger (7)
- Of one's : belonging to oneself? (3)
- Used to be alive (7)
- In vogue or fashion (6)
- Acute anxiety (5)
- Representatives (6)

DOWN :

- What bees collect? (6)
- Went upward (4)
- Royal emblems? (7)
- Depending, banking on, trusting (7)
- Stopped ball with bat? (7)
- Impassioned, romantic or sensual (7)
- "Been" anagram for Swiss watch manufacturers? (4)
- Easy catch (6)
- Mahara-shtra city (6)
- Economic improvement (6)
- Depiction or story or report (9)
- Advocate of com-



SOLUTION FOR CROSSWORD - 950

P	O	P	P	C	O	N	S	E	L	G	E	L
O	U	O	I	L	N	P	I	R	E			
O	C	T	E	T	U	I	A	P	A	I	S	A
J	R	A	R	B	I	T	E	R	O	T	N	
A	D	I	E	U	N	T	E	M	P	T	E	D
G	E	F	E	T	U	B	A	A	I	E		
C	H	E	S	T	E	L	M	A	G	N	A	R
O	U	T	P	U	T	S	C	A	L	A	W	A
N	E	A	T	S	Y	L	A					
T	A	R	M	C	A	M	P	O	B	L	A	T
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E	E	O	E	A	E	R	N	T	R			
D	A	D		N	O	T	I	C	E	D		
G	A	S	S									

WIN A PRIZE

Here's your chance to win a cash prize of ₹200 each. All you need to do is rush in your completed crossword entry to us by Wednesday with your full name and address. Mark the envelope to:

Sunday Crossword-952
Sunday Magazine, 36, S.D. Road,
Secbad-03

WINNERS OF CROSSWORD 950

- Hema Kumar, Hyderabad
- Jaikanth Dubey Secunderabad

CROSSWORD JIGSAW

K	E	Y	S		G	A	B		W	I	N	S
A	E		L		L		C		E			
N	O	O	D	L	E		E	S	T	E	E	M
G	M		A	A	L	S	T		M		I	
A	L	A	R	U	M		S	A	H	A	R	A
R	N	O	N		I		I	O	N		U	
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O		E		S	U	C	K		S		D	A
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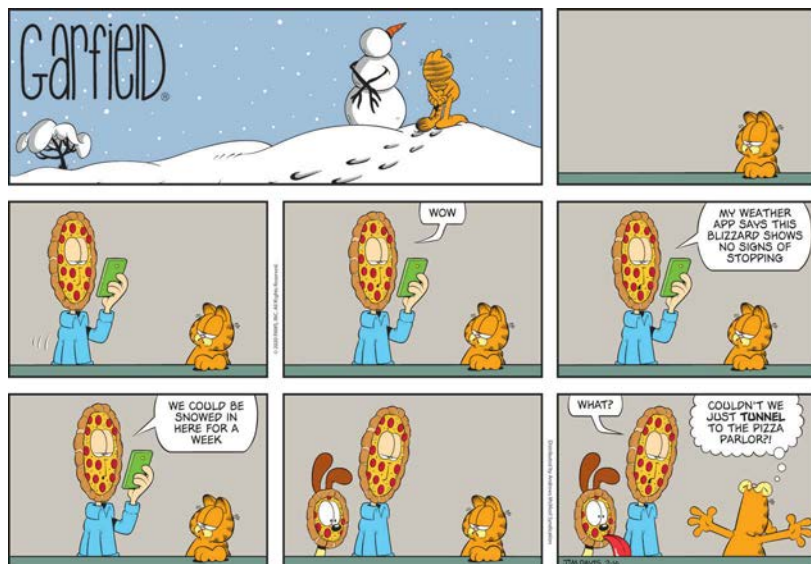
STRIKE OUT

E	X	P	A	N	S	E		S	O	B	E	R
X	O		A	V				U	A			
A	T	L	A	S			O	C	A	R	I	N
C	Y		A		L		S		Z			D
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							E		O			
G	O	D	S	O	N		S	N	I	F	F	Y
A		R	A	D		E						
R	A	D	I	O		X	I	J	I	A	N	G
L		U	R		O		A	T				
A	B	R	E	A	S	T		C	O	T	T	A
N		R		N		I	K	O				
D	E	A	L	T		C	H	O	P	P	E	R

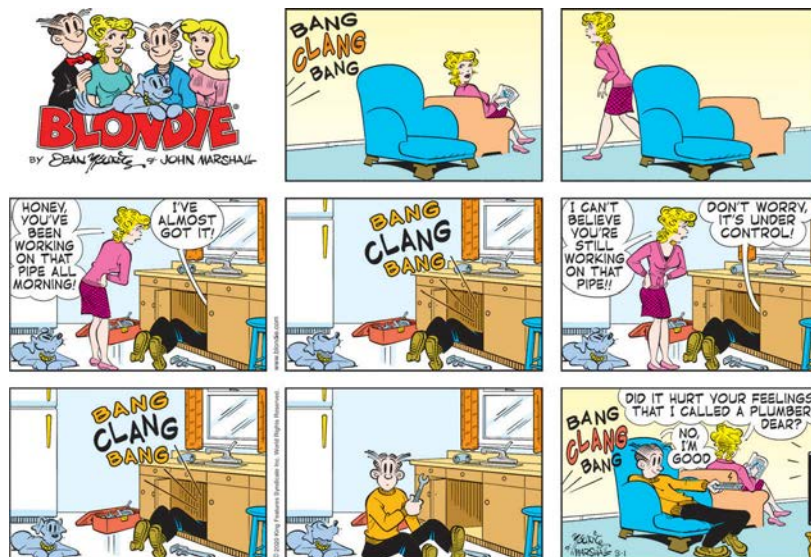
PHANTOM



GARFIELD



BLONDIE



OTHER STORIES

FICCI HOLDS WEBINAR ON NEP-2020

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The webinar, National Education Policy (NEP), 2020: A game changer for Telangana, organised by the FICCI Telangana State Council in association with the Telangana State Council for Higher Education (TSCHE), on Saturday, saw brainstorming by various stakeholders and education experts from different sectors to establish a plan of action for the effective implementation of the policy in the state.

During the three plenary sessions, the focus was on increasing private investment into higher education as well as achieving sustainability in higher education spaces through infrastructural support for new universities through government funding.

Suggestions were made for enhancing research skills and resources for students and improving the assessment system at the higher education level in order to produce globally accepted graduates who are work-ready, with a curriculum keeping in mind industry needs and future requirements.

Jayesh Ranjan, principal secretary, and Naveen Mittal, commissioner collegiate education, who represented the government at the event, focused on teacher training as an essential part of enhancing higher education.

Ranjan said "Teacher training is a fundamental aspect of the education system; more like a make or break situation. Running a very solid teachers' training programme, especially for those already in service should be mandated immediately."

The need to de-affiliate colleges was also on the agenda. "Only after we move out of the affiliation system and let these colleges survive on their own will we be able to differentiate on the basis of quality of education. This affiliation system, if you look globally, is mostly found in South Asia, and not in other parts of the world," said Mittal.

Meanwhile, a demand to attract top foreign universities to the state was made by all stakeholder and policy experts by branding Telangana state as a global higher education hub through the promotion of excellence and competition using rankings, ratings, etc.

● **SUGGESTIONS WERE made for enhancing research skills and resources for students and improving the assessment system at the higher education level in order to produce globally accepted graduates who are work-ready, with a curriculum keeping in mind industry needs and future requirements.**



Sweet shop at Nehru Chowk in Mahabubabad sealed.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Sweet shop violates Covid norms, sealed

Owner was doing business without wearing a mask

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC WARANGAL, SEPT. 19

A sweet shop in Mahabubabad that was violating Covid-19 protocol was sealed by municipal authorities here on Saturday.

District collector V.P. Gautham, who was touring the city to inspect palle prakruthi vanams and steps being taken for

● **THE DISTRICT administration has been asking denizens to be wary of the spread of Coronavirus and warned them not following the guidelines was tantamount to a crime.**

controlling Coronavirus, noticed a sweet shop

owner doing business without wearing a mask in Nehru Chowk. He immediately went up to the shop and asked the person to wear a mask and took him to task for his irresponsible act.

The district administration has been asking denizens to be wary of the spread of Coronavirus and warned them not following the guidelines was tantamount to a crime. "A large number of people visit the shop daily and under such circumstances, steps need to be taken to avoid the spread of the virus. How can you not wear a mask while working?" he asked the shopkeeper.

Gautham immediately asked the municipal commissioner Indrasena Reddy to seal the shop and impose fine on the shopkeeper.

ADILABAD MUNICIPALITY TO FENCE ITS LANDS

DC CORRESPONDENT ADILABAD, SEPT. 19

The Adilabad municipality will fence its lands and properties using ₹1 crore funds to protect against encroachment in Adilabad town.

A team led by municipal chairman Jogu Premender and vice-chairman Zaheer Ramzani visited various sites belonging to the Adilabad municipality on Saturday.

Mr Jogu Premender participated in the ground breaking ceremony to fence the municipal land in New Housing board colony (Ward no 12).

He said that the municipal lands and properties in 49 wards in the municipality will be identified and fenced.

New housing board colony Councillor Pavan Naik and others were present.

Mr Premender planted saplings as part of the Haritha Haram programme in the area.

BJP's false propaganda cannot unsettle TRS: Min

DC CORRESPONDENT WARANGAL, SEPT. 19

The Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) preparatory meet for the upcoming Warangal-Nalgonda-Khammam graduates' constituency MLC polls was held on Saturday at Wardhannapet.

Addressing party workers, minister for panchayat raj, rural development and rural water supply Errabelli Dayakar Rao said, every word uttered by the BJP state president Bandi Sanjay is false. Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has introduced several welfare schemes with a vision for the future. It is unfair to say that the state schemes are being funded by the Central government. "The state government is spending ₹11,000 crore for pension, the Centre gives only ₹200 crore. For every ₹100 the state spends the Centre shares only ₹0.180 paise," he explained. The Congress and BJP rely



Errabelli Dayakar Rao

● **The state government is spending ₹11,000 crore for pension, the Centre gives only ₹200 crore.**

on mudslinging to make their presence felt in the state and will be defeated in the upcoming MLC elections, he said.

The minister urged the youth wing of the party to take the elections prestigiously. MLC Pochampally Srinivas Reddy, MLC elections examiner TSIC Chairman G. Balamallu, mayor Gunda Prakash Rao, M.L.A. A. Ramesh, DCCB chairman M. Ravinder Rao, corporators and others were present.

Sanction ₹10K for health staff fighting Covid: TNGO

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 19

The district president of the Medical and Health Employees Central Forum of the Telangana Non-Gazetted Officers union (TNGO), Manchala Ravinder demanded that the government sanction ₹10,000 immediately for employees of the medical and health department who contracted Covid-19.

The public health department had issued orders that special treatment be provided to employees of the medical and health department at the NIMS hospital.

In a statement released on Saturday, Mr Ravinder alleged that Covid-19 positive staff did not received any special facilities or treatment.

A health assistant at the Chelpur Primary Centre in Huzurabad division died battling Covid-19. He underwent treatment for a month at Yashoda hospital in

● **THE PUBLIC health department had issued orders that special treatment be provided to employees of the medical and health department at the NIMS hospital.**

Hyderabad and spent over ₹20 lakh but in vain. He leaves behind his wife and two children.

Ravinder said, "Health minister Etala Rajendar must issue orders through the government for employees of the health department to be treated in the Nizam Institute of Medical Science (NIMS) hospital. The government must also provide quarantine facility for three days to all employees performing Covid-19 duties in hospitals."

Another demand that the TNGO is pushing is for anti-viral medicines be dis-

● **RAVINDER ALLEGED that Covid-19 positive staff did not received any special facilities or treatment and has asked health minister to issue orders via the government for treatment of staff in NIMS.**

tributed to all Covid-19 positive staff of the medical and health department and to sanctioning of ₹10,000.

The members of the association paid rich tributes to their colleague who lost his life battling the Coronavirus and offered condolences to his family. They demanded that the government sanction ₹50 lakh health insurance declared by the Central government and that the state in addition sanction ₹25 lakh from the Chief Minister Relief Fund (CMRF) to help the family of the deceased colleague.

OGH'S OT FOR SURGERY DEPT TO RESUME

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Operation theatres for the general surgery department in Osmania General Hospital will be functional from Monday, but they will not be as big as in the heritage building. Postgraduate doctors said that they are also working with the administration as they want operation theatres to be functional soon.

There are 12- and 32-bed post-operative wards set up in the new building for general surgery. Dr B. Nagendra, superintendent of OGH, said, "We have made arrangements and the department will now be able to function properly." Interestingly, the heritage building has not flooded despite the heavy rains.

AIDSO DEMANDS HOSTEL FACILITIES FOR STUDENTS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The state unit of the All India Democratic Students Organisation and the Progressive Democratic Students Union submitted a memorandum to education minister Sabitha Indra Reddy on problems being faced by polytechnic students and demanded transportation, hostel facilities for final year students writing supplementary exams.

Karimnagar dist jail follows Covid-19 protocol strictly

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 19

The district jail in Karimnagar is taking precautionary steps to protect the prisoners from contracting the Coronavirus.

Superintendent of the district jail, Sammaiah said that twice a week every barrack in the jail is sanitised with sodium hypochlorite including the women jail and the premises of the district jail.

Though the mulaqath facility for the last five months has been stopped, prisoners are provided with a telephone facility to speak with their relatives four times a week.

Prisoners are provided with face masks and soaps. They have been asked to wash their hands thoroughly before meals.

Boiled eggs are provided twice a week along with chicken every Sunday. Warm water mixed with turmeric along with tea is given in the early hours daily.

Health check ups are con-

ducted regularly for the prisoners. If any prisoner is found having the symptoms of Coronavirus they are shifted to a separate cell and kept under observation along with providing them separate meals, he added.

Mr Sammaiah said that new prisoners are kept in isolation for a period of 28 days before allowing them to mingle with old prisoners. First 14 days, they are kept in separate cells and another 14 days in the hospital present in the jail premises under the supervision of the doctors.

If the new prisoners test negative for Covid-19 they are shifted to the common barracks. Free legal services are provided to prisoners by members of the District Legal Cell Authority is stopped temporarily, he said.

Mr Sammaiah said that along with him, other prison officers Sanjeev Reddy and Venkateshwara Swamy, deputy jailer Sudhakar Reddy, Ramesh Naik and Bala Krishna are taking special care of the prisoners.

GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM CORPORATION

Procurement Tender Notice No.09/2020-21(CE/GVMC)(S&WS)/EE-I(WSS&M)/DB-DT-17-09-2020

01. Number of Works	: 1 No
02. Value of Works (ECV)	: Rs.857.34 Lakhs
03. Down Loading Starting Date	: 18-09-2020
04. Down Loading Ending Date	: 05-10-2020 @ 3.00 PM
05. Last date of bid submission	: 05-10-2020 @ 4.00 PM
06. Date of PQ Opening	: 05-10-2020 @ 5.00 PM
07. Date of Commercial opening	: 09-10-2020 @ 1.30 PM
08. Date of TQ opening	: 12-10-2020 @ 5.00 PM

Note: For any other details required in respect of above tender notice, please contact EE-I(WSS) before applying for tender schedules and visit vsp @ www.approcurement.gov.in

CE(GVMC)

Untimely rains may cause pest attack

DC CORRESPONDENT ADILABAD, SEPT. 19

Farmers fear that the untimely rains may cause damage to the standing cotton crop in erstwhile Adilabad district.

The cotton crop is in the flowering stage and there would be yield by second week of October. It has grown to a certain stage and rains will cause damage to the standing plants. There was enough moisture in the soil for the growth of the plant.

The area of cotton cultivation is 3.5 lakh acres this kharif season in Adilabad district. Many farmers have cultivated cotton under controlled agriculture following state government instructions this kharif.

Farmers pinned hopes on a good yield due to good rains and were expecting a good price in the open market. Cotton picking may take place in the first week of October, if everything goes well.

Many farmers are applying pesticides to the standing crops to protect the plants from a pest attack. The pink bollworm was found in the fields in Jainad and Bela mandals in the initial days of flowering.

● **THE AREA of cotton cultivation is 3.5 lakh acres this kharif season in Adilabad district. Many farmers have cultivated cotton under controlled agriculture following state government instructions this kharif.**

Farmers tried their best to get rid of it in the district.

One can't rule out the sudden appearance of the pink bollworm at the formation of cotton from the flowering stage affecting the standing cotton crop.

Some farmers who sowed seeds early in the kharif suffered a loss due to lack of germination of the seeds and some of them have gone for second and third sowing of seeds. These farmers were relieved by the continuous rains that followed.

Ramakanth, a farmer from Talamadugu mandal said the untimely rains may damage the standing cotton crop and there is no more need of rains since there is enough moisture in the soil in the cotton fields.

DO YOU OWN A PLOT IN UNAUTHORIZED LAYOUT?

LAST & FINAL OPPORTUNITY TO REGULARIZE

GREAT CHANCE TO REGULARIZE ALL UNAPPROVED LAYOUTS

The Government of Telangana announces Layout Regularization Scheme (LRS) in Rural and Urban areas for regularizing unauthorized Plots & Layouts.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: All existing unapproved sub-division of plots, existing unapproved layouts or ventures where

- * The plots have been sold through a Registered Sale Deed
- * Unauthorized layouts developed, provided at least 10% of plots are sold through Registered Deed
- * Plots registered on or before 26.08.2020

EASY TO APPLY: Applicant should file an online application or at mee-seva center in the prescribed format for regularization of the Plot/Layout before the competent authority by 15-10-2020 for all such Plots / Layouts, which are unapproved unauthorized and not covered under the prohibitory category.

PROHIBITORY CATEGORY: Plots falling in Government lands / ULC surplus / Endowment / Waqf Lands and falling in FTL of tanks are not eligible for regularization.

LAST DATE FOR REGULARIZATION: OCTOBER 15, 2020

APPLICATION FEES PAYABLE: FOR INDIVIDUAL PLOTS: RS.1,000/- ALONG WITH APPLICATION

FOR LAYOUT DEVELOPERS: RS.10,000/- IF APPLIED FOR THE ENTIRE LAYOUT

ONCE YOUR APPLICATION IS REGISTERED, THE ENTIRE REGULARIZATION CHARGES SHOULD BE PAID BY 31/01/2021

Details of the Scheme & Regularization Charges are available at: <http://lrs.telangana.gov.in/>

Helpline Numbers: For Clarifications call between 10 AM and 6 PM

1. For Plots in HMDA: 1800 - 4258838
2. For Plots in GHMC: 040 -2111 1111

e-mail: support-lrs@telangana.gov.in

Download LRS 2020 Mobile App from Google Play

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=cgg.gov.in.lrs_2020

Sri K T Rama Rao
Hon'ble Minister for MA & UD Industries & Commerce, IT & C

Utilize this last & final opportunity - Get your plot regularized

IN BRIEF

Swiggy staff warn of nationwide stir

Hyderabad : Indian Federation of App Based Transport Workers has warned of a nationwide strike if Swiggy does not adhere to their demands by September 20. The delivery executives approached the principal secretary, information technology, Jayesh Ranjan demanding that they be paid ₹35 per order. More than 3,500 delivery executives are on strike from September 15. They are also demanding that outsourcing to third parties must be stopped.

Human traffickers' gang busted

Hyderabad: A gang of human traffickers which operated online was busted by the Rachakonda commissionerate police on Saturday. The Preventive Detention Act was invoked against one of the accused, Sadanala Devi alias Soumya, and she has been detained at the special prison for women at Chanchalguda. Police said another accused, Anjali, the kinkin, was earlier involved in similar offences in the Rachakonda and Cyberabad police limits. The gang would post pictures online of the victims that they had brought from West Bengal. Clients had to react with Anjali who would charge ₹10,000 per person, police said.

RULES ON SCHOOL FEE SOUGHT

ATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

All India Muslim Educational Society (AIMES) requested the special chief secretary, school education to issue clear cut guidelines regarding collection of fee from the parents. Society general secretary M.S. Farooq also sought guidelines for partial reopening of schools for students of Classes 9 and 10. He said the Centre had issued standard operating protocols on September 9 about partial resumption of schools for Classes 9 to 12 on voluntary basis from September 21. Schools in the state are in a dilemma over whether these students can visit school for clearing doubts, he said.

TWO ARRESTED FOR SELLING VITAL DRUG

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Two persons were arrested for selling mephentermine sulphate injection that is used as an emergency medicine during surgery and to treat certain cardiac problems.

The medicine is mostly misused in gyms with people trying to increase their endurance. Mephentermine sulphate can cause cerebral haemorrhage, hypertension, insomnia, drowsiness and anxiety. The accused, Mohammed Shah Fahad, 28, and Shaik Abdul Owais, 20, were arrested by the South Zone Task Force, Chaderghat police and drugs officials who seized 150 injection vials, each consisting 30 ml of the medicine.

HYD DOC WINS DROCHARYA AWARD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The prestigious Drocharya Award was announced to Dr Soundararajan, senior consultant nephrologist at Apollo Hospitals, Jubilee Hills, for his 35 years of nephrology teaching and kidney-related research. The award will be presented in New Delhi and the dates will be announced later, said Dr Soundararajan.

Dr Soundararajan served in Tamil Nadu medical colleges for 15 years and as professor and head of the department in Ramachandra Medical College for 20 years. He has trained over 30 nephrologists and 12 PhD scholars. He pioneered the first HIV transplant and was the first to transplant a kidney from a brain-dead snakebite victim. This was cited in the Indian Journal of Nephrology. He has organised over 1200 kidney transplants including 200 disease donor transplants and has published over 200 publications.



Basti Dawakhana get going



A doctor checks a woman at a Basti Dawakhana at Gaddiannaram on Saturday, where prenatal services and medicines are offered free. The state government aims to increase the number of Basti Dawakhana in view of the high demand. — P. SURENDRA

Number of pvt Covid hospitals yo-yos, state drops six facilities

BALU PULIPAKA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The state government which, two days ago, had indicated that it had allowed an increase in the number of private hospitals treating Covid-19 patients from 204 as on September 14 to 225 on September 16, has mysteriously cut this number to 219.

According to the daily Covid-19 bulletins, the number of government hospitals treating Covid-19 patients as on September 14 was 42 which was reduced to 41 on September 16.

The health department that issues the bulletins has not provided any information on the changes or the reasons for the changes.

The changes in the number of private hospitals have seen 'adjustments' being made in the number of beds offered by them for Covid-19 patients. On

September, with 204 hospitals listed, the bulletin said there were 10,733 beds. On September 15, when the number of hospitals zoomed to 224, the bed strength had gone up to 11,288. That day, one more private hospital was added to the list taking the number to 225 and the beds to 11,340.

By September 17, the health department dropped six private hospitals, bringing their number down to 219 and the beds to 10,941. There was no explanation as to why the six hospitals were dropped.

It may be recalled that the government had set up a three-member task force last week to look into billing as well as treatment protocol violations by private hospitals.

The health department did not make it clear if the six hospitals dropped from the list had indulged in such violations.

TS records 2,123 cases, 9 deaths

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The GHMC area continues to record the highest number of Covid-19 cases in the state and on Friday the figure stood at 305. The state registered nine more Covid-19 deaths and 2,123 new cases, taking the toll 1,025 and the caseload to 1,69,169.

With the exception of two days, September 13 and 14 when the city recorded 264 and 277 cases respectively, Hyderabad and the rest of the GHMC area has been recording 300 or more cases during the past week.

Between September 12 and 18, the GHMC are recorded 2,144 cases, as per the daily Covid-19

bulletin issued by the health department.

While Ranga Reddy district registered 185 new cases, for the week starting September 12 its total was 1,206.

The 135 new cases in Nalgonda district took its weekly total to 851, while Medchal-Malkajgiri district's week tally was 848, followed by Karimnagar with 837 for the same period. Warangal Urban district recorded 681 cases in the week, followed by Khammam with 596, and Siddipet with 578.

So far, 1,37,508 people have recovered from Covid-19 and that as on Friday 8 pm, Telangana had 30,636 active cases, according to the health department bulletin,

Rain pain



Overcast skies and buildings covered with mist and rain marked Saturday for Hyderabad. — R. PAVAN

RAIN MAY CONTINUE TILL SEPTEMBER 23, MET DEPARTMENT CAUTIONS

Hyderabad: Thunderstorms, lightning and heavy rain are expected till September 23, according to an IMD forecast.

In its weather warning issued on Saturday, the IMD said heavy rains

and thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places across the state till Wednesday. In IMD parlance, 'isolated places' mean those having less than 25 per cent

of the IMD automatic weather stations. The IMD said that the southwest monsoon has been active over Telangana state and that very heavy rain occurred at isolated places in Ranga Reddy,

Kumarambheem, Jogulamba-Gadwal, Mahbubnagar and Nagarkurnool districts. The heaviest rainfall of 13 cm was recorded in Ibrahimpatnam of Ranga Reddy district, the IMD said.

Fraud in Youth Cong polls alleged

BALU PULIPAKA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The ongoing elections to the state Youth Congress appear to be caught up in unseemly controversies including allegations of membership enrolment fraud that involve buying voter ID card data from Mee Seva centres, and violations of the Congress youth wing's policy of not allowing anyone facing criminal charges to contest the polls.

According to a party insider, at least two of the contestants face serious criminal charges but they have managed to exert influence both at the state and central party levels to ensure

that they are not barred, as well as filling the party coffers with funds generated through the ongoing membership drive.

The Youth Congress polling ends on Sunday. The top three contestants are expected to be summoned to Delhi to face an interview with the party bosses, following which one would be appointed as state Youth Congress president.

There are at least seven candidates for the post: R. Shravan Rao a leader of the Congress' student wing NSUI; Shiva Sena Reddy, believed to have the support of a powerful MLA-MP brother duo from the Congress; Saishankar, son of for-

mer MP Balram Naik; Vari Lalith, son of former PCC president and former MP Tusli Ram; Rakesh Shetkar, former MP Suresh Shetkar's son; Arvind Kumar Yadav former MP Anjan Kumar Yadav's son; and

Aamer Javed.

Two of these are facing criminal cases — one involving illegal smuggling of liquor across the Delhi-Gurugram border this April, and another in a case relating to illegal sacrifice of buffaloes in a temple in Peddagudem village of Wanaparthy, party sources said.

Some of the candidates, it is learnt, have purchased voter ID card facsimiles from Mee Seva centres. Sources said more than 30 of these centres were involved in the sale of voter ID data.

"Telangana state has crossed 8 lakh active members of Youth Congress in the current drive which is impossible if everything is above

HC okays benefit for contract staff

Court rules state can provide 20% weightage

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA I DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The Telangana High Court has made it clear that prescribing up to 20 per cent marks as weightage to contract service or service rendered on outsourcing basis while making regular recruitment in public employment is not excessive. It is within the powers of the employer to provide the weightage, the court ruled.

Having considered various aspects concerning regular recruitment in public employment, the full bench, comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan, Justice A. Rajashekar Reddy and Justice P. Naveen Rao, upheld the constitutional validity of Rule 31 of the Telangana State and Subordinate Service Rules, 1996, which enables and empowers the Governor to exercise the power of relaxation to lift any Rule in favor of a person or class of persons. The bench held that exercise of power in the circumstances is legally valid.

Hence, the power of relaxation of service rules can be exercised by the Governor in order to remove the restriction on computation of temporary service imposed by the Service Rules, and to enable the temporary employee to compute the temporary service as weightage in the process of regular recruitment.

The bench also clarified that if the Service Rules do not envisage assignment of marks for temporary service in regular recruitment, it is for the employer to assign

TIME NO BAR, ERRANT PUBLIC EMPLOYEE CAN BE PUNISHED, SAYS HC FULL BENCH

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

The Telangana High Court made it clear that disciplinary action would be taken against errant employees, even if such misconduct is made known after several years.

A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Tadakamalla Vinod Kumar, was dealing with an appeal by P. Narasimha Chary, nayab tahsildar in Jagtial district, who is under suspension on charges of alleged misconduct in 2005 when he was serving as a village revenue officer (VRO).

When an FIR was registered against the petitioner in 2020, the collector placed him under suspension.

Chary approached the High

Court challenging the suspension orders, contending that suspending him after a lapse of 14 years would not serve any purpose. A single judge bench of Justice P. Naveen Rao did not agree, and the appeal was filed. Chary sought setting aside the FIR. Petitioner's counsel P.V. Ramana submitted that the allegations related to 2005-2006 were false and registering FIR after several years was incorrect.

Counsel pleaded that the suspension orders be revoked as the petitioner was nearing retirement. Upholding the order of the single judge, the division bench said that these grounds could not help the petitioner get relief and also noted that to determine whether the FIR was false is not to be decided by the court. Its veracity can only be

such weightage and it does not bestow any vested right upon a temporary employee to insist upon extension of weightage to temporary service rendered by him.

A series of petitions were filed before the Telangana High Court from since 2017, challenging non-apportionment of weightage marks to temporary and outsourcing employees in the recruitment of public employment, like power utility companies, medical, health and agriculture departments. On the other hand, some petitions were filed challenging the apportionment of

weightage marks up to 45 per cent to temporary employees. These petitions were heard separately by two different division benches of the High Court and their decisions were conflicting.

Hence, the specially constituted full bench heard the petitions and decided that as part of the selection process for direct recruitment, the employer has the power to apportion marks towards service rendered on a temporary basis. The marks, so apportioned, shall not be more than 20 out of a total of 100, or not more than 20 per cent.

Don't privatise ordnance factories: Uttam to Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

State Congress president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, the Nalgonda MP, on Saturday appealed to the defence ministry to reconsider the decision to corporatise and privatise ordnance factories.

In a short intervention during a debate in the Lok Sabha on Saturday, Reddy said that finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had on May 16 announced the decision to corporatise 41 ordnance factories under the Atma Nirbhar initiative.

Maintaining that this was completely ill-advised, he pointed out that the three main federations of ordnance workers, representing 80,000 permanent employees and lakhs of contract workers, had opposed the move. Telling the House that the three federations have argued that a corporate entity would not be able to survive the unique market environment of defence products which has an unstable demand and supply dynamics, Reddy said "I appeal to the government not to embark on a path which will destroy the 200-year legacy of government factories."

He said that the Congress would adopt a micro-level constituency centric approach to reach out to the people. He said that the main objective should be to get a majority of votes in all 34,360 polling booths in the 2023 elections.

Tagore made it clear that the party does not differentiate between seniors and juniors and involves seniors in all decision-making processes.

He said, "We are not out of the game. We must fight the battle with the right perception. There should be continuous communication among all leaders. Winning each booth is important and

it can be achieved through booth-centric work, cadre-building and discipline. Although we are a national party, we must think regionally."

Tagore said that the Congress had granted statehood for Telangana state, but the people did not gain anything as only one family had been taking away the entire wealth. This should be exposed to gain people's support, he said.

While introducing the day's participants to Tagore, the TPCC president said that it was the second meeting to facilitate interaction between senior leaders with the new AICC in charge.

The leaders discussed the strategy for the Dubbaka byelections, elections for the GHMC and Warangal and Khammam corporations and two the graduates constituencies of Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam and Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahbubnagar.

CLP leader Malla Bhatti Vikramarka, N.S. Bose Raju, Srinivasan Krishnan, Ponnam Prabhakar, J. Kusum Kumar, Renuka Chowdhary, Dr. J. Geetha Reddy, R. Damodar Reddy, Marri Shashidhar Reddy, attended the meeting held by Tagore.

Tagore gives tips to Congress leaders

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Manickam Tagore, in-charge of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee on Saturday urged party leaders to adopt a constituency-centric approach in order to win the next Assembly elections.

Tagore, along with TPCC president Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, held a video conference with AICC secretaries, candidates in the Lok Sabha elections, former ministers and senior leaders on Saturday.

He said that the Congress would adopt a micro-level constituency centric approach to reach out to the people. He said that the main objective should be to get a majority of votes in all 34,360 polling booths in the 2023 elections.

Tagore made it clear that the party does not differentiate between seniors and juniors and involves seniors in all decision-making processes.

He said, "We are not out of the game. We must fight the battle with the right perception. There should be continuous communication among all leaders. Winning each booth is important and

Centre praises state for managing virus

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 19

Covid-19 cases are "declining" in the state, the government told the Centre on Saturday.

The government said that it is "keeping a close watch" on the Covid-19 situation and is "fully geared up to handle the pandemic even as the number of positive cases have started declining."

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, who was taking part in a video conference with Union commerce minister Piyush Goel and Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, said that "special focus is being laid on managing the situation in the districts."

He said that the government

had ramped up testing. RT-PCR tests were being done on every person who was found symptomatic after undergoing a Rapid Antigen Test. The government, he said, has formulated a strategy to equip all beds with oxygen facilities.

Gauba complimented the state for "managing the pandemic well and maintaining low case fatality compared to the national average," according to a government news release.

Making available Covid-19 tests at PHCs, UHCs and Basthi Dawakhana was also appreciated by Gauba.

Telangana state has managed to keep its Covid numbers low even as the disease is raging everywhere else.

IN BRIEF

WEAPONS SENT BY DRONE FOR LeT MILITANTS

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, SEPT. 19

Jammu and Kashmir police on Saturday claimed arresting three Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants from frontier district of Rajouri and said that the weapons and cash recovered from them were sent from across the border and dropped by a drone in an area close to the Line of Control (LoC).

DG police, Dilbag Singh, who was on a visit to Rajouri, told reporters that the arrested LeT cadres were residents of Kashmir Valley who had travelled all the way to the frontier region to receive a weapon and cash consignment from across the LoC.

“Yesterday (Friday), the trio was chased by the jawans of J&K police and the Army’s 38 Rashtriya Rifles unit, after which one of them hurled a grenade at the forces which luckily didn’t explode. They were subsequently caught alive”, he said.

He added, “All the three are affiliated with the Lashkar outfit and were in touch with their handlers from across and had received weapons and cash through drones.”

The weapons seized from the accused identified as Rahil Bashir, Amir Jaan and Younis Wani include two AK 56 rifles, two pistols, four grenades and Rs. 1,00,000 cash, the police said.

The police chief reiterated that charge that Pakistan “is trying hard to keep the pot of militancy boiling in Rajouri and Poonch districts”.

He said “Also, this weapon consignment and cash were aimed at fuelling militancy in Kashmir Valley.”

He further said that this was the first attempt of aerial weapon drop on the LoC and second in the recent past as earlier one drone was shot along with weapons by the BSF on the International Border in Samba district. “We are aware of the challenge and will evolve a counter strategy to foil these bids,” he said in reply to a question.

IGP (Jammu range) Mukesh Singh said that a huge consignment of heroine weighing 7 kilograms and worth ₹7 crore was seized by the police on September 14.

“The arrest of one person from Kulgam (district in Kashmir Valley) in this connection led to the arrest of three more from Poonch district (bordering LoC) on whose integration 4 more kilograms of heroin worth ₹4 crore was recovered besides IED making material and a pen drive,” he said.

He added that in the pen drive “there were indications and training sessions as to how an IED can be prepared.”

Meanwhile, the police here said that two “terrorist associates” were arrested by it from Awantipora and Khrew areas of southern Pulwama district. “Incriminating material of proscribed terrorist outfits Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Al-Badr has been recovered from the arrested terror associates,” the police said in a statement here.

41 ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL DIED OF COVID-19

New Delhi, Sept. 19: The coronavirus pandemic has killed 41 and infected 22,353 armed forces personnel, according to details provide by the government in Rajya Sabha on Saturday.

Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik said a series of measures have been put in place to check the spread of the coronavirus infection in the armed forces which included a campaign on preventive measures.

“The total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases amongst serving armed forces personnel is 22,353,” he said, adding 41 personnel died of the infection till date.

“In line with the international and national treatment protocols for Covid-19, armed forces hospitals have a wide array of anti-viral drugs (Favipiravir and Remdesivir),” he said.

The minister said two hospitals in the armed forces are using plasma therapy for treatment of severely ill patients.

To a separate question, Naik said the strength of women officers serving in the Indian Air Force is 1,875.

“Of these, 10 women officers are fighter pilots and 18 women officers are navigators,” he said. Naik said women fighter pilots are inducted and deployed in IAF as per strategic needs and operational requirements within the laid down policy.

SINGLE-DAY RECOVERIES EXCEED FRESH COVID CASES

New Delhi, Sept. 19: “In a landmark global achievement”, India has overtaken the US and become the top country in terms of Covid-19 recoveries, the health ministry said.

The country has reported the highest number of recoveries with 42,08,431 patients having recovered from the disease so far, pushing the national recovery rate to nearly 80 per cent, while the case fatality rate has further dropped to 1.61 per cent, the ministry said.

India’s single-day recovery outstripped the number of new infections as nearly 96,000 people recuperated from the coronavirus, even as the total caseload went past 53 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data. -PTI

End of an era



Decommissioned aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy, INS Viraat during its last journey from Naval Dockyard to Alang in Gujarat, where it will be dismantled, in Mumbai on Saturday. For Navy veterans who watched the huge vessel being towed away by a tug boat, it was an emotional moment as they stood near the Gateway of India, waving at the once ‘floating town’, aboard which they spent the best years of their career. The aircraft carrier served the Indian Navy for 29 years before being decommissioned in March 2017. It had served in the UK’s Royal Navy as HMS Hermes and was named INS Viraat after being inducted in the Indian Navy in 1987. Alang-based Shree Ram group bought it for ₹38.54 crore at an auction. Viraat will be dismantled at the Alang ship breaking yard. The ship will be scrapped in 9 to 12 months.

NIA arrests 9 Al-Qaeda terrorists from WB, Kerala

Among those arrested are computer science student and guest workers

RAJIB CHOWDHURI & PRANMOY BRAHMACHARI | DC KOLKATA/BERHAMPORE, SEPT. 19

In a major crackdown on terror, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) busted a ‘Pakistan sponsored module’ of Al Qaeda and arrested its nine members from West Bengal and Kerala early Saturday for allegedly planning terror attacks in New Delhi and other parts of the country.

Among them, six accused including two college students and two migrant workers were caught during a marathon raid at their homes in various parts of Murshidabad which earlier came under the NIA’s scanner during its probe in the Burdwan blast which blew the lid off Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh network active in West Bengal six years ago around this time.

The arrested have been identified as Najmus Sakib (20), Abu Sufiyan (44), Mainul Mondal (30), Leu Yean Ahmed (32), Al Mamun Kamal (30) and Atiturr Rehman (20).

This was also the first time when such a large number of accused of terror were picked up simultaneously in the state.

Najmus is a second-year student of computer science at Basantapur Engineering College in Domkol of the district while Atiturr is a first year BA student of Karimpur Pannadevi College.

Mainul, a guest worker, had returned home at Jalangi in the district from Kerala three months ago. Like him Mamun also worked as a mason in Bengaluru earlier. But he returned home two years ago.

The NIA said that it initiated a case RC-

31/2020/NIA/DLI on September 11 after learning “about an inter-state module of Al-Qaeda operatives at various locations in India including West-Bengal and Kerala.”

It said, “The group was planning to undertake terrorist attacks at vital installations in India with an aim to kill people and strike terror in their minds. Large quantity of incriminating materials including digital devices, documents, jihadi literature, sharp weapons, country-made firearms, a locally fabricated body armour, articles and literature used for making home-made explosive devices have been seized from their possession.”

The NIA added, “As per preliminary investigation, these individuals were radicalised by Pakistan-based Al-Qaeda terrorists on social media and were motivated to undertake attacks at multiple places including the National Capital Region. For this purpose, the module was actively indulging in fund raising and a few members of gang were planning to travel to New Delhi to procure arms and ammunition. These arrests have pre-empted possible terrorist attacks in various parts of the country.”

The six accused, brought from Murshidabad, were produced at the NIA court in Kolkata which remanded them in police custody.

The arrests have come as a shot in the arm for the BJP to turn it into a major political issue and attack the ruling Trinamul Congress ahead of the Assembly elections.

From state BJP chief Dilip Ghosh to central leaders like Rahul Sinha, all tore into chief minister Mamata Banerjee’s rule.

Mr Ghosh, the

Presence of Qaeda operatives among workers causes concern

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT. 19

The arrest of three Al Qaeda operatives in Ernakulam district has set alarm bells ringing for the state Intelligence and police.

In a pre-dawn operation, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) nabbed Murshid Hassan, Iyakub Biswas and Mosaraf Hossen, all hailing from West Bengal.

What has alarmed the state police is their presence among the guest workers in Perambavoor which has the highest concentration of guest workers in Kerala.

The Al Qaeda operators were staying in Perumbavoor town and Kalamassery in Ernakulam district.

While Murshid Hassan was arrested from a labour camp at Pathalam near Kalamassery where he was staying along with five others, while Iyakub Biswas and

Midnapore MP, alleged, “This proves that the anti-national activities are taking place mostly in Bengal and Kerala. The present government here does not give importance to national security. The TMC is allowing Islamic fundamentalism for its votebank politics to stay in power. As a result the country’s security is at stake.” Mr Sinha, BJP national secretary, said, “Bengal has become a safe haven for the terrorists because of lack of actions of the present state government which should shun appease-

ment politics.” Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar also did not miss the opportunity. Describing his role of ‘In service of WB’ he tweeted, “NIA busts Al-Qaeda module in Murshidabad, WB. DGP on this alarming affairs @MamataOfficial to me “West Bengal police firmly adheres to the path laid down by law. There is no discrimination for or against anyone in an extra legal sense.”

He added, “State has become home to illegal bomb making that has potential to unsettle

democracy. Police @MamataOfficial busy in carrying out political errands and taking on opposition. Those at helm @WBPolice cannot escape their accountability for this alarming decline in law and order.”

Rejecting the BJP’s allegations, senior TMC MP Sougata Roy, however, pointed fingers on the Border Security Force. He questioned its lack of vigil at the Indo-Bangla border which, he blamed, allowed the terrorists into the state from neighbouring country.

According to the state police, the three were arrested from Perumbavoor. Murshid Hassan had taken a house on rent from one Nasser about two months ago and started living there. Though the NIA had reportedly alerted the state police on a possible action just in case local force was warranted at any stage, the central agency did not specify about the case that it was following up. The local police was informed only after the arrest of the three operatives. Mursihid was taken into custody at around 2 am. Parallel raids were carried out in Perambavoor to arrest

proceedings for at least six months. The six-month period is ending next week.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2020, seeks to replace the ordinance issued in June, was passed by a voice vote after a brief discussion. Replying to the debate, Sitharaman said the suspension of provisions will end next week.

“At the moment, amendment to the Code gives me a provision to only extend till one year. If at all, because it is coming to an end on September 25, September 24 itself we have to make an announcement about what is going to happen. But even if I do, it means by March it should be ending,” she said.

According to Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and

Industry, the Valley’s economy alone suffered losses to the tune of over ₹42,000 crore in the past over 13 months.

“This is just a good beginning, may not all that’s needed to salvage J&K’s economy which fell off a cliff due to the post-August 5, 2019 lockdown and then ‘lockdown within lockdown’ left it in a complete shambles. It is for the first time in about 14 months that something good is being done. Let us appreciate it and hope that the Centre will also come up with a good package to bail out J&K’s economy,” said Sheikh Ashiq, the outgoing president of KCCL.

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Scribe was passing info to China: Cops

New Delhi, Sept. 19: Delhi Police on Saturday said arrested freelance journalist Rajeev Sharma was allegedly passing sensitive information about India’s border strategy and Army deployment to Chinese intelligence.

At a press conference, Special Cell DCP Sanjeev Kumar Yadav said Sharma was writing on defence-related issues for some Indian media organisations, as well as China’s *Global Times*.

He was allegedly contacted by Chinese Intelligence agents in 2016. Sharma was also in contact with some

Chinese intelligence officer, the police officer claimed, adding the freelance journalist got “₹40 lakh in one-and-a-half years and he was getting USD 1,000 for each information”.

Sharma was arrested September 14 based on inputs from central intelligence. Police have also been classified defence documents from him, the DCP said.

He said that a Chinese woman and her Nepalese associate have also been arrested for allegedly paying Sharma large amounts of money routed through shell companies. —PTI

NCB busts narco ring, seizes drugs sourced from Ethiopia

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, SEPT. 19

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) busted a drugs racket seizing 670 gram cocaine from Delhi that was sourced from Addis Ababa and arrested accused persons from Mumbai. The officials said that the drugs, concealed inside a thread roll, were making way to high profile users in Mumbai and the buyers are also under the scanner.

The NCB had earlier seized a parcel at the Import Custom Examination Area in Delhi, which had originated from Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. The said parcel was declared as tailoring material samples and on examination, 670 gm of cocaine was found concealed in the same.

To unearth the drug syndicate, the NCB officials replaced the contraband with a dummy as per the provisions and clearances from the NCB chief.

“The controlled delivery mechanism empowered NCB to keep the parcel delivery alive, even after seizing the contraband and replacing the same with the dummy parcel.

Subsequently, the KYC of the consignee were verified and the team reached

Mumbai. The operation was successfully executed and the consignee was apprehended from Vasai,” said an NCB official.

The accused was identified as S. Ghangale, who was found to have close association with few high-profile drug traffickers in Mumbai. The network of these peddlers operate under the guise of property dealers, construction contractors while dealing in drugs.

It has been found that the group also involves DJs and other party organizers, who are connected to the party circuit in Mumbai. The NCB is in the process of getting a transit remand of Ghangale from a Delhi Court.

Earlier the NCB conducted pan India raids and seized around three kilos of cannabis. The officials said that the operations on the Andhra Pradesh – Orissa border, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Assam and arrested 17 persons. The agency said that several teams began ‘intensive operation’ at the three locations from where 2,795 kilos of cannabis were seized. The officials apprehended the operatives of the narcotics substances which includes source, receivers and traffickers, NCB officials said.

J&K Govt announces ₹1,350 cr package

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, SEPT. 19

The J&K government on Saturday announced a ₹1,350 crore package for revival of businesses in the Union Territory. Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, while unveiling the package at a press conference here said it would help the J&K’s business sector “to tide over the problems.”

The UT’s business community welcomed the package but said it was “too little” given the magnitude of losses it has suffered particularly since August 5 last year, yet a “good beginning.”

According to Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and



DECCAN
Chronicle

20 SEPTEMBER 2020



Shreevatsa Nevatia

Off the beaten track

Beauty no antidote to
Beirut's legacy of loss

I have developed a strange habit of late. An hour before I sleep, I tune into either BBC or CNN. Having caught up on the day's news, I wait for the foreign voices of TV anchors to first turn into a drone, then into lullaby. I often wake up in the middle of the night to fresh updates of Donald Trump's dangerous shenanigans, but on most days, I do not mind these rude interruptions. Even though my subconscious mind isn't well put together, it is, I tell myself, well informed. On occasion, however, my plans backfire.

A little over a month ago, on August 4, I couldn't fall asleep, no matter how hard I tried. Both the BBC and CNN had begun to flash breaking news, pictures of Beirut's historic port exploding. The television didn't make the blast any less deafening or scary. Hours before the Lebanese government could wrap its head around the cause of the explosion — a large, volatile consignment of ammonium nitrate — reports of devastation had begun trickling in. Houses, storefronts and bystanders had been blown to pieces. The CNN bureau had been destroyed. I was anguished. Beirut is my favourite city in the world.

In 2006, when Israel began pounding Lebanon with bombs, my editor called me and said, "You're going to Beirut." I was only 22, but my boss was one of those rare men who did not see inexperience when he looked at youth, he saw hunger. He was also one of those rare editors who believed that one could only make sense of affairs at home when one understood the world. A war, even if being fought between Israel and a terrorist Hezbollah, had ramifications for us all. To show that violence is futile, he believed, it needed to be widely reported. As I was parachuted into Lebanon, I knew he was right.

For my first few days in Beirut, I embedded myself with the Red Cross. I was asked to shadow Sana'a, a volunteer not much older than me. She translated the Arabic I heard and read. She spoke English with a delectable accent. She was the most beautiful woman I had seen. Even when she took me to meet Fadiya Al Ahmar, I spent more time looking at her than a nearly nine-months pregnant Fadiya, who had been caught in Israeli-Hezbollah crossfire just a few days ago. "I am taking pills to calm myself, knowing they could be dangerous in my present state. I am so frightened my milk will be poison for my baby," the 30-year-old told us. After my interview, Fadiya hugged me tight and cried inconsolably.

Driving into Dahieh, a predominantly Shia suburb in Beirut, the windshield of my car would sometimes be hit by pamphlets that Israeli aircraft would drop from the skies. "Get out or get killed," the flimsy papers would read. Lebanon's youth had begun to take this message seriously. Mohammad, a man I met in Dahieh, a Hezbollah stronghold, said he didn't want take sides in the war: "I like sitting on the fence, it takes less place." Checking into a hotel with his family, Mohammad confided he wanted to move to Europe. Bilaal, a 14-year-old, watched Macaulay Culkin's *Home Alone* once every month. All he wanted was a life in the US. Even in 2006, Lebanon was, sadly, a country you survived or escaped.

Fourteen years ago, Beirut still had wounds that hadn't healed. A 15-year long (1975-1990) civil war had left its people scarred and distrustful. Rafic Hariri, one of Lebanon's beloved prime ministers, had been assassinated in 2005. Israel and Hezbollah were only compounding Lebanese trauma. All of 1,191 civilians are believed to have died in the 2006 Lebanon War, but the number of people who left the country as a result of it is estimated to be much, much higher. In recent years, a financial crisis has brought Lebanon to its knees. With inflation above 50 per cent, the life savings of several Lebanese people have now been erased. A banking scandal has made it difficult for many to access funds or take loans.

The nostalgia of tourists and travellers is inevitably myopic. It misrepresents both the past and present. When I think of Beirut, I remember the Rauche Rocks that I could see from the city's exquisite beach. I long to return to the Roman Baths in downtown Beirut and walk past the Parisian cafes that surround Nejme Square. When I was 22, I believed that beauty and disaster could coexist, but watching the Port of Beirut being blown to smithereens, I knew that beauty is only a ruse. Rather than help us ease another's pain, it only tries to make us forget their suffering altogether. Sana'a had told me, "I don't care how bad it gets. Beirut is my home. I'll do all that I can to protect it." I imagine her fighting alone.

Shreevatsa Nevatia is a Kolkata-based journalist and the author of How to Travel Light: My Memories of Madness and Melancholia



Hope was never easy to find in Beirut, but the destruction of its port might make it extinct altogether

Subhani SEAT SHARING...

How a 'friendly' media
hurts govt's credibility

Pavan K. Varna

Chanakya's View

Rajat Sharma, who runs India TV, once told me a story about Atal Behari Vajpayee. The story deserves to be known more widely, so I hope that Rajat, who is a friend, will not mind if I share it. India TV has a very popular show called "Aap Ki Adalat", which Rajat anchors. A prominent personality from any walk of life is invited to the show, and literally put in the dock to be interrogated. Once, Atalji, as Prime Minister, agreed to be in the dock.

The interaction went off very well, or so Rajat thought. But as Atalji was leaving, he said, "Main aapse naraaz hoon: I am not very happy with you. Come and see me at my residence." Rajat was apprehensive that he had perhaps been too aggressive in his questioning, or said something that the PM did not like. In any case, at the first opportunity, he took an appointment, and was promptly given one. When they met, Atalji was gracious as ever, but told Rajat bluntly the reason for his *naraazgi* or unhappiness. "Aapne mujhe bohat aasani se chhod diya. You did not ask me the tough questions, and let me off lightly. That was not good of you."

There is a moral in this story, both for our current ruling party, and for some parts of our media. I don't think that leaders who welcome a more open interaction with the media, including sometimes unscripted — even hostile — questioning, lose their believability.

In fact, they enhance it. Similarly, if the media stops being blindly supportive of the ruling party's agenda, it does not lose its credibility. It only increases it.

I often wonder why the BJP's media managers don't understand this simple truth. It is said — apocryphally perhaps — that the BBC has a maxim: You must admit your minor truths if you want your major lies to be believed. With so many "pliant" channels openly toeing the ruling party's line, the BJP is soon going to ensure that no one anymore fully believes what these channels are saying. Intelligent media management requires the ability to propagate your point of view in the midst of a counter-viewpoint, not flat footedly have that viewpoint muted or shouted over. People from one generation before would remember when nobody believed what Doordarshan said. To get the "real" news they would tune in to BBC. But, Doordarshan was a government run broadcaster. What else could it do? That certainly is not the constraint of our non-governmental

When open bias crosses a certain threshold it endangers its own outreach. We saw this happening in the ongoing case of Sudarshan TV's 'Bindas Bol'. The channel was rightly hauled up by the Supreme Court.

Nothing is worse for media management than to have a situation where even your truths are discounted or dismissed because of the lack of credibility of those disseminating it.

media. In fact, the PM would do well to be a little more accessible to the public through interactions with the independent media, interactions that are not a one-way monologue.

When open bias crosses a certain threshold it endangers its own outreach. We saw this happening in the ongoing case of Sudarshan TV's "Bindas Bol" programme which alleged a "jihadi" conspiracy in the supposed increase of Muslim candidates qualifying for the civil services. The channel was rightly hauled up by the Supreme Court for its hateful, hurtful and dubious findings. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said: "While we respect freedom of media, let this message go to the media as well that any community shouldn't become a target. Ultimately we all exist as a nation, which must be cohesive and not against any community." The SC imposed an injunction on the broadcast of the programme, and called for a more robust mechanism for self-regulation in the media. Referring to several provisions under the law that are against hate speech and incitement of religious hatred, the Court specifically asked the regulatory powers of the News Broadcasters Association to be strengthened. At present, it felt, the NBA is "toothless", with several channels not its member and,

therefore, not under its jurisdiction.

Freedom of speech is a sacrosanct right guaranteed under the Constitution. But this freedom is neither limitless, nor is it one-sided. In a democracy, there must be space for those who wish to dissent, disagree or interrogate the viewpoint of the government. The media is a vital instrument in ensuring that such a liberal milieu of free debate and questioning exists. The BJP's proclivity to encourage and patronise only those "friendly" media outlets that unreservedly espouse its point of view, is counterproductive. I have been the official spokesperson of the ministry of external affairs, the Press secretary to the President of India, and the national spokesperson of the JD(U). Nothing is worse for media management than to have a situation where even your truths are discounted or dismissed because of the lack of credibility of those disseminating it.

Atal Behari Vajpayee was, I am sure, not averse to good media coverage of his government. All leaders, and all governments, want that. But, he was intelligent enough to understand that "good" coverage means very little if it lacks credibility. If the perception is that certain media outlets just blindly eulogise the government, more and more people will devalue what they say. Such outlets may be watched, but may not be believed. That is why he told Rajat Sharma that he should have been a little tougher in his questioning. It is something that the BJP would do well to ponder about.

The writer, an author and former diplomat, is in politics. The views expressed are personal.

LETTERS

CONDOLENCES

I am shocked that a 12-year-old girl was washed away in a drain near her house while having a joyride on her bicycle (12-yr-old washed away in drain, DC, Sept. 19). It is not easy for parents to bear this pain. I offer my sincere condolences to her parents Abhijit Kapuria and Sukanya Kapuria.

Zakaria Sultan
Hyderabad

EGOISTIC RULERS

The proposed new Parliament building at Delhi, new Secretariat in Hyderabad and three capitals for AP are some examples of how ruling parties show hatred for their predecessors. The question is, whose money are they spending for satisfying their egos?

K.R.K.S. Murthy
Hyderabad

UNILATERAL

The Telangana Assembly session was declared adjourned sine die because a few administrative staff tested positive for Covid-19. If such a rule was applied to other offices, most of them will have to be closed. Question Hour was removed in Parliament citing the pandemic. Instead of finding different ways to run the sessions, governments are trying to abdicate their responsibility under the pretext of Covid-19. This is not correct.

G. Thirupathaiah
Hyderabad

ESCAPISM

Democracy demands debate and discussions. The ruling party escapes from the obligations of replying to Opposition's queries by blaming Jawaharlal Nehru or Congress corruption (*Anurag's remark sets off LS furore, DC, Sept. 19*). Hope wisdom prevails and the government answers queries of both the Opposition parties and the media.

P.R. Ravinder
Hyderabad

THANK YOU, KTR

The Christian community is grateful to IT minister K.T. Rama Rao for giving an assurance on the construction of the Christian Bhavan and appreciating the work done by the community.

P.J. David
Hyderabad

MUIVAH'S LOYALTY

The intelligence inputs that NSCN (I/M) is being used by Chinese to delay the Naga peace process is a damning evidence against Muivah. (*Chinese intel mounts pressure on Muivah, DC, Sept. 19*). He should stop having anything to do with China which has mobilised troops at Ladakh. He ought to be grateful to India.

K. Srinivasa Charyulu
Hyderabad

DRUGS IN B'WOOD

Drug abuse in Bollywood should be handled seriously by involving people and civil society organisations. Jaya Bachchan and others should not be defensive about it as it was a different industry then.

T. Kailash Diya
Hyderabad

Email your letters to info@deccanmail.com, editor@deccanmail.com. You can also send them to Editor, Deccan Chronicle, 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad-500 003.

Kangana's vitriol corrodes Bollywood reputation

Avenging angel

The Kangana Ranaut saga has upset and demoralised Bollywood. Already badly hurt by the Covid-19 pandemic that is depriving lakhs of their livelihood, the "drugs society" charge is hurting the entertainment industry further. Some former stars wonder why Kangana, an accomplished actress, is speaking with vengeance and making it look as if the drug menace is confined to film industry wallahs. Does it have to do with an ugly episode from Kangana's own life when a superstar and other A-listers had cornered her badly?

Desperately seeking 'Suzy'

Others acknowledge that Bollywood cliques have occasionally concocted their own narcotic for personal consumption. These concoctions are given informal names. One mild drug was reportedly called "Suzy". Who is Suzy? Is she some style trendsetter who habitually hangs out with other A-listers? Nobody knows for sure.

Rajnath comes second

Kangana Ranaut's Mumbai visit was followed by her war of words with co-actress-

es such as Urmila Matondkar. The media frenzy was so extraordinary that it even rattled BJP communication personnel who struggled to make space on TV news for defence minister Rajnath Singh's important statement on China. Even some anchors and channels considered sympathetic to the ruling establishment were reluctant to run political news in place of the saucy Jaya Bachchan-Kangana-Urmila saga.

They still love Sidhu

Shiromani Akali Dal minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal's resignation from the Narendra Modi government over the new farming bill is sought to be underplayed. But informed sources say there is much more happening as part of the run-up to the early-2022 Punjab Assembly polls. While both the Akalis and the BJP have gone on record to say that all is well and that the SAD would continue in the NDA, in private conversation some BJP leaders say the SAD has become a political liability for the BJP in Congress-ruled Punjab. They recall that even in 2016, Narendra Modi and Amit Shah had contemplated breaking ties and going at it alone in the 2017 Assembly polls but Arun Jaitley had argued in favour of the SAD. Interestingly, some BJP leaders view Navjot Singh Sidhu — who had left the BJP



By WAQYANAWIS

and is currently a disgruntled MLA in the Captain Amrinder Singh-led Congress in Punjab — as an asset for 2022. You heard this here first.

No more corridor scoops

For journalists covering the Parliament session, Covid-19 is posing problems.

Incredible as it may sound, they and officials have to get their nose drilled for RT-PCR and antigen tests on a daily basis, or each time they enter Parliament. At the functional level there are many handicaps. Senior scribes cannot meet (or run into in Parliament's corridors) leaders who used to provide valuable information, leads or just gossip.

Waiting for Sonia

During the UPA era, Gurdeep Singh Sappal was everywhere. A political aide of former vice-president Hamid Ansari and heading Rajya Sabha TV, Sappal had wide access. Today, his independent TV venture, Swaraj Express, has conked without a trace. Sappal has not given up hope. He, like many others, is anxiously waiting for Sonia Gandhi to return and looking for a meaty role in the AICC media department or party's "War Room" at 15, Gurudwara Rakabgunj Marg. Some Congress leaders feel that if failure and insignificance act in Sappal's favour then he may bounce back.

The writer is a keen observer of the goings-on in backrooms of power

Cease-fire ordered
in Jordan

NEW DELHI, Sept. 19. Cairo Radio has announced that King Hussein of Jordan has asked his forces to cease-fire, Radio BBC reports.

Baghdad Radio announced that Palestinian Commandos have rejected the cease fire, the Radio report added. A.P. adds from Beirut: The order to cease fire, from 2130 IST, came from Field Marshal Majali and was addressed to all army, police and security units of the Royal forces.

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle It was broadcast by Radio Amman. Marshal Majali ordered his men to stop firing "except in dealing with sources of fire hindering your humanitarian duties." The Palestinian resistance central committee announced it would never accept a ceasefire "until we have liquidated all the murderers and all the traitors." Baghdad Radio said. Meanwhile, defections were reported to have taken place in the Palestinian guerrillas and Jordanian Government troops fighting in Amman.

SHORT TAKES

THOUSANDS JOIN
DEMOCRACY
RALLY IN THAI

Bangkok, Sept. 19: Tens of thousands of pro-democracy protesters massed close to Thailand's royal palace on Saturday, in a huge rally calling for PM Prayut Chan-O-Cha to step down and demanding reforms to the monarchy.

The kingdom has seen nearly daily gatherings of youth-led groups since mid-July calling for the resignation of Prayut, the former army chief behind the 2014 coup, and a complete overhaul of his administration. Some are also demanding reforms to Thailand's ultra-wealthy and powerful monarchy — a once-taboo topic in the country due to its tough royal defamation laws.

The burgeoning movement, partly inspired by Hong Kong's pro-democracy protests, remains largely leaderless.

But the weekend's demonstration is organised by students of Bangkok's Thammasat University — a group that has been among the most vocal about the royal family's role in Thailand.

2 KILLED, 14 HURT
IN SHOOTING AT
U.S. PARTY

Washington, Sept. 19: Two people were killed and 14 wounded early on Saturday in a shooting at a backyard party in Rochester, New York state, police said.

Officers responding to reports of gunfire in the area found a "chaotic scene" with about 100 people running in various directions, interim police chief Mark Simmons told reporters.

"In total we have 16 confirmed victims of shooting. And I'm sad to announce that two of the 16 received a fatal wound," he said.

Those killed — one man, one woman — were both between 18 and 22 years of age, and had not been formally identified, he said.

The 14 wounded had been taken to hospital and were not in a life-threatening condition, he said. No arrests have been made so far and police could not say if more than one shooter was involved. "For our community to have to deal with this tragedy ... is unfortunate and shameful," Simmons said.

FIREFIGHTER
DIES BATTLING
BLAZE

Juniper Hills (US), Sept. 19: The death of a firefighter on the lines of a wildfire east of Los Angeles was under investigation on Friday as another blaze to the north burned homes in a small community on the edge of the Mojave Desert.

The death occurred Thursday in San Bernardino National Forest as crews battled the El Dorado Fire about 75 miles (120 kilometers) east of L.A., the US Forest Service said in a statement.

The fire erupted earlier this month from a smoke-generating pyrotechnic device used by a couple to reveal their baby's gender, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire, said. The name of the firefighter was being withheld until family members are notified. "Our deepest sympathies are with the family, friends and fellow firefighters during this time," Forest Service spokesperson Zach Behrens said in the statement.

TORRENTIAL RAIN
HITS SOUTHERN
FRANCE

Marseille, Sept. 19: One person was reported missing on Saturday and dozens faced evacuation from their homes after torrential rain hit southern France, authorities said.

The Gard region, where firefighters reported the missing person, was on red alert after as much as 350 millimetres (13.5 inches) of rain fell in parts of the Cevennes mountain range on the edge of the Massif Central.

Helicopters carried out two rescue missions and some 300 firefighters were mobilised for three further operations as some 200 people were led to safety in two villages.

The mayor of one commune, Anduze, some 70 kilometres (45 miles) north of Montpellier, told AFP around 100 houses on low ground would have to be evacuated.

The adjacent region of Languedoc was also hit by severe storms as meteorological authorities warned of more downpours to come across much of the deep south.

US Liberal icon Ginsburg dies at 87

Flags fly at half-mast as crucial vacancy expected to set off pitched political battle during Prez polls

Washington, Sept. 19: US Supreme Court Justice and liberal icon Ruth Bader Ginsburg died Friday, opening a crucial vacancy on the high court expected to set off a pitched political battle at the peak of the presidential campaign.

Affectionately known as the Notorious RBG, the 87-year-old Ginsburg was the oldest of nine Supreme Court justices.

She died after a fight with pancreatic cancer, the court announced, saying she passed away "surrounded by her family at her home in Washington, DC." Coming just 46 days before an election in which President Donald Trump lags his Democratic rival Joe Biden in the polls, the vacancy offers the Republican a chance to

lock in a conservative majority at the court for decades to come.

Trump issued a statement praising Ginsburg as a "titan of the law," but gave no indication whether he intended to press ahead with a nomination. Accolades flowed in for the pioneering Jewish justice.

"Our Nation has lost a jurist of historic stature," said Chief Justice John Roberts.

Trump's predecessor Barack Obama said in a tweet that Ginsburg "fought to the end, through her cancer, with unwavering faith in our democracy and its ideals." Biden said she was "an American hero, a giant of legal doctrine, and a relentless voice in the pursuit of that highest American ideal: Equal



Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Justice Under Law." In Washington, hundreds of tearful mourners laid flowers in front of the Supreme Court, where the diminutive Ginsburg sat for 27 years — even taking arguments and issuing opinions from her hospital bed after repeated bouts of illness over the past two years.

US flags flew at half-mast on each side of the court building. People lit candles on the steps of the court while others held rainbow flags.

Among the notably young crowd was Erin Drumm, a student at the Catholic University of America.

"I came here because I think RBG represents everything that America should stand for," the 19-year-old said. "She represents the freedom to choose and respect for science and other people regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity or religion."

Taylor Gutierrez, 26, said he wanted to celebrate Ginsburg's achievements, "especially as a gay man knowing that she helped create a more equitable society for us." — *AFP*

Water area festival



A flyboarder performs in Moscow River Channel during a SUP (Stand Up Paddle), Water area festival in Moscow, Russia, on Saturday.

— *AFP*

US envoy wraps up Taiwan visit as China sends more warpalnes

Taipei, Sept. 19: A top US diplomat attended the funeral for former Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui Saturday which featured a eulogy by Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama before wrapping up a visit overshadowed by Chinese military exercises.

China sent more warplanes toward Taiwan for the second day on Saturday.

Keith Krach, undersecretary of state for economic growth, energy and the environment, was the highest-ranking State Department official to visit Taiwan since 1979 when Washington switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing.

The trip, the second high-ranking US visit in as many months, sparked an immediate rebuke from China, which balks at any recognition of Taiwan and has mounted a decades-long policy of marginalising the democratic island.

US Secretary of State

China protests US ban on tech giants, warns of counteraction

Shanghai, Sept. 19: China said on Saturday it had launched a mechanism enabling it to restrict foreign entities, a much-anticipated move seen as retaliation to US penalties against Chinese companies such as telecom giant Huawei.

An announcement by the Ministry of Commerce did not mention any specific foreign entities, but broadly spelled out the factors that could trigger punitive measures, which may include fines, restrictions on import-export business or investment in China, and

the entry of personnel or equipment into the country.

It covers "foreign enterprises, other organisations and individuals", it said. The launch of the "unreliable entities list" ups the ante in the escalating commercial fight with the Trump administration, which has used its own "entity list" to bar Huawei from the US market on national security grounds.

The announcement also came a day after the US ordered a ban on downloads of popular video app TikTok and effectively

Mike Pompeo accused China of "military blustering" as Beijing conducted military exercises on Friday near the Taiwan Strait

Krach's visit.

Chinese fighters and bombers crossed the so-called median line dividing the Strait and entered Taiwan's southwest air

blocked the use of the Chinese super-app WeChat on similar grounds, which prompted a threat by China to strike back.

Beijing would consider sanctions on entities whose activities "harm China's national sovereignty, security, and development interests" or violate "internationally accepted economic and trade rules".

That language closely tracks wording that Beijing has used to repeatedly denounce US actions against Chinese companies. — *AFP*

defence identification zone (ADIZ) for a second straight day on Saturday, Taiwan's defence ministry said as it scrambled fighters in response. — *AFP*

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UK FOREIGN MIN'S
BODYGUARD AXED
AFTER LEAVING
GUN ON PLANE

London, Sept. 19: A bodyguard who was traveling with Britain's foreign secretary has been suspended from duties after he reportedly left a loaded gun on a plane.

British media reported on Saturday that the police protection officer traveling with Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab on a visit to the United States left the pistol on a plane at London's Heathrow Airport on Friday. A cleaner found the weapon, media reports said.

London's Metropolitan Police said the force was aware of "the incident on a flight into the UK on Friday" and "taking this matter extremely seriously".

"The officer involved has since been removed from operational duties whilst an internal investigation into the circumstances is taking place," the police department said on Saturday in a statement. Raab visited Washington this week to speak with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and other officials about Brexit. — *AP*

PAK'S FORMER-PM
NAWAZ SHARIF
MULLING POLITICAL
COMEBACK

Islamabad, Sept. 19: Pakistan's deposed premier Nawaz Sharif is set to make a comeback in active politics following a year-long absence after PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari invited him to virtually attend the Opposition-led multiparty conference aimed at launching a protest movement against the Imran Khan-led government on Sunday.

Sharif, 70, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo, has been living in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treatment. — *PTI*

FILM | FESTIVAL Lindon's French love story, *Spring Blossom* captures the shine and bounce that love brings

What is life? It's that youthful first love, a funeral and a party

SUPARNA SHARMA | DC NEW DELHI, SEPT. 19

"What is youth? A dream. What is love? The content of the dream." These unforgettable lines, by Soren Kierkegaard, appear at the beginning of director Thomas Vinterberg's Danish film, *Another Round*, which is playing at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). But it's almost as if they were written after watching another film that's playing at TIFF — 20-year-old Suzanne Lindon's French love story, *Spring Blossom*.

Lindon is the star of her film. She plays Suzanne, a bored 16-year-old girl in Paris who, on her way to

and from school, lingers a bit in a cobbled, cafe-lined square, her eyes peeled for a 35-year-old dashing actor, Raphaël (Arnaud Valois).

Boys and girls her own age don't interest Suzanne. She wants to be seen, by him.

Raphaël's parked red scooter is an indicator that he's inside the small theatre rehearsing a play. She doesn't know that he too is bored. She doesn't know that sometimes he is asked to play an Oak tree.

Spring Blossom follows Suzanne everywhere — when she's with her friends, at home with her parents, or out with Raphaël.

The film's story, which Lindon wrote when she was 15, celebrates the

A still from the movie *Another Round*.

heady concoction of uncontrollable joy, chuckles and tingles in a young mind and body while negotiating first love. It captures the shine and bounce that love brings, as well as the overwhelming confusion before that first breakfast date, and the shy, awkward moments at that date with the sort of lyrical swaying that the young in love are prone to.

As Raphaël too begins to fall in love with Suzanne, they are locked in a moment. And just as she likes to linger in that square, Suzanne wants to linger in that moment too, sipping grenadine and lemonade.

Usually, love stories have trauma, drama, villains, loss. There is no turmoil, loss in *Spring Blossom*. Just the fear of losing that

A still from the movie *Spring Blossom*.

moment, that love.

Vinterberg's *Another Round* is about having lived those moments and then lost them to a job, a family, a house.

The film tells the story of four high school teachers of whom Martin (Mads Mikkelsen) is most obviously struck by a sadness that's taken hold of his soul.

"Am I boring?" Martin

pick Ginsburg's successor.

"President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate," McConnell, a chief ally of the president in Congress, said in a statement shortly after Ginsburg's death was announced by the court.

The move would be in direct opposition to Ginsburg's reported dying wish that she not be replaced "until a new president is installed" in January 2021.

Such a step would be unprecedented in modern times — and is certain to infuriate Democrats who

have already called for McConnell to wait to bring a nomination to the floor until at least January, when control of the White House and Senate could change. "The voters should pick the president, and the president should pick the justice for the Senate to consider," Biden told reporters after learning of Ginsburg's death.

"This was the position the Republican Senate took in 2016 when there were almost 10 months to go before the election. That's the position the United States Senate must take today." — *AFP*

Iran vows 'hit'
on all involved
in US killing

Tehran, Sept. 19: The chief of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard threatened on Saturday to go after everyone who had a role in a top general's January killing during a US drone strike in Iraq.

The guard's website quoted Gen. Hossein Salami as saying, "Mr. Trump! Our revenge for martyrdom of our great general is obvious, serious and real."

US President Donald Trump warned this week that Washington would harshly respond to any Iranian attempts to take revenge for the death of Gen. Qassem Soleimani, tweeting that "if they hit us in any way, any form, written instructions already done we're going to hit them 1000 times harder."

The president's warning came in response to a report that Iran was plotting to assassinate the US ambassador to South Africa in retaliation for Soleimani's killing at Baghdad's airport at the

beginning of the year. "We took out the world's number one terrorist and the mass murderer of American troops and many, many troops and many people all over the world," Trump said.

"Qasem Soleimani is dead. He's dead. Bad guy. Bad guy. Very bad guy." Salami rejected the report of an Iranian plot to assassinate Ambassador Lana Marks, but made clear that Iran intends to avenge the general's death.

"Do you think we hit a female ambassador in return to our martyred brother?" the general said. "We will hit those who had direct and indirect roles. You should know that everybody who had role in the event will be hit, and this is a serious message. We do prove everything in practice." In January, Iran launched a ballistic missile attack targeting US soldiers in Iraq in response to the fatal drone strike. — *AP*

Don releases \$13 bn
aid for Puerto Rico

Washington, Sept. 19 (AP) President Donald Trump announced the release Friday of \$13 billion in assistance to repair years-old hurricane damage in Puerto Rico and pledged to restore its economy, setting aside his past bitter treatment of the island and its leaders as he courts Puerto Rican voters in the US, particularly in the crucial swing state of Florida.

Trump has spent much of his administration blasting Puerto Rican officials as corrupt and inept, and he has opposed spending to rebuild a power grid and other infrastructure that was wiped out by the Hurricane Maria in September 2017. He's now portraying himself as the territory's best friend.

"I'm the best thing that ever happened to Puerto Rico," he said at a White House press conference, "no one even close." Residents of Puerto Rico, a US territory of more than 3 million people, cannot vote in the general election.

But there are more people of Puerto Rican descent on the mainland than on the island, and they could play a key role in the November 3 vote. Former Vice President Joe Biden has also sought support from Puerto Ricans, recently releasing a recovery plan for the territory and visiting central Florida.

The region has one of the largest concentrations of people from the island on the US mainland, including many who fled the devastation of Hurricane Maria. — *AP*

He tells the others, and on Nikolaj's suggestion and pretence of taking notes for research, they all begin taking a few swigs before and during work. It helps initially, to smile, to take more interest, to reconnect with themselves, and to connect with others. But there's temptation to drink more, and soon some relationships, lives begin to capsize.

Another Round is funny, sad, real, bizarre, scary, warm. And it's message is simple — life is both, a funeral and a party. That's why it ends on a glorious note, with a dance sequence by Mads Mikkelsen that will add two years to your lifespan.

SHORT TAKES

Hari stuns Carlsen before four losses

Chennai: Indian Grandmaster P. Harikrishna pulled off a stunning win over world champion Magnus Carlsen of Norway but suffered four losses later in the day to slip to overall sixth place in the St Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tournament.

Harikrishna defeated world number one Carlsen in round three of Blitz 1 in 63 moves with white pieces. He also beat lower-rated American Jeffrey Xiong but save for the two wins, he had a forgettable day as he suffered four defeats, apart from three draws. Harikrishna shares the sixth place with Armenian GM Levon Aronian with 3.5 points after the nine rounds of Blitz 1. Carlsen, who had dropped to second place behind So at the end of the Rapid event, leapt to the top spot in the standings with 18.5 points. — PTI

Tvesa lies T-2nd at French Open

Bordeaux, France: Indian golfer Tvesa Malik put herself in contention with a solid three-under 68 to lie tied second after round two of the 2020 Lacoste Ladies Open De France.

As Tvesa carded 68 to get to four-under 138, Sweden's Julia Engstrom had a memorable day with a hole-in-one en route to a second round 64 (-7) which put her on top the leaderboard heading into the third and final round.

Things were, however, rather disappointing for another Indian Diksha Dagar, who after 89 in the first round, carded 85 and missed the cut by a big margin. Tvesa shares the second place with local French golfer and the 2015 champion Celine Herbin at four-under and they are four behind Julia Engstrom. — PTI

Djoker loses cool again during win

Rome: Less than two weeks after getting defaulted from the U.S. Open, Novak Djokovic lost his cool again midway through a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win over German qualifier Dominik Koepfer in the Italian Open quarterfinals Saturday.

When Djokovic was broken at love to end the second set at 3-3, he slammed his racket to the red clay in anger. With the frame broken and the strings all mangled, Djokovic was forced to get a new racket and received a warning from the chair umpire.

Djokovic had already appeared frustrated the previous game, when he glared toward the umpire following a couple of overrules and a point that was ordered to be replayed. — AP

Lakers dominate Nuggets in Game 1

Miami: Anthony Davis scored 37 points and pulled down 10 rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers dominated the Denver Nuggets 126-114 on Friday in game one of the NBA Western Conference finals.

LeBron James added 15 points with 12 assists and six rebounds for the Lakers, who shot out of the gate after dropping their opener in each of their previous two playoff series in the NBA's coronavirus quarantine bubble in Orlando, Florida.

After a close first quarter ended with the Nuggets up by two, the Lakers seized control in the second quarter, out-scoring Denver 34-21 to take a 70-59 lead into halftime. "It took a quarter for us to kind of figure it out," James said. — AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Delhi Capitals vs Kings XI Punjab from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Southampton vs Tottenham Hotspur from 4.30 pm; Newcastle vs Brighton from 6.30 pm; Chelsea vs Liverpool from 9 pm; Leicester City vs Burnley from 11.30 pm on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Spanish League: Huesca vs Cadiz from 7.30 pm; Granada vs Deportivo Alaves from 10 pm; Real Betis vs Real Valladolid from 10 pm; Real Sociedad vs Real Madrid from 12.30 am (Monday) on LaLiga page on Facebook

Italian League: Parma vs Napoli from 4 pm; Genoa vs Crotone from 6.30 pm; Sassuolo vs Cagliari from 9.30 pm Juventus vs Sampdoria from 12.15 am (Monday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

TENNIS

Rome Masters: Semifinals in two sessions from 5.30 pm and 9.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

DAZZLING DUET

Century stand between Rayudu, Du Plessis help CSK pull off incredible win

Abu Dhabi, Sept. 19: Ambati Rayudu smashed a 48-ball 71 to guide Chennai Super Kings to a comprehensive five-wicket win over defending champions Mumbai Indians in the opening match of the 13th IPL here on Saturday.

Chasing 163 to win, Rayudu blasted six fours and three sixes in his blistering innings, while Faf du Plessis cracked 58 off 44 balls as CSK romped home with four balls to spare.

Earlier, Mumbai Indians posted a challenging 162/9 after Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni won the toss and elected to bowl.

The highlight of Mumbai's innings was Saurabh Tiwary's 42 off 31 balls and Quinton de Kock's 20-ball 33 at the top.

For CSK, Lungi Ngidi (3/38) was the most successful bowler while Ravindra Jadeja (2/42) and Deepak Chahar (2/32) captured two wickets apiece and Sam Curran (1/28) and Piyush Chawla (4/21) picked one each.

The shrewd Dhoni introduced Chawla into the attack and he right away dismissed Rohit Sharma (12) who always have had a problem with wrist spinners. It was a straight delivery that Rohit was trying to hit

inside out but couldn't get past Curran at the mid-off circle. — PTI

SCORECARD

Mumbai Indians: Rohit Sharma c Sam Curran b Chawla 12, Quinton de Kock c Watson b Sam Curran 33, Suryakumar Yadav c Sam Curran b D. Chahar 17, Saurabh Tiwary c du Plessis b Ravindra Jadeja 42, Hardik Pandya c du Plessis b Ravindra Jadeja 14, Kieron Pollard c Dhoni b Lungi Ngidi 18, Krunal Pandya c Dhoni b Lungi Ngidi 3, James Pattinson c du Plessis b Lungi Ngidi 11, Rahul Chahar (not out) 2, Trent Boult b D. Chahar 0, Jasprit Bumrah (not out) 5. **Extras: (w-4, lb-1) 5. Total: (for 9 wkts, in 20 Over) 162.** **FoW:** 46-1, 48-2, 92-3, 121-4, 124-5, 136-6, 151-7, 156-8, 156-9. **Bowler:** Deepak Chahar 4-0-32-2, Sam Curran 4-0-28-1, Lungi Ngidi 4-0-38-3, Piyush Chawla 4-0-21-1, Ravindra Jadeja 4-0-42-2.

Chennai Super Kings Innings: Murali Vijay lbw b James Pattinson 1, Shane Watson lbw b Boult 4, Faf du Plessis (not out) 58, Ambati Rayudu c and b Rahul Chahar 71, Ravindra Jadeja lbw b Krunal Pandya 10, Sam Curran c James Pattinson b Bumrah 18, M.S. Dhoni (not out) 0. **Extras: (w-3, nb-1) 4. Total (for 5 wkts, in 19.2 overs) 166.** **FoW:** 5-1, 6-2, 121-3, 134-4, 153-5. **Bowler:** Trent Boult 3-2-0-23-1, James Pattinson 4-0-27-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-43-1, Krunal Pandya 4-0-37-1, Rahul Chahar 4-0-36-1.



Chennai Super Kings players celebrates the wicket of Rohit Sharma of Mumbai Indians during match 1 of season 13 of the Indian Premier League held at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium, Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates on Saturday. — BCCI

DC, KXIP in battle of power-hitters

Dubai, Sept. 19: Two greats will pit their wits against each other in the background as their captains, with an ability to achieve greatness, lead their power-hitters out for an IPL match between Delhi Capitals and Kings XI Punjab here on Sunday.

Ricky Ponting and Anil Kumble are arguably two of the biggest names in cricket and the dazzling array of talent in both the teams would seek to draw inspiration from their respective heavyweight coaches in their tournament opener.

Man-to-man, Delhi Capitals seem to have a slight edge, more so in the spin department, with the trio of R. Ashwin, Amit Mishra and Axar Patel streets ahead of their counterparts from the Mohali-based side.

Spin is expected to play a big role on the UAE pitches.



Delhi Capitals' captain Shreyas Iyer (left) and coach Ricky Ponting at a training session in Dubai on Saturday.

The match, at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, will also be a face-off between skipper K.L. Rahul and Shreyas Iyer, both seen as future India captaincy material.

On the batting front, the Capitals have one of the best assortments of India internationals, comprising Prithvi Shaw, Iyer, Rishabh Pant, Shikhar Dhawan, besides West Indian

Shimron Hetmyer.

In this scenario, Ajinkya Rahane (strike-rate below 120), who was bought from Rajasthan Royals, may be left out.

The KXIP also boast of some of the finest clean hitters in the form of Chris Gayle, Glenn Maxwell and Rahul himself.

Maxwell's confidence must be sky high after his ODI series-winning century (108) against England. He also had a memorable run the last time the IPL was held in UAE, albeit partially, in 2014 when he hammered 552 runs in 16 games.

The KXIP have a dangerous opening pairing in Gayle and Rahul with Mayank Agarwal to follow. But it remains to be seen whether the 40-year-old Gayle will continue to be a regular feature at the top of the order this time around. — PTI

NUMBERS GAME — KXIP vs DC

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:
● Matches: 24
● Kings XI Punjab won: 14
● Delhi Capitals won: 10

MEETING IN 2019

● Kings XI Punjab defeated Delhi Capitals by 14 runs in Mohali
● Delhi Capitals beat Kings XI Punjab by 5 wickets in Delhi

FOR THE RECORD

● Shikhar Dhawan, who scored 4579 runs at an average of 33.42 in 158 innings of 159 matches for Deccan

Chargers, Mumbai Indians, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals is the fourth highest scorer in IPL behind Virat Kohli (5,412 runs in 177 matches) and Suresh Raina (5,368 runs in 193 matches) and Rohit Sharma (4,898 runs in 188 matches).

● Chris Gayle is the only batsman to hit over 300 sixes in IPL. He smashed 326 sixes in 124 innings of 125 matches for Kings XI Punjab, Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bangalore. — S. PERVEZ GAISER

Rahul vows to make it memorable

Dubai, Sept. 19: Kings XI Punjab skipper K.L. Rahul on Saturday said the side is motivated to making this IPL season a memorable one by playing a good brand of cricket.

The Rahul-led side will open their campaign against Delhi Capitals at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday.

"The team has been fantastic, we've been getting along great and are looking forward to playing a good brand of cricket and making this season a memorable one," Rahul said.

"We're confident, we're motivated and we are really excited to be a part of this edition of the



Indian Premier League," he added.

Rahul, who has been handed the Kings XI Punjab captaincy after two stellar seasons with the bat at the top of the order, said it will be a

challenging experience playing in the UAE without the fans but the team is ready for it.

"It is going to be a different experience this year, but we as a team are up to the challenge and

are playing for all the fans who continue to support us," Rahul said.

KXIP, who have never won the IPL, are aiming to go all the way this time with a strong squad at their disposal with the likes of Mayank Agarwal, Mohammad Shami and overseas recruits Chris Gayle, Glenn Maxwell, Sheldon Cottrell, Jimmy Neesham, the in-form Nicholas Pooran and Mujeeb Zadran.

"The team looks great and we have a top-notch line up this season. The boys have been working really hard and we have a nice balance of youth and experience in our squad," head Coach Anil Kumble said. — PTI

SMITH, ARCHER, BUTTLER CLEAR COVID-19 TESTS

Dubai, Sept. 19: Captain Steve Smith along with star players Jofra Archer and Jos Buttler have cleared the mandatory Covid-19 test on arrival and are available to play Rajasthan Royals' IPL opener against Chennai Super Kings at the Sharjah Cricket ground on September 22.

The trio were part of the 21-strong contingent of Australia and England players, who arrived in the UAE from UK by a special chartered flight on September 17.

"Smith, Buttler and Archer underwent Covid-19 tests on Friday and

results are negative. So they are available for selection with quarantine duration being reduced to 36 hours," an IPL source said on conditions of anonymity.

Former Australia skipper Smith has had concussion problems and missed all three ODIs against England and his participation in the opening game is subject to clearance from both franchise and Cricket Australia's medical team.

If Smith misses the first game, Buttler could lead the side as he is one of the senior most players in the team. — PTI

EVERTON FIRE 5 PAST WEST BROM

London, Sept. 19: Dominic Calvert-Lewin hit a hat-trick and James Rodriguez bagged his first Premier League goal as Everton crushed 10-man West Bromwich Albion 5-2 to extend their perfect start to the season on Saturday.

Carlo Ancelotti's side fell behind to Grady Diangana's early goal at Goodison Park.

But Calvert-Lewin equalised and James put them ahead before West Brom imploded.

Kieran Gibbs was dismissed for pushing James in the face in first half stoppage-time.

Then Albion boss Slaven Bilic was sent to the stands after storming onto the pitch for a furious rant at referee Mike Dean.

Matheus Pereira equalised for Albion after the interval, but Michael Keane restored Everton's lead and Calvert-Lewin sealed the points with his second and third goals.

Ar 23, Calvert-Lewin is the youngest Englishman to score a Premier League hat-trick for Everton. — AFP

THE RESULT

Everton 5
(Calvert-Lewin 31, 62, 66, James 45, Keane 54)
West Brom 2
(Diangana 10, Pereira 47)

BAYERN RUN RIOT IN OPENER

Munich (Germany), Sept. 19: Leroy Sane said all-conquering Bayern Munich crave even more silverware after the Germany winger scored on his debut in Friday's historic 8-0 thrashing of Schalke in the opening game of the new Bundesliga season.

"We're still hungry, even though we won the treble last season. Winning our first game at home 8-0 is obviously super," said Sane after creating two goals for Serge Gnabry, who claimed a hat-trick in the goalfest.

The jaw-dropping result is the highest win in an opening game of a new Bundesliga season — five weeks to the day after Bayern's 8-2 thrashing of Barcelona in the quarter-finals of the Champions League. — AFP

THE RESULT

Bayern Munich 8
(Gnabry 4, 47, 59, Goretzka 19, Lewandowski 31-pen, Mueller 69, Sane 71, Musiala 81)
Schalke 0

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This IPL could be decisive for 5 Indian star players



Ayaz Memon Over The Top

After months of suspense, apprehension and anticipation, the IPL is finally underway. The circumstances are unusual. The tournament has been played overseas earlier too, so that it not such a severe setback, though it could impact the teams in sundry ways since players were chosen, retained or dumped based on the tournament being played in India.

What's starkly different this time is that this high-

octane tournament will be without spectators, and with a stringent protocol in place to counter the looming threat of Covid19. It remains to be seen what impact this has on the players' mood and mind.

Barring players from West Indies, England and Australia, others are also shorn of match practice since the lockdown began in March. How rusty will they be? Other factors that could have a bearing on team and individual performances are the heat

and humidity in the UAE, at least for the first half of the tournament, and the character of pitches which is unknown.

None of this, however, can subdue the excitement of the tournament being played. The IPL is a platform where talent can be showcased and careers made or consolidated. The *creme de la creme* of the world's players (barring from Pakistan) will be in action.

No player's worth can be undermined, but this season my attention will be on five Indian players, at different stages in their careers, for whom this IPL could be decisive in one way or another.

M. S. Dhoni: Recently retired from international cricket, he still remains

perhaps the biggest draw-card in the IPL. Pushing 40, how fit is he for the demanding schedule of the league? Does he still have the form to win matches off his own bat? Most important in Dhoni's case is captaincy. He commands loyalty, of that there is no doubt. But with seasoned pros Raina and Harbhajan missing, how he deploys his resources will be key. And how CSK fares this season could well determine whether Dhoni will wear the yellow jersey next season.

Virat Kohli: India's most successful captain in international cricket has been floundering to win the IPL title, though he's been spectacular with bat and is the league's highest rungetter. This is his 10th

season in the leadership role. The best RCB have achieved under him was runner up in 2016. Since then, RCB's results have been poor: bottom placed in 2017 and 2019, 6th in 2018, raising queries about Kohli's captaincy in this format. Harsh considering his captaincy record in the same format in internationals. But Kohli has certainly something to prove.

R. Ashwin: Picked for international cricket on the strength of IPL performances, became a certainty in all three formats, before losing his place in ODIs as well as T20s. A productive IPL season could bring Ashwin back in the reckoning for India in limited overs cricket. Move from Kings XI Punjab cost him the cap-

taincy as Delhi Capitals have preferred to retain Shreyas Iyer in the top position. Crafty and strong-minded, how well and swiftly he strikes rapport with Iyer and coach Ponting could define DC's fortunes as well as his own future.

K. L. Rahul: Made captain of Kings XI after Ashwin's departure, faces multiple challenges as the team seeks its first IPL title. Rahul's batting ability is hardly doubted. He's mauled the best bowlers with his rich and powerful strokeplay. Under scrutiny now to see how he tackles burden of captaincy. Managing individuals with different skillsets and temperaments can be hugely demanding. Several fine players who

have suffered under the pressure. But this is also an opportunity which can take Rahul higher in Indian cricket.

Hardik Pandya: Broke down during the ODI World Cup in 2019, Pandya's comeback to Indian cricket — in all formats — depends on how well he survives this IPL season. His all-round skills and aggressive instincts make him a matchwinner: with bat or bowling fast medium with clever variations. Add to that brilliant fielding, and it is easy to see why Hardik is so coveted by Mumbai Indians, as well as the Indian team. Whether his career graph resumes its upward trajectory, stagmates or slumps depends on his form and fitness in this tournament.