

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | THURSDAY | 22 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 31.0°C
Min: 16°C
RH: 79%
Rainfall: Nil
Forecast: Cloudy sky. Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 31/16 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+56,149)	(+701)
77,04,399	1,16,639
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+1,579)	(+5)
TS: 2,26,124	1,287
(+3,746)	(+27)
AP: 7,93,299	6,508

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,13,01,999
DEATHS
11,32,951
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
213
worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwayuja Shuddha Shashti till 7.41 am
Star: Poorvashada till 1.01 am (Friday)
Variyam: 10.46 am to 12.21 pm
Durmuhurtam: 10.05 am to 10.51 am; 2.41 pm to 3.28 pm
Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm
HILARI CALENDAR
Rabbi-ul Awwal 4, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.10 am
Zohar: 12.11 pm
Asar: 4.12 pm
Maghrib: 5.55 pm
Isha: 7.04 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.11 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.49 PM
MOONSET 11.44 PM
MOONRISE 11.03 AM

COUNTER POINT



Selling onions is more profitable and safe!

SHORT TAKES

PLA stumbles in high altitudes

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Extreme climatic conditions in the high altitude areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh — which has been witnessing massive build-up of troops both by Indian Army and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) since the last few months — has started to take a toll on the PLA soldiers. Corporal Wang Ya Long of the PLA, was gasping for breath when he was caught.

Chinese corporal returned by Army

New Delhi: The Indian Army late Tuesday night handed over the Chinese soldier who had strayed across the Line of Actual Control to the People's Liberation Army at the Chushul Moldo meeting point in Ladakh. The Chinese soldier, identified as Corporal Wang Ya Long, was handed back to China after the completion of all formalities. He was caught by the Indian Army in the Demchok sector of eastern Ladakh on Monday. He was provided medical assistance, including oxygen, food and warm clothes, to protect him from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climatic conditions.

NATION | 4

Farooq questioned by ED officials again



WORLD | 5

Pope endorses same-sex civil unions in documentary

SPORTS | 8

Holder rues lack of BLM solidarity in IPL



Officials travel on a bulldozer in the inundated Peerzadiguda area on Wednesday with relief material to be distributed among those affected by the recent rains and subsequent floods.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

53 out of 185 lakes hit by incessant rains in city

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

As many as 53 lakes out of a total of 185 have been left damaged or left in a vulnerable condition due to incessant rains.

Irrigation officials monitoring the city lakes said all tanks were brimming with huge inflows after the city received a record 30 cm of rainfall this week, said state secretary, irrigation, Rajat

Kumar. The threat of breach of any or all water bodies is not ruled out if the city receives further rainfall.

Moosapet, Mansorabad and Bandlaguda tanks in Hyderabad limits were on the verge of breach. Necessary measures were being taken to prevent breach of water bodies. Additionally, 15 special teams were constituted to look after safety of tanks and lakes, Mr Kumar said.

However, officials prioritised the restoration of 53 extremely damaged lakes, which would be restored with immediate effect. The state government had earmarked ₹10 crore for temporary restoration of tanks. The officials said the department sought another ₹40 crore funds to take up repairs on a permanent basis.

■ **Page 2: Low-lying areas to be evacuated first**

LOW PRESSURE TO BECOME DEEP DEPRESSION

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT 21

The low pressure area over central parts of Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood lay as well marked low pressure area over west central Bay of Bengal off Andhra Pradesh coast on Wednesday evening. It is likely to move north northeast towards northwest Bay of Bengal off Odisha and West Bengal coasts and concentrate into a depression during the subsequent 24 hours. Before crossing Odisha and West Bengal, the system would be intensified into a deep depression, the IMD report said.

Under its influence, rainfall with heavy falls is likely over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha during the next two days. As the state of sea would be rough, fishermen were advised not to venture into the sea during the next three days.

● **HEAVY RAINFALL** is likely over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha during the next two days under the influence of the low pressure in Bay of Bengal

Rajasthan to bring Bill against Centre's farm law

Jaipur, Oct. 20: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Tuesday said his government will bring a bill against the Centre's farm laws on the lines of Punjab.

The chief minister announced this on Twitter, hours after the Punjab assembly unanimously passed four bills and adopted a resolution against the Union government laws. "INC under the leadership of Smt #SoniaGandhi ji & #RahulGandhi ji stands absolutely with our annadats and will continue to oppose the anti-farmer laws passed by NDA Govt. Today Congress Govt in

#Punjab has passed Bills against these laws & #Rajasthan will follow soon," Gehlot tweeted on Tuesday night. Earlier, the Congress leadership had suggested states where the party is in power to pass laws of their own, negating the central legislation. In the meeting of the state council of ministers held at the chief minister's residence, the effects of Centre's three new laws on the farmers were discussed. The council of ministers decided that a special session of the Legislative Assembly will be convened soon and amendment bills will be brought to preserve the

interests of the farmers, an official statement said. The council also emphasised on the imperative of procurement of crops at minimum support price (MSP). The council observed that the removal of the maximum limit of stock of various agricultural commodities under normal circumstances under the ESMA after the implementation of the new laws will increase black marketing, unauthorised storage and rise in prices. It was also discussed that the provision of MSP in the Contract Farming Act will be in the interest of the farmers of the state, it said. — PTI

Police to be modernised: Shah

New Delhi, Oct. 21: The government is undertaking a comprehensive modernisation programme to prepare the country's police and paramilitary forces for newer challenges in terrorism, cybercrime and border security, Union home minister Amit Shah said.

Shah laid a wreath at the National Police Memorial in Chanakyapuri to pay

homage to the slain policemen and addressed a joint column of police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) on the occasion of Police Commemoration Day.

The day is observed in memory of 10 CRPF personnel who were killed in an ambush by Chinese troops in 1959 in Ladakh's Hot Spring area. Armies of the two countries are cur-

rently locked in a military standoff in the Ladakh area. "The work of police is witnessing new challenges and new dimensions in the areas of terrorism, fake currency, narcotics control, cybercrime, arms smuggling and human trafficking. "It is a challenge to prepare the police forces for the new dimensions that have emerged in the last 2-3

Organic farming



Wayanad MP and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi visits the 200-acre paddy fields and organic farms in Wayanad on Wednesday.

— PTI

Rajan cautions against import substitution

Mumbai, Oct. 21: Former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan on Wednesday cautioned against import substitution under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative of the government.

"If the focus (under Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative) is on import substitution by erecting tariffs, then I think it is a direction we have tried before and it has failed. I would caution against going in that direction," Rajan said. He was addressing a webinar organised by the Centre for Financial Studies at Bhavan's SPJIMR. Rajan said in order to export, one needs to be able to import things that go into those exports as cheaply as it can. "China's rise as an export power came on the back of assembly. It brought in the stuff, put it together and exported it out. "In order to export, you have to import. Don't erect huge tariffs and focus on creating right

environment for production in India," he said.

According to Rajan, targeted spending by the government can be fruitful in the longer term. "I think it is good to keep an eye on the overall spending and to be careful. This is not the time to have a free cheque book. But targeted spending can repay a lot if it is done wisely and carefully," he said. He further said the country's growth was significantly hit but it is more important to understand the consequences of that slowdown on the economic system. "If a number of firms have shut down never to reopen again, the supply side of the economy is affected. If a number of households stopped sending their kids to school because they can't afford, that again inhibits our growth potential for the future as these are going to be poorly educated kids who are going to be capable of much less quality jobs," he stated. — PTI

COWARDLY | COMBAT

Suspected NSCN (I-M) militants believed to be behind attack

Jawan from AP killed in ambush

MANOJ ANAND
GUWAHATI, OCT. 21

In an ambush a rifle-man of Assam Rifle was killed by suspected National Socialist Council of Nagaland (I-M) militants near Sanliam village, about 10 kms south of Khonsa, in Arunachal Pradesh's Tirap district on Wednesday.

Informing that heavily armed Naga rebels ambushed a patrolling team of the Assam Rifle, security sources said that a rifle-man Babu Rao, who was the resident of Andhra

Pradesh sustained grievous bullet injuries and died on the way to hospital.

The development came three months after 6 Assam Rifles killed six NSCN (I-M) militants in an early morning encounter near Nginu village, close to Myanmar border, in neighbouring Longding district.

Pointing out that Assam Rifle has launched a combing operation in the area, security sources said that there were reports of heavily armed NSCN (I-M) rebels camping along the international border with Myanmar. Indicating that

● **BABU RAO**, a rifle-man from Andhra Pradesh sustained grievous bullet injuries and died on the way to hospital.

● **THE DEVELOPMENT** came three months after 6 Assam Rifles killed six NSCN (I-M) militants in an early morning encounter near Nginu village, close to Myanmar border, in neighbouring Longding district.

● **SOURCES SAID** there were reports of heavily armed NSCN (I-M) rebels camping along the international border with Myanmar.

NSCN (I-M) militants have been targeting the Assam Rifle since July to retaliate the killing of its six cadres, security sources said that

several attempts of NSCN (I-M) to ambush Assam Rifle were foiled in the last three months.

Earlier, on October 3, a

heavily armed rebel group, suspected to be Khaplang faction of NSCN had ambushed and killed an Assam Rifles jawan in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Another jawan was injured seriously in the ambush near Hetlong village under the Jairampur police station. However, no militant group took responsibility, but district officials and the security forces suspected that the Khaplang faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-K) had carried out the attack.

SHORT TAKES

GOLCONDA FORT SURVIVES RAIN BUT DAMAGED

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Though the historic Golconda Fort has survived relentless rains since the previous week, it has suffered immense damage. A portion of the wall near 18 Seedhi graves collapsed, which happens to be the third incident in the past seven days.

Cracks had been noticed along different retaining walls and ramparts, both inside and around the fort. Stone edifices have got loose at many places. Unless corrective measures are taken, there is threat of more damage to Golconda and its environs in the near future. ASI officials are keeping a watch on the edifice and taking precaution to avoid any causality.

Elsewhere in the city on Wednesday, a rock slid down the hillock of Falaknuma Palace and fell on to the road. According to locals, another boulder had loosened and fallen on the road nine days ago.

In the Old City, an ancient Kaman at Bela near Surajbhan Kaman, apart from a house near Noor Khan Bazaar, collapsed. There have been no casualties though.

CENTRE GIVES 75% OF THE DISASTER FUNDS

From page 1

The Centre contributes 75 per cent of the disaster management funds whereas the remaining 25 per cent has to be pitched in by the respect state or UT. He said that every state should use funds from the state disaster response fund.

"Telangana should also utilise the SDRF on emergency situations immediately. The Centre will reimburse the fund," he said. The Central government will help states after estimating losses after a detailed field visit by Central officers, Mr Reddy said.

He criticised TRS ministers, saying funds which are allocated by the Centre as well as state government is all entirely public money, not some personal money coming from packets of any party or leader. He said that the Telangana government was neglecting encroachments, despite repeated complaints, in and around the Musi river area.

Chiding Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, Mr Reddy said CM Rao should check satellite maps of 2014 and compare it with now to realise the extent of encroachments of the Musi river, and demanded demolition of such encroachments.

LOW-LYING AREAS TO BE EVACUATED FIRST

From page 1

The restoration and repair works would be taken up after evacuating residents in low lying areas. In the long run, all 185 lakes, which have already reached full-tank level, will be repaired and restored at an estimated cost of ₹10 crore. Repairs are being taken up at all breached water bodies on a war footing, Rajat Kumar claimed.

Kumar said the department was currently not focussing on lake's encroachments since most of them in FTL had completed their mutation process as per official records. He said action will be initiated against encroachers after the emergency situation ends.

Commenting on incidents of lake breaches, the irrigation secretary claimed that breach of Appa Cheruvu was not a human error, he claimed. He conceded that three persons lost their lives near Palle Cheruvu. People were not allowed to visit tanks and lakes until water levels receded, he said.

Meanwhile, after efforts of over 48 hours, irrigation department finally found sluice gates in the Fox Sagar lake in Jeedimetla. They were opened and water released after evacuation of people in low lying areas.

The twin reservoirs under Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar were at full reservoir level.

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board officials have released 1,372 cusecs of water from Himayat Sagar by lifting gates. Inflows at Osman Sagar were also reduced to 800 cusecs.

Waterlogged houses raise unbearable stink

Dip in night temp is also one of the factors aggravating smell

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The stench emanating from waterlogged homes is nauseating and people cleaning them are having a tough time as they simply cannot work continuously. For the last two days, volunteers and family members cleaning the homes state that the smell is unbearable.

During the night, the stench gets worse as the continuously flowing water from lakes, sewage and storm water drains worsens it. The dip in night temperatures is also one of the factors aggravating the stench.

People have dumped sofas, mattresses, clothes,

utensils and wooden furniture outside their homes. Along with the water in the floods, there came jute bags, helmets, wooden toys and also sanitary materials which are now being removed from homes. Many items are stuck to the walls, furniture and along the steps as water flowed in.

Mansoor Ahmed, from Baba nagar, says "It is difficult to work continuously. Despite wrapping cloths around our noses, we are still not able to work continuously. Women started crying and we had to keep them back at relatives' homes as it was not possible to get them to do the cleaning."

Emotionally drained see-

ing the state of their homes, many have been unable to come to terms with the devastation. The Greater Hyderabad municipal corporation has deployed machines to remove the silt and collect garbage from outside homes. Packets of bleach are being distributed for spraying and cleaning. With electricity yet to be restored and no fresh water, cleaning has been difficult.

Many are cleaning during the day time but the night is being spent at relatives' homes. Till the situation improves, the families have decided not to shift back.

Non-government organi-

sations state that the help in terms of food, water packets and other household requirements is abundantly pouring in. There is a dearth of medical camps and that is strongly required. A non-governmental organisation has set up a team of paramedical staff to go from house to house with a testing kit.

A few doctors have been stationed outside and they are checking those with fever and fungal infections. They have limitations as only 30 homes can be covered due to the muck and filth around. With more than 30,000 people affected and many others still in waterlogged colonies, there is a need for more focused outreach.

A helping hand for the marooned



Relief material being supplied to a household which was marooned at Ramanthapur on Wednesday as the floodwaters are yet to recede. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE



Visitor at Osmansagar in Gandipet on Wednesday. The reservoir has not reached its full level due to encroachments. — R.PAVAN



A resident shows rice that got wet due to floods in Ramanthapur. — DC

TS hub for sale of spurious seeds: BJM

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
VEMSOOR (KHAMMAM), OCT. 21

Bharatiya Janata Morcha (BJM) state president Kondapalli Sridhar Reddy on Wednesday said that Telangana is turning out to be a centre for spurious seeds.

Farmers are facing huge losses going into crores of rupees every year due to the sale of spurious seeds. He demanded the government to file a case against seed companies for selling bad seeds to paddy farmers in Vemsoor mandal.

He said, "The farmers led by Bharatiya Kisan Morcha lodged a complaint on October 13 against a company for selling spurious seed. Till date no case



scientists view the paddy plants in Kandukuru in Vemsoor mandal on Wednesday.

has been filed. We have our doubts on the delay in filing a case against the seed company."

Meanwhile, a team of scientists led by Kasani

Rukmini Devi, Sathish Chandra and Krishi Vignana Kendra scientist Hemanth Kumar visited the fields in various villages in Vemsoor mandal.

Paddy of the MTU-1224 variety has been sown in 1,200 acres in Marlapadu, Kandukuru, Adasarlpadu and Ramannapalem in Vemsoor mandal.

Even after 75 days, the paddy plants did not witness capitulum. The farmers appealed to the scientists to visit their fields.

The scientists took the count of spikes on a plant and compared them with the other seed varieties. The farmers informed that they had purchased seeds from Dhanalaxmi Enterprises in Kandukuru and Arunodaya Enterprises in Marlapadu. Assistant director for agriculture Narasimha Rao accompanied the scientists.

Uttam seeks higher compensation for floods

IREDDY SRINIVAS
REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Wednesday said that the state government should increase the amount for flood relief from ₹500 crore to ₹5,000 crore.

Uttam Kumar Reddy was discussing the issue while addressing the members of the TPCC core committee, which met at Pragnapur in Gajwel constituency on Tuesday night in the presence of AICC in-charge of Telangana affairs, Manickam Tagore. The committee discussed various issues including the flood situation in Telangana, distress in the agriculture sector and the

Kalwakurthy lift irrigation scheme. "A number of issues such as huge misery and loss of life, property and agricultural crops and the inadequate response of state and Central governments were discussed. The committee passed resolutions on various issues unanimously," said Uttam Kumar Reddy. It was decided to write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to demand that the present situation in Telangana be declared a national calamity, he said.

The Congress party condemned the negligent attitude of Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao who did not even once tour flood affected areas of Hyderabad and neighbouring districts. Congress demanded that

the amount sanctioned by the state government for flood relief be increased from ₹500 to ₹5,000 crore while an ex-gratia of ₹25 lakh be given to families which had lost a member due to rains and floods. For houses damaged fully due to floods, a compensation of ₹5 lakh must be given while ₹2 lakh must be provided as compensation for partially damaged houses. The Congress also demanded that all houses in areas where flood water had entered be provided with a compensation of ₹50,000.

Mr Reddy said that the state government must immediately take up enumeration of crop damages due to rains and floods. "For all farmers whose crops were damaged extensively, ₹20,000 per acre

must be released immediately, including tenant farmers," he demanded.

A PCC sub-committee was formed to review all aspects of the Kalwakurthy lift irrigation scheme and recommend future course of action. It comprises CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, MP A. Revanth Reddy, MLC T. Jeevan Reddy, MLC D. Sridhar Babu, former ministers Ponnala Lakshmaiah and P. Sudarshan Reddy, AICC secretaries Dr. G. Chinna Reddy, S.A. Sampath Kumar and Ch. Vamshichand Reddy and former MP Dr. Mallu Ravi. AICC secretary Madhu Yashki Goud will oversee relief measures on behalf of the Congress, Mr Uttam Reddy added.

KTR inspects flood-hit areas, distributes relief

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) minister K.T. Rama Rao on Wednesday visited flood-affected areas and also distributed ₹10,000 compensation to the victims. Rao visited relief camps and flood-affected areas in Secunderabad, Amberpet and Uppal Assembly constituencies apart from Boduppal municipal corporation areas.

The MA&UD minister assured the residents that the government will come up with permanent solutions to avoid flood-like situations in the city. Along with Minister Malla Reddy, T. Padma Rao, Bethi Subash Reddy and others, he handed over the compensation amount to families in Boduppal, Amberpet, Nallakunta, Lalapet and other areas.

In the colonies in Boduppal Municipal Corporation, he inspected facilities provided in shelter homes and interacted with victims to learn about their grievances. He instructed officials to provide proper food and medical facilities



MA&UD minister K.T. Rama Rao visits flood-affected areas in Secunderabad, Amberpet and Uppal Assembly constituencies apart from Boduppal municipal corporation areas on Wednesday

in the medical camps. The minister asked officials to provide a special dining hall.

Rama Rao also inspected Nalla Cheruvu restoration works and asked the officials to expedite them. He said "As a temporary relief, the government is

handing over ₹10,000 to families affected by rains."

He said that the officials will soon inspect the damaged houses and submit a report to the government, which will provide additional financial support to families whose houses were fully or partially damaged.

Aparna Group donates ₹6 crore

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

In response to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao's call to people to come forward and extend help while tackling the prevailing unprecedented flood situation, Aparna Group has come forward with a ₹6 crore donation to the CM Relief Fund (CMRF).

Aparna Group managing director, S.S. Reddy said: "Aparna Group has always aligned efforts towards the larger well-being of the society. We strongly believe in helping the community in its hour of grief and this donation is an extension of this belief. Through

this endeavor, we want to assist the state government in its efforts to manage and mitigate the ongoing crisis. We will continue to consciously help the government in their efforts to enable people to overcome the calamity."

Over the years, the Aparna Group has worked persistently in the areas of social welfare and healthcare. Their CSR arm, Aparna Novel Society for Education and Research (ANSWER) has taken up many community-driven initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life of underprivileged children as well as senior citizens.

5-man Central team for Hyd

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

A five-member team of central officials is scheduled to visit Hyderabad and districts of Telangana for assessing damage caused by floods to properties, roads and crops.

The inter-ministerial team, led by Praveen Vashista, joint secretary with the ministry of home affairs, will arrive on Thursday. Other officials of the team will be from ministries of agriculture, finance, water resources and transport, apart from National Highways Authority.

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy

● **THEY WILL** check the flood relief measures being taken up in Hyderabad and various parts of the state

said the central team will interact with flood-affected people and farmers. They will check the flood relief measures being taken up in Hyderabad and various parts of the state, apart from hold a meeting in Hyderabad with state officials to discuss the overall situation.

Subsequently, the team will submit a detailed report to the centre on damage to properties, roads and loss of standing crops in various areas.

BJYM LEADER STOPPED FROM VISITING VICTIMS

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

BJYM leader PM Sai Prasad was arrested at his old Alwal residence around 4.30 am on Wednesday to prevent him from visiting flood-affected areas of Malkajgiri.

According to Sai Prasad, he and his party workers were to visit the inundated areas and extend relief aid to those who were impacted.

"We have been conducting flood relief programmes in other areas too, so why is that I have been stopped from entering Malkajgiri. When I asked what charges I was being detained, the police personnel had no answer," he said.

He told *Deccan Chronicle* that the ruling party MLA of Malkajgiri did not want to see that the aid was being extended by him and his supporters. "He influenced the police to take me into custody," he said.

BJP leader and MLC Ranchander Rao said, "Ruling party leaders are not allowing other parties to carry on with relief activities in the flooded areas. TRS members are doing so because of the upcoming GHMC elections."

He said that the arrest of Sai Prasad was 'undemocratic'.

According to Alwal Sub-Inspector, M. Parsuram, the arrest was made around 6:30 am 'after we received information from the Malkajgiri police station that the person, along with his party members, was to take out a rally protesting against the government.

TS STUDENT FROM AGENCY AREA GETS INTO IIIT-BASARA

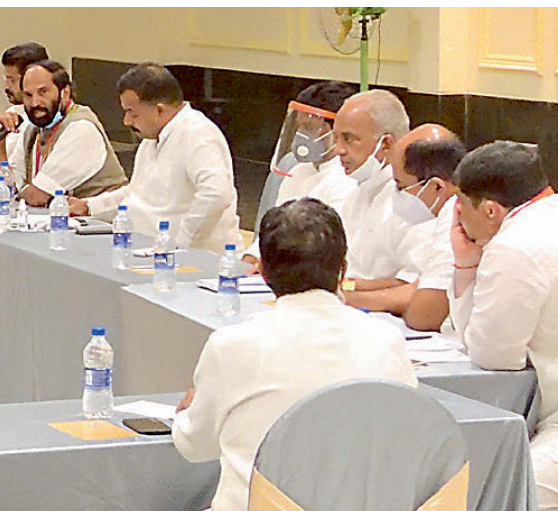
DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, OCT. 21

Sirikonda Rakshit, has bagged a seat at the IIIT-Basara. Rakshit achieved this, despite hailing from a backward Agency area.

A student of Mucharla-Jastipalli Zilla Parishad High School in Kamepalli mandal, Rakshit, in Class X got 10 GPA.

School headmaster Srinivas said, "Rakshit worked hard, as his parents are not financially well off.

Getting a seat in IIIT-Basara is not easy." He was felicitated by his teachers and other students in the school on Wednesday.



Telangana Congress core committee holds a meeting at Pragnapur. Excess rains, flood situation and agricultural losses in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana were discussed — P. ANIL KUMAR

SHORT TAKES

JOGU DARES
BJP'S LAXMAN
ON BC WELFAREDC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, OCT. 21

Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna on Wednesday said that the Telangana government was committed to the development and welfare of the Backward Communities.

In the last six years, it has initiated welfare schemes and development programmes specifically for the community.

The MLA condemned the statement made by BJP OBC Morcha national president K. Laxman that the Telangana government has failed to develop the BC communities. Mr Jogu Ramanna challenged Laxman saying that he was ready to debate on the issue and added that the BJP is against the SC, ST, OBC and other Minorities.

In united Andhra Pradesh, the number of BC hostels was 19. After Telangana state, this rose to 261 hostels. The number of students in these hostels has increased to 1 lakh from 6,500. Besides, before there was only one Degree college for BCs, now the number has risen to 19 in Telangana, the MLA said.

SERIOUS ABOUT
STRENGTHENING
PACS: MINISTERDC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, OCT. 21

Minister Allola Indrakaran Reddy addressed a workshop on Agriculture Infrastructure Fund under the 'Athma Nirbhar Bharath' organised by Nabard for the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) in Adilabad on Wednesday.

The minister said that for the welfare of the farmers, the state government is taking steps to strengthen PACS with the financial support of Nabard. The state government will provide ₹2 crore loan at the rate of 1 per cent interest to each PACS if they bring a viable proposal to set up a business for the benefit of local farmers and people while at the same time making a profit.

The Adilabad District Cooperative Central Bank has identified 27 PACS out of a total of 65 PACS in erstwhile Adilabad district. The minister appealed to the leaders of PACS to avail the scheme.

Officials are not paying commission for damaged gunny bags supplied by PACS. Workers are not getting their payments. The minister asked the concerned officials to pay commissions and to accept the damaged gunny bags in the interest of PACS.

NIT-W TO HOLD
VIRTUAL 18TH
CONVOCATIONDC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, OCT. 21

The 18th Convocation of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Warangal will take place on Thursday in its campus. Union minister of education, Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and N.R. Narayana Murthy, founder of Infosys will give out degrees to over 1,600 students.

However, because of Covid-19, students will participate in the ceremony from the safety of their homes. Their e-avatars will walk up the live dais to receive the medals and degrees from the virtual avatars of dignitaries.

Prof. N. V. Ramana Rao, director, NIT Warangal said of the 1,607 candidates, 119 are PhD. Degree awardees, 616 are M. Tech., Post Graduate Degree awardees and 872 are B. Tech. Degree awardees.

In each branch of Engineering, the topper of the B. Tech. class is awarded 'Roll of Honour' gold medal and the topper of all branches put together is awarded the Institute gold medal.

Apurva Bhardwaj from the Chemical Engineering department will receive the Institute gold medal for being the student with the highest CGPA among all the branches of Engineering.

The ceremony will be telecasted live on the official YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/pclopgfB1u>, Twitter & Facebook page of the institution.

● **HOWEVER**, because of Covid-19, students will participate in the ceremony from the safety of their homes. Their e-avatars will walk up the live dais to receive the medals and degrees from the virtual avatars of dignitaries.



Armed police perform Shok Shastra in Mahbubabad. Kamareddy SP N. Swetha presents a gift to a family member of a police martyr on the occasion of Police Commemoration Day in Nizamabad on Wednesday.



— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Rich tributes paid to police martyrs

Wreath-laying ceremonies and rallies were held by police personnel across the state; saplings planted

264 policemen martyred
in last one year: Top copNARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 21

Police commemoration day was observed in Nizamabad on Wednesday. Police officials and constables paid rich tributes to the martyrs. They also garlanded the martyrs statue at armed reserve police headquarters and recalled the sacrifices of departed policemen.

Speaking on the occasion, district collector C.Narayana Reddy said that police are playing a pivotal role in the society. Integrated development is possible, when the law and

order is under control, he said. Government developmental activities and welfare schemes are reaching the people with the round the clock duties rendered by the police, he said.

Commissioner of police Kartikeya said that 264 policemen including DIG, additional SP, 2 CIs and others had lost their lives in last one year.

In undivided Nizamabad district, around 19 policemen sacrificed their lives during discharging their duties, he explained. "We are always ready to help the family members of police martyrs", he said.



Minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar pays tributes at the police memorial in the Police Parade grounds in Khammam on Wednesday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Services during Covid-19 unforgettable: Min

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, OCT. 21

Minister for transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar said that the police and security forces protect people and the country by sacrificing their lives. It is the responsibility of the people to commemorate the services of the cops.

"The police have been extending services not only in the times of calamities but also during the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

They strictly implemented lockdown, which saw a drop in the number of positive cases."

Recently, during the floods due to the heavy rains, they came out to help too. The minister

paid floral tributes to police martyrs on the occasion of the Police Commemoration Day. He said that the state government will extend all assistance to the police martyr families.

District Judge M. Laxman said that people should imbibe the spirit of the police martyrs who sacrificed their lives. "The

duties of the cops are not limited to checking crime and maintaining law and order. It also includes helping people in hard times."

Collector R.V. Karnan said that the police were the first force to come to the rescue of people in the flood areas.

There are numerous occasions when cops have saved the lives of people.

hesitation to achieve victory.

There is not a day when a policeman does not make a sacrifice, he said.



SP Sangramsingh G. Patil along with a family member of a police martyr plants a sapling in their memory at Mulugu on Wednesday.

Want clarity on
Covid-19 cases in
Khammam: PeopleRAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, OCT. 21

The lack of details of Covid-19 positive cases has thrown the people in Khammam district into confusion.

People are unaware if the number of Covid-19 positive cases are raising or reducing. About 20 private hospitals have permission to treat Covid-19 patients.

Till September 19 the District Medical and Health Department gave details of Covid-19 positive cases. Since then, no bulletin has been issued.

The trend witnessed is that many Covid-19 positive patients opt to go to private hospitals for treatment. As a result, the district medical and health officials do not have their details. Besides, the is no control over the collection of fees from patients. As patients want to recover from the infection, they do not complain against these hospitals.

The district reported its first Covid-19 positive case on April 6. In the first phase, eight persons tested positive for the virus. All recovered.

Till September 19, there were 19,000 Covid-19 positive cases and 10,500 dis-

● **TILL SEPTEMBER 19** the District Medical and Health Department gave details of Covid-19 positive cases. Since then, no bulletin has been issued.

charged.

The death toll given by the officials is 193 against the 800 unofficial deaths. Mostly, people suffering from cardiac, lung and kidney problems succumbed to the virus.

ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) has said that country-wide, the Covid-19 cases are reducing. But, whether this is true for the district, is a big question. Neither the state nor the district officials have responded to the ICMR statements.

There are reports that Covid-19 positive cases are spreading, and more than 400 cases are exposed everyday.

G. Suresh, a teacher in Khammam said, "The asymptomatic Covid-19 positive patients are moving freely without wearing masks. This has instilled fear among the people. It is the responsibility of the government to give the correct picture on Covid-19 to the people."

Rythu Vedikas to wear colourful look

PILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
NIRMAL, OCT. 21

The Rythu Vedikas coming up as part of the 'Palle Pragathi' programme in the gram panchayats will have a colourful look.

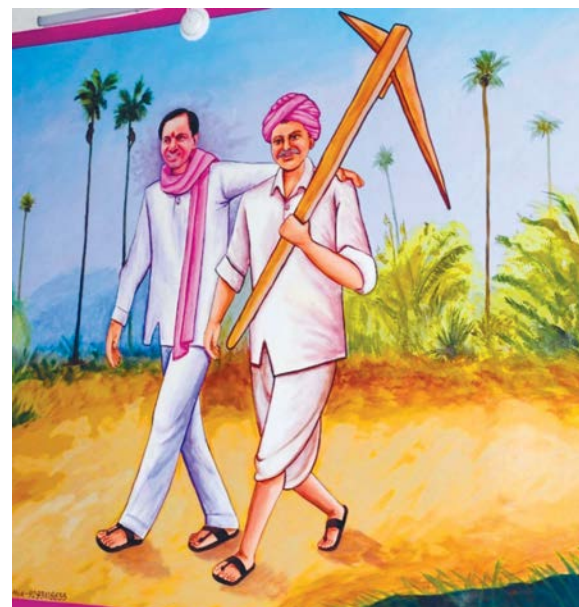
The interior and exterior walls will have murals depicting agriculture in the state, government schemes and irrigation projects. These structures will have greenery around them. Nirmal district is an example of this.

The Rythu Vedika in Yellapalli village in Nirmal rural mandal stands out. Its walls have murals of farmers carrying out agriculture operations, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao walking along with a farmer, water gushing out from the SRSP irrigation project.

● **THE WALLS** will have murals of farmers carrying out agriculture operations, Chief Minister walking with a farmer, water gushing out from the SRSP irrigation project and women working in the fields.

ect and women working in the fields.

Nirmal collector Musharaff Farooqui said, "So far, 70 Rythu Vedikas of the total 79 are completed and construction is going on at a fast pace. We hope to complete all the Rythu Vedikalus sanctioned for Nirmal district by Dasara." The murals show that the TRS government is committed to the development of the farming community.



The murals on the interior of a Rythu Vedika in Yellapalli village in Nirmal rural mandal on Wednesday.

2 hurt as lorry rams into shopping complex

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, OCT. 21

A lorry lost control and ran into a shopping complex in Pasra of Mulugu district on Wednesday. Two persons were injured, and four two-wheelers got damaged in the incident.

The police shifted the injured to the

Mulugu Government Area Hospital.

There was no major damage as the lorry came to a halt right in front of the shops.

According to the police, the truck was coming from Medaram and going towards Warangal. Police registered a case and seized the vehicle.



The lorry which caused the accident in Pasra of Mulugu district on Wednesday.

₹11.50 LAKHS
GUTKA, ZARDA
SEIZED, 1 HELDDC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 21

The Task Force police conducted raids in Barkatpura Colony on Wednesday and seized gutka and zarda worth ₹11.50 lakhs.

Task Force inspector Shakir Ali along with his team, raided a house and godown under the II-Town police station limits and seized the banned products.

Police have also taken into custody one NRI Javed, 45, of Barkatpura Colony.

Commissioner of Police Kartikeya directed the Task Force and II-Town police to seize the gutka, zarda and register a case.

Task Force inspector Shakir Ali said that they have handed over the seized gutka, zarda to the II-Town police station. Based on a certificate issued by Gazetted food inspector, gutka and zarda come under hazardous food items, will be deposited in the court, he said.

● **TASK FORCE** inspector Shakir Ali along with his team, raided a house and godown under the II-Town police station limits and seized the banned products.

SHORT TAKES

INDO-US 2+2 TALKS CONFIRMED ON OCT. 26, 27

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

United States secretary of state Michael R. Pompeo and secretary of defense Mark T. Esper will indeed visit New Delhi on October 26 and 27 and will hold talks with their Indian counterparts S. Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh on October 27 as part of the Indo-US 2+2 talks at the foreign and defence ministerial level, New Delhi finally announced on Wednesday, adding that the agenda would "cover all bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest".

In a separate late evening statement, the US said the talks were "to advance the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and expand cooperation to promote stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and the world".

Pompeo, meanwhile, will separately visit Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia after his visit to India.

The tense situation on the Sino-Indian border in the Ladakh sector and Chinese military brinkmanship in Asia are bound to figure during the talks, observers point out.

FAROOQ ABDULLAH INTERROGATED AGAIN BY ED

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 21

Former chief minister and National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah was on Wednesday again summoned by the Srinagar wing of Enforcement Directorate (ED) where he was grilled by its officials in connection with an alleged multi-crore scam in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).

This was the second time in three days that the octogenarian politician and three-time chief minister of J&K had to face the cross-examination by the ED officials, termed by the NC as "part of a coercive plot." His son and NC vice president Omar Abdullah lamented, "This on a day when my father turns 84!"

On Monday, Senior Abdullah was interrogated by the ED for seven hours over his alleged role in misappropriation of ₹113.66 crore (including bank interest) received by J&KCA from the BCCI between April 2002 and December 2011.

NOTICE TO MP GOVT OVER INDUCTION OF NON-LEGISLATORS

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 21

Madhya Pradesh high court on Wednesday issued notice to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and state Assembly speaker Rameswar Sharma over induction of 14 non-MLAs as ministers in the state government. 14 Congress MLAs had resigned from Assembly in March leading to the fall of 15-month-old Kamal Nath government. They later quit Congress and joined BJP.

They were inducted in the Shivraj ministry later. The court has set December 14 this year as the next date of hearing in the case. The court was responding to a petition filed by one Aradhana Bhargav seeking suspension of the ministers from their posts.

INDIA RECORDS STEADY DIP IN COVID-19 CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

As several European countries have started witnessing resurgence of a second wave of Coronavirus, India seems to be slowly coming out of its first wave as the fresh Covid-19 cases and deaths in the country continue to decline. On Wednesday, India's overall Covid-19 tally crossed 76.51 lakh with 54,044 new cases and 717 fatalities in a day. Total deaths in India so far due to the virus has been 1.16 lakh.

"India has sustained its trend of maintaining the active cases below the 7.5 lakh mark for the 2nd successive day. With a high number of Covid-19 patients recovering every day, India's steady trend of posting high levels of daily recoveries also continues. 61,775 recoveries were registered in the last 24 hours in the country compared to 54,044 new confirmed cases," said the officials of Union health ministry.

HC relief



Dhakis, traditional drummers, wait to be booked by members of community puja pandals for performance during the Durga Puja festival, in Kolkata on Wednesday. The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday partly modified its order on community Durga Pujas, allowing drummers to perform within the no-entry zones of the marquees. — PTI

PLA soldiers find it difficult to adapt to high altitudes

Soldiers confused, completely disoriented due to hypothermia in cold

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Extreme climatic conditions in the high altitude areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh — which has been witnessing massive build-up of troops both by Indian Army and the People's Liberation of Army (PLA) since the last few months — has started to take a toll on the PLA soldiers.

Corporal Wang Ya Long of the PLA, who was apprehended by the Indian Army when he strayed across the LAC in Demchok sector on Monday — was heavily disoriented due to the extreme weather, which led him to cross over the LAC, hardly realising that he had walked over to the Indian side.

After more than 36 hours in custody of the Indian Army who interrogated him, the Corporal of the PLA was handed over to the Chinese military at the Chushul-Moldo border point on Tuesday night.

Sources in the know of the developments disclosed to *Deccan Chronicle* that Wang Ya Long was heavily disoriented and gasping for breath when he was caught by the Indian troops at Demchok on Monday. This was precisely why the Indian Army provided medical assistance including oxygen besides warm clothes

Indian Army hands over captured Chinese corporal

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

The Indian Army late on Tuesday night handed over the Chinese soldier who had strayed across the Line of Actual Control to the People's Liberation Army at the Chushul Moldo meeting point in Ladakh.

The Chinese soldier,

and food. "But for the timely medical assistance, the Chinese soldier could have died," they said. Discounting the theory that the Chinese Corporal was on an espionage mission, they said there is nothing to suggest that it was a deliberate act by the Chinese side. However, all standard procedures of interrogating a Prisoner of War was followed by the Indian Army and it was only after making it extremely clear that there was nothing suspicious about the Chinese soldier that he was handed back to his military.

While China claimed that their soldier "went missing while helping the local herdsman find lost yak near the India-

China border," there could also be a possibility of Corporal Wang Ya Long making an attempt to desert his Army, unable to bear the extreme climatic condition, but inadvertently ended up on the Indian side. "He appears to have genuinely lost his way and we do not rule out the possibility of he being a deserter or at least making an attempt at that," sources said adding that the Yak theory by the Chinese was not convincing.

Over the last month, ever since massive mobilisation of men and material began taking place on both sides, multiple obstacles and barbed wire fences have been put in place by both the armies, making it impossible for anyone to

reme altitude and harsh climatic conditions.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said on Tuesday at a press briefing that China hoped India would hand over the soldier soon and works with China to promote implementation of the consensus reached at the seventh round of talks.

cross over from those points. But the Corporal in PLA is said to have strayed across the LAC from the mountainous terrain, away from the points where obstacles have been put up.

Deployment on the high altitude regions can have a tremendous impact on the mental health of the soldiers. "Confusion or disorientation which is a symptom of advanced hypothermia is the main problem in the extreme cold. In such a condition, the individuals do not realise what is happening to them. It has a dysfunctional impact on the personality and psychological integrity of an individual which leaves little or no control over the situation they are in," sources explained.

PAK INCREASES FORCES ALONG BORDER: INTEL

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

Intelligence agencies have cautioned that Pakistan Army has increased its presence both along the International Border (IB) and the Line of Control (LoC) over the last few weeks.

Basis specific intelligence inputs, sources say Pakistan Army has deployed special units of Border Action Teams (BATs) close to the LoC, primarily to push more militants into the Kashmir Valley. It is a known fact that Pak Army deploys BATs to help militants sneak into the Valley.

Sudden increase in presence of Pakistan Army near the LoC and the IB is being linked to a major infiltration being planned before the onset of winter in Kashmir, when most mountain passes get blocked due to inclement weather.

Both intelligence agencies and Army have concrete inputs that at least 250 to 300 militants are waiting at their launch pads close to the border areas, waiting for an opportunity to sneak into India.

Cabinet approves amendments to J&K panchayat Act

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

In a significant decision, the Union cabinet on Wednesday approved the amendments made by the home ministry in the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act 1989, that enables setting up of a directly-elected 14-member district development council (DDC), which has led to fears that this will curb the powers of MLAs and members of legislative bodies. The amendments were made by the home ministry on October 16.

In another major decision, the Cabinet also approved the payment of bonus for 2019-2020 to 30.67 lakh Central government employees, which will cost ₹3,737 crores, and it is hoped will encourage spending during the festival season and add to demand in the economy. The government hopes that the bonus, ahead of Durga Puja, Dussehra and Diwali, will encourage the middle class to go out and spend, and thus add to demand in the economy, Union minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters after the Cabinet meeting. The bonus will be disbursed in a week's time.

The Productivity-Linked Bonus (PLB) for 2019-2020,

with a financial implication of ₹2,791 crores, will benefit 16.97 lakh non-gazetted employees of commercial establishments like the Railways, Posts, Defence, EPFO, ESIC, among others. The non-PLB, or ad-hoc bonus, which is given to non-gazetted Central employees, will benefit 13.70 lakh staff. It will cost the exchequer ₹946 crores.

In Kashmir, meanwhile, after the changes made in the panchayati raj law, the DDCs will replace the district development boards, which were chaired by a Cabinet minister or a minister of state, and included MPs, MLAs and MLCs.

The decision to accept the amendments to the legislation was taken at the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday. Javadekar said the decision was people friendly and another step towards assimilation of the region's people with the mainstream after Article 370 was abolished in August last year and J&K was made a Union Territory, separating it from Ladakh, which too was made a Union Territory.

There are no legislative bodies in the region as they were abolished when Jammu and Kashmir was carved up into two Union Territories.

GJM quits NDA, to support TMC

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, OCT. 21

In a dramatic move, absconding Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) founder Bimal Gurung on Wednesday took a U-turn and dealt a heavy blow to the BJP ahead of the Assembly election in West Bengal next year. Accusing the saffron party of not fulfilling its "commitment" towards the separate statehood demand of "Gorkhaland", he quit the NDA, leaving the BJP stumped.

With talk of an alliance with Trinamul Congress, Gurung also offered full support to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to help her return to power for the third consecutive time. His announcement came after he surfaced in Kolkata in the afternoon for the first time in three years, when he was on the run with more than 150 cases, including under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, against him for spearheading a violent movement in Darjeeling for "Gorkhaland" in the middle of 2017.

Travelling by car, Gurung went to Gorkha Bhavan in Salt Lake first. However, he could not enter as the police personnel were guarding the building.

Later, at a hotel, he alleged, "Though we were a constituent of the NDA 2009 onwards, the Central government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did not fulfil its commitment of finding 'Gorkhaland' as a permanent political solution for the hills. It has not included 11 Gorkha communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes. We were cheated. So we are quitting the NDA."

Kaziranga National Park open for tourists

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, OCT. 21

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Wednesday formally opened the Kaziranga National Park for the tourists and flagged off jeep safari which has been allowed to ply in two — Kohora and Bagori ranges of the national park while other two ranges would be opened from November for the visitors where elephant safari will also be started.

● **SARBANANDA SONOWAL** flagged off jeep safari which has been allowed to ply in two — Kohora and Bagori ranges of the national park while other two ranges would be opened from November for the visitors where elephant safari will also be started.

● **SONOWAL HOPES** that Assam's tourism sector will be able to overcome the setback of Covid-19 lockdown soon.

stopping rhino poaching to a great extent in the last four and half years and he thanked the people of the nearby areas for extending their full cooperation in eliminating poaching incidents. He also called on the people to maintain all Covid-19 protocols while visiting the Kaziranga National Park and other such places of tourist interest so that the spread of the pandemic can be contained.

He also requested the media to spread the news of the opening of Kaziranga National Park for the year 2020-21 so that tourists from various places of the country and abroad can come and enjoy the natural beauty of the park while also contributing to revival of Assam's tourism industry. The Chief Minister also took a jeep safari into the national park and he was accompanied by local MLA and agriculture minister Atul Bora, water resources minister Keshab Mahanta, industries and commerce minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, MLA Rituparna Baruah, PCCF (Wild Life) A. M. Singh among others.

EC issues notice to Kamal Nath over 'item' jibe

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

The Election Commission of India has issued a notice to senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath for his derogatory comments against BJP candidate Imarti Devi. Kamal Nath, during a bypoll election rally at Dabra, Gwalior on October 18 had, without naming Imarti Devi, addressed her as "item," a comment that has not gone down well with the ECI.

The ECI has said that such a derogatory statement is a violation of the General Code of Conduct and construed as being repugnant to the honour and dignity of women and asked Kamal Nath to submit an explanation in the next 48 hours failing which the ECI will take its call.

The ECI has mentioned that it has received a complaint from National

MP CONG SPLITS, DEMAND NATH'S APOLOGY

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 21

Veteran leader Kamal Nath's 'item' jibe against state women and child development minister Imarti Devi, which triggered outrage, has divided Congress in Madhya Pradesh with an influential section of leaders demanding apology from him for his 'outrageous' utterance.

Commission of Women chairperson saying Nath has used the derogatory remark for a woman minister and has "strongly condemned such irresponsible and disparaging statement by a person holding responsible office.

EC ticks off parties for violating Covid norms

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

The Election Commission of India has ticked off political parties in Bihar for violating social distancing norms during their poll campaigns and addressing public meetings without wearing masks.

In an advisory to the presidents and general secretaries of the recognised national and state political parties, the ECI expressed unhappiness over the complete disregard of its guidelines issued earlier and said chief electoral officers and the district machinery would be expected to invoke appropriate and relevant penal provisions against candidates concerned as well as organisers responsible for such violations.

In its advisory on October 9, the ECI had asked political parties to follow instructions related to pandemic Covid-19 at all stages, especially wherever public interface in physical form is involved.

LJP releases party's vision document

NAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 21

LJP Chief Chirag Paswan on Wednesday released his party's manifesto for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections.

During the event, Chirag Paswan said that the manifesto was based on his party's vision of "Bihar first Bihari first" which will resolve many serious

problems being faced by the people of the state. The manifesto promises to create job opportunities, better policies for education, health and industrial growth in the state. The vision document also emphasises on constructing a grand Sita temple in Sitamarhi on the lines of Ram Temple in Ayodhya to promote religious tourism in Bihar.

"Observance of the preventive measures including wearing a mask, use of sanitiser, observance of social distancing is a duty cast upon all the stakeholders in the larger interest of public health," the ECI had said.

However, visuals of huge gatherings at campaign rallies in Bihar have left ECI miffed.

"Instances of such public meetings have come to notice of the ECI, where large number of crowds have assembled in utter violation of social distancing and the political leaders/campaigners are addressing the gathering without wearing masks in complete disregard of the guidelines/instructions issued by ECI", it said.



IN BRIEF

Houston club shooting: 3 dead

Houston: Three people were killed in a shooting at a Houston nightclub where about 30 people had gathered for an open mic night and authorities were searching early Wednesday for suspects, police said. Police had been called to the DD Sky Club at about 9:45 p.m. Tuesday on reports of multiple people dead inside, Houston Police Commander Caroleta Johnson said. Once there, officers found three people dead at the scene and a fourth person in critical condition, Johnson said. Investigators believe two men opened fire after a fight broke out, but officers don't yet have a clear description of the shooters. Kade Trammell, who was inside the club attending the open mic show, said he heard seven to 10 gunshots before he and his friends dropped to the floor and then fled. "We got really scared, we ran for our ... lives," he said. "Everybody starting running for their lives after the gunshots," he said.

Five killed in Pak explosion

Islamabad/Karachi: A powerful explosion ripped through a four-storey building in Pakistan's Sindh province, killing at least five people and injuring 20 others, police said. At least two floors of the building near Maskan Chowranghi in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal area in Karachi were severely damaged, leading authorities to fear that the toll may rise. The death toll in the incident has increased to five, Faisal Edhi of the Edhi Ambulance Service said. Seven of the injured are said to be in critical condition. The security forces have cordoned off the area after the explosion. Police chief Mushtaq Mahar said the bomb disposal squad and anti-terrorism officials are yet to determine the cause of the explosion. A police official said that initial investigations suggested that the explosion could have been caused due to a gas leak. The official said that no trace of an improvised explosive device (IED) was found at the scene. The incident happened a day after five people were injured when an IED bomb exploded.

UK navy seizes 450 kg meth

Dubai: A British royal navy vessel seized 450 kilograms (990 pounds) of methamphetamine in the northern Arabian Sea in the largest-ever bust by a joint maritime operation in the region, officials said Wednesday. The HMS Montrose seized the drugs hidden aboard a stateless dhow, a traditional cargo ship that plies the Persian Gulf and surrounding waters, the joint task force said in a statement. The seizure took place last Wednesday. The task force said it was unable to say where the drugs came from, who manufactured them or their ultimate destination. However, Iran over the last decade has seen an explosion in the use of methamphetamine, known locally as "shishah" or "glass" in Farsi. That's bled into neighbouring Iraq as well. While drug lab busts have dropped in recent years in Iran, there appears to be an uptick in meth drug labs in Afghanistan.

NASA CRAFT LANDS ON ASTEROID

Washington, Oct. 21: After a four-year-long journey, NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft successfully touched down on the rugged surface of asteroid Bennu on Tuesday, and unfurled its robotic arm to collect a sample of rocks dating back to the birth of our solar system to bring back to Earth, the US space agency said. The Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft briefly touched the near-Earth asteroid to collect dust and pebbles from its surface for delivery to Earth in 2023.

Asteroid Bennu is currently more than 321 million kilometres from the Earth. It offers scientists a window into the early solar system as it was first taking shape billions of years ago and flinging ingredients that could have helped seed life on Earth, NASA said. If Tuesday's sample collection event provided enough of a sample, mission teams will command the spacecraft to begin stowing the precious primordial cargo to begin its journey back to Earth in March 2021.

Pope nod for same-sex civil unions in interview

Says homosexual people have the right to be in a family

Rome, Oct. 21: Pope Francis endorsed same-sex civil unions for the first time as Pope while being interviewed for the feature-length documentary *Francesco*, which premiered on Wednesday at the Rome Film Festival.

The papal thumbs-up came midway through the film that delves into issues Francis cares about most, including the environment, poverty, migration, racial and income inequality, and the people most affected by discrimination. "Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God," Francis said in one of his sit-down interviews for the film.

"What we have to have is a civil union law; that way they are legally covered." While serving as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Francis endorsed civil unions for gay couples as an alternative to same-sex marriages. However, he had never come out publicly in favour of civil unions as pope. The Jesuit priest who has been at the forefront in seeking to build bridges with gays in the church, the Rev. James Martin, praised the pope's comments as "a major step forward in the church's support for LGBT people."

"The Pope's speaking positively about civil unions also sends a strong message to places where



Pope Francis arrives for his weekly general audience in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican on Wednesday. — AFP

the church has opposed such laws," Martin said in a statement. One of the main characters in the documentary is Juan Carlos Cruz, the Chilean survivor of clergy sexual abuse whom Francis initially discredited during a 2018 visit to Chile.

Cruz, who is gay, said that during his first meetings with the Pope in May 2018, Francis assured him that God made Cruz gay. Cruz tells his own story in snippets throughout the film, chronicling both Francis' evolution on understanding sexual abuse as well as to document the Pope's views on gay people. Director Evgeny Afineevsky had remarkable access to cardinals, the Vatican television archives and the Pope

himself. He said he negotiated his way in through persistence, and deliveries of Argentine mate tea and Alfajores cookies that he got to the pope via some well-connected Argentines in Rome.

"Listen, when you are in the Vatican, the only way to achieve something is to break the rule and then to say, 'I'm sorry,'" Afineevsky said in an interview ahead of the premiere. The director worked official and unofficial channels starting in early 2018, and ended up so close to Francis by the end of the project that he showed the pope the movie on his iPad in August. The two recently exchanged Yom Kippur greetings; Afineevsky is a Russian-born Jew who lives in Los Angeles. But

"Francesco" is more than a biopic about the Pope.

Wim Wenders did that in the 2018 film *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word*, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival.

"Francesco," is more a visual survey of the world's crises and tragedies, with audio from the pope providing possible ways to solve them. Afineevsky travelled the world to film it: the settings include Cox's Bazaar in Bangladesh where Myanmar's Rohingya sought refuge; the US-Mexico border and Francis' native Argentina. "The film tells the story of the Pope by reversing the cameras," said Vatican communications director Paolo Ruffini, who was one of Afineevsky's closest Vatican-based collaborators on the film.

Ruffini said that when Afineevsky first approached him with the idea of a documentary, he tried to tamp down his hopes for interviewing the Pope. "I told him it wasn't going to be easy," he said. But Ruffini gave him some advice: Names of people who had been impacted by the Pope, even after just a brief meeting. "I told him that many of those encounters had certainly been filmed by the Vatican cameras, and that there he would find a veritable gold mine of stories that told a story," Ruffini said.

— AP

Trump paid \$1.8L tax in China for licensing deals

Washington, Oct. 21: President Donald Trump spent a decade unsuccessfully pursuing projects in China, operating an office there during his first run for president and forging a partnership with a major government-controlled company, *The New York Times* reported Tuesday.

China is one of only three foreign nations — the others are Britain and Ireland — where Trump maintains a bank account, according to a *Times* analysis of the president's tax records. The foreign accounts do not show up on Trump's public financial disclosures, where he must list personal assets, because they are held under corporate names.

The Chinese account is controlled by Trump International Hotels Management LLC, which the tax records show paid \$188,561 in taxes in China while pursuing licensing deals there from 2013 to 2015. In response to questions from *The Times*, Alan Garten, a lawyer for the Trump Organisation, said the company had "opened an account with a Chinese bank having offices in the United States in order to pay the local taxes" associated with efforts to do business there.

He said the company had opened the account after establishing an office in China "to explore the potential for hotel deals in Asia." "No deals, transactions or other business activities ever materialised and, since 2015, the office has remained inactive,"

Garten said. "Though the bank account remains open, it has never been used for any other purpose." Garten would not identify the bank in China where the account is held. China continues to be an issue in the 2020 presidential campaign.

THE COMPANY (Trump International Hotels Management LLC) had opened an account with a Chinese bank having offices in the US in order to pay the local taxes associated with efforts to do business there

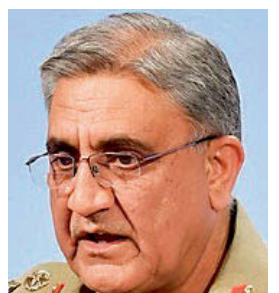
ALAN GARTEN, lawyer for the Trump Organisation

Don says will win by 'bigger' margin

Erie (US), Oct. 21: US President Donald Trump has exuded confidence that he will win the November 3 election by a bigger margin than that of 2016 and urged his supporters to deliver a "thundering" defeat to his Democratic challenger Joe Biden. In his hour-long speech at an election rally here, Trump reiterated that his challenger Biden and his running mate Senator Kamala Harris, if elected, would convert the

US into a socialist country. "It's time to send a message to these wealthy liberal hypocrites by delivering Joe Biden, sleepy Joe, a thundering defeat on November 3rd. Got to get out and vote," Trump told his supporters in Pennsylvania on Tuesday. Trump asserted that his victory on November 3 is going to be bigger than that of 2016. "This is going to be bigger than four years ago."

— PTI



Qamar Javed Bajwa

PROBE INTO ARREST OF NAWAZ KIN

Karachi, Oct. 21: Pakistan's Sindh Police chief has deferred his leave and asked his officers to set aside their leave applications for 10 days "in the larger national interest" after Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa ordered an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the arrest of former premier Nawaz Sharif's son-in-law, an issue that brought the paramilitary forces and police in direct conflict in the country's largest city.

In a series of tweets, Sindh Police said on Tuesday that the "unfortunate incident" that occurred on the night of 18/19 October caused "great heartache and resentment" within its ranks, referring to the circumstances surrounding the arrest of Sharif's son-in-law Capt (retd) Muhammad Safdar.

Opposition parties have alleged that the Sindh police chief was reportedly forcibly taken away by paramilitary Frontier Corps from his home in Karachi in the wee hours of Monday and pressurised to order for the arrest of Safdar.

"As a result, IG Sindh decided to proceed on leave and subsequently all ranks decided that they would also apply for leave to protest the humiliation meted out to Sindh police," it said.

It added, "This was a spontaneous and heartfelt reaction and made on an individual rather than a collective basis, because every single member of the department felt an acute sense of disrespect."

— PTI

PAK MAY NOT EXIT FATF GREY LIST: REPORT

Islamabad, Oct. 21: Pakistan may remain on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has been unable to comply with six of the 27 points in the global terror financing and money laundering watchdog's action plan, a media report said on Wednesday.

The Paris-based global watchdog will hold its virtual plenary session from October 21 to 23. It will review Pakistan's progress on the 27-point action plan. The FATF had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019, but the deadline was extended later on due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

— PTI

Support for Thai royals



Royalist supporters take part in a rally to show support for the Thai royal establishment in Su-ngai Kolok District in Thailand's southern province of Narathiwat on Wednesday. — AFP

Europe records weekly high of 927K cases

Geneva, Oct. 21: The World Health Organisation says Europe again reported a new high in the weekly number of Coronavirus cases during the pandemic last week, recording more than 927,000 cases.

The UN health agency said in its latest global report on the deadly Coronavirus pandemic that the continent saw a 25 per cent spike in confirmed cases last week and was responsible for 38 per cent of all new cases reported worldwide.

Russia, the Czech

Republic and Italy accounted for more than half of new Coronavirus cases in Europe.

The WHO report says the number of deaths in Europe also "continues to climb," and increased by one-third from the previous week.

The health agency says Slovenia reported a 150 per cent increase in cases in a week with a record 4,890 cases.

Slovenia also reported 1,924 Coronavirus deaths, compared to one week before.

— AP

CDC: 300K more deaths in US

New York, Oct. 21: A new government report shows that since the Coronavirus pandemic began, the US has seen 300,000 more deaths than it usually would. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has been tracking how many deaths have been reported and comparing them with counts seen in other years. Usually, between the beginning of February and the end of September, about 1.9 million deaths are reported. This year, it's closer to 2.2 million — a 14.5 per cent increase. The CDC says the Coronavirus was involved in about two-thirds of the excess deaths. CDC officials say it's likely the virus was a factor in many other deaths too.

For example, someone with heart attack symptoms may have hesitated to go to a hospital that was

busy with Coronavirus patients. The largest segment of the excess deaths, about 95,000, were in elderly people ages 75 to 84. That was 21.5 per cent more than in a normal year. But the biggest relative increase, 26.5 per cent, was in people ages 25 to 44. Deaths in people younger than 25 actually dropped slightly. Deaths were up for different racial and ethnic groups.

— AP

Sub-Saharan Africa has households that struggle to survive on \$1.90 a day

One in six children live in extreme poverty: UN

United Nations, Oct. 21: An estimated one in six children — or 356 million globally — were living in extreme poverty before the Covid-19 pandemic began, and this is set to worsen significantly, according to a new World Bank Group and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) analysis. Global Estimate of Children in Monetary Poverty: An Update', notes that sub-Saharan

aran Africa, with its limited social safety nets, accounts for two-thirds of children living in households that struggle to survive on an average of \$ 1.90 a day or less per person — the international measure for extreme poverty, while South Asia accounts for nearly a fifth of these children. The analysis shows that the number of children living in extreme poverty

decreased moderately, by 29 million, between 2013 and 2017.

However, UNICEF and the World Bank Group warn that any progress made in recent years, has been "slow-paced, unequally distributed, and at risk" due to the economic impact of the pandemic. "One in six children living in extreme poverty is one in six children struggling to

survive," UNICEF Director of Programmes Sanjay Wijesekera said.

"These numbers alone should shock anyone. And the scale and depth of what we know about the financial hardships brought on by the pandemic, are only set to make matters far worse. Governments urgently need a children's recovery plan to prevent countless more children and their families from reaching levels of poverty unseen for many, many

years," Wijesekera said. Although children make up around a third of the global population, around half of the extreme poor are children. The youngest children are the worst off — nearly 20 per cent of all of them below the age of 5 in the developing world live in extremely poor households, the report highlights.

— PTI

DECCAN Chronicle

22 OCTOBER 2020

Punjab makes a point, will other states follow?

The passage of four bills and a resolution by the Punjab Assembly seeking to undo the impact of the three recently passed Central laws to regulate farming could trigger a political war between the Opposition-ruled states and the Centre on agriculture, a state subject as per the seventh schedule of the Constitution.

While the unanimous resolution passed by the Assembly in the Congress-ruled state has asked the Centre to annul the Central laws and promulgate an ordinance making procurement of food grains on minimum support price (MSP) a statutory right of the farmers, the three state laws seek to address the grievances of the farmers who have been protesting against the Central laws. According to the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, no sale of paddy and wheat will be valid in the state unless the rate of payment is equal to or above the MSP and its violation could attract imprisonment of not less than three years and a fine. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, provides for a fee to be levied on traders or electronic trading and transaction platforms for trade outside the mandis run by the Agricultural Produce Market Committees. The Bill amending the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, seeks to protect the farmers from attachment of land below 2.5 acres in recovery proceedings, insulating small farmers from the provisions of the Central law that facilitates contract farming. The Essential Commodities (Special Provisions and Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2020, empowers the state to set stock limits under extraordinary circumstances, a power the Central law had reserved for the Union government.

While the Central laws concerned made the mandis redundant by allowing farmers to sell outside them, the state law makes such trade unviable by making it a costly deal.

That these laws followed the exhortation of Congress president Sonia Gandhi to the states her party rules to take legislative route to checkmate the Centre's move makes their fate uncertain as governors can sit on them or consult the President, as per the constitutional provisions. It is highly likely that courts will be called upon to decide on the constitutionality or otherwise of the bills and the farmers will have to wait to benefit from them, if there is any.

It's pretty clear that the Capt. Amarinder Singh government is making a political point by moving the bills. The BJP had claimed that the Modi government was doing what the Congress had promised in its manifesto—to free up the mandis from all controls. The Congress, however, had explained that the party was aiming at reforms of the markets that were long overdue. It may be noted that the Punjab bills offer pretty little in terms of reforming them. If it really wants to support the farmers and win the argument on the issue of farm bills, the Congress government should make the functioning of the mandis transparent and non-exploitative. Whether it will walk the talk is the moot question.

'Rapist' trolls: Shame them

The cyber wing of the Chennai police should not stop with registering the case against the Twitter user who issued a rape threat to the daughter of award-winning film actor Vijay Sethupathi. The police should pursue the pervert, going by the Twitter handle @tsirithikrajh, in all earnestness and arrest him. Earlier, the five-year-old daughter of cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni was threatened similarly by a 16-year-old boy from Gujarat on Instagram. Though the police cracked down quickly and caught the boy, it is not clear what action was taken under the law, which would serve as a deterrent to every other pervert lurking in the shadows of social media.

Traditionally, rape threat has been used as a weapon by roguish men to establish their gender supremacy and to intimidate women they disliked. That it is now used freely in social media to silence women who have a mind of their own is one of the banes of modern society. It is a tragedy that not much has been done by the enforcing agencies so far to put an end to this cheap tactic employed by men running short of ideas and words to counter women intellectually.

Now that the trend has degenerated further, touching such an abysmal level wherein men threaten children just because they do not agree with their fathers' behavior, whatever it is, the crime has to be seen in a new light. Rape threat should be treated as a felony and dealt with accordingly by the police. Also, such persons need to be exposed to society with a view to telling all men that as a civilised society we have zero tolerance to rape and rape threat. Above all, we need to enlighten young men that such threats come out of men's impotence in dealing with themselves and their problems.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

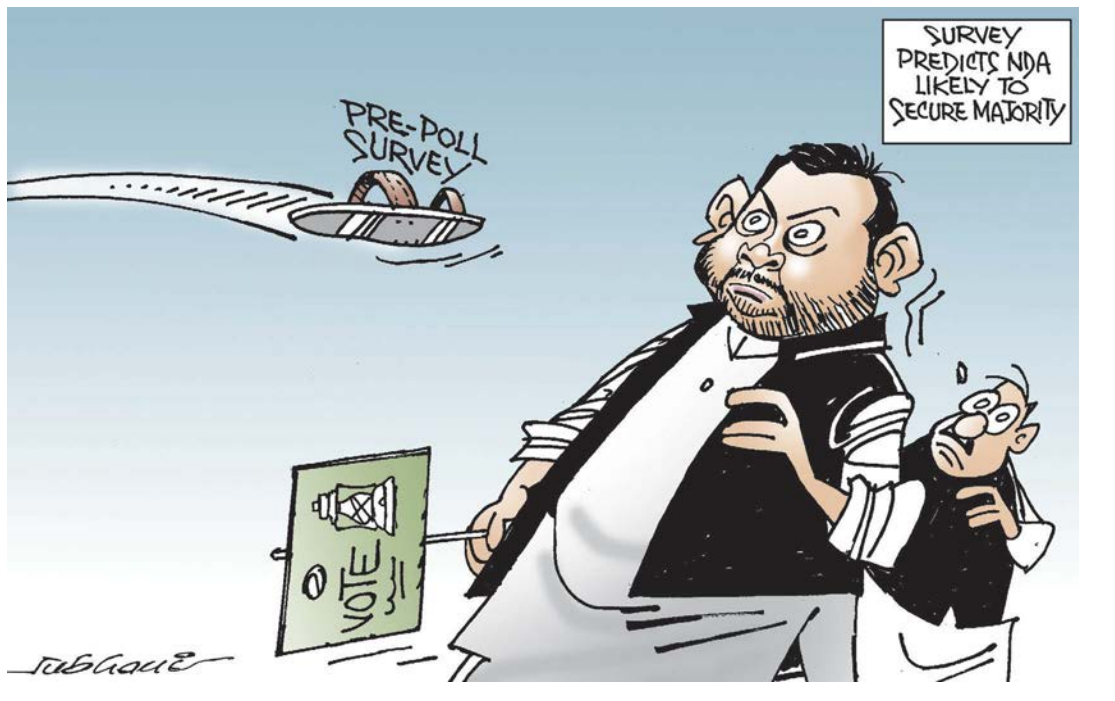
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Subhani



Step up pressure on Xi; bring France into Quad



Claude Arpi

Since five months now, Indian and Chinese troops have stood face-to-face in the high Himalayas; in all probability, the standoff will continue during the cold winter months ahead in Ladakh.

It has consequences at many levels, not just militarily.

The first: what has President Xi Jinping achieved by trying to advance a few hundred metres in Galwan, Gogra or Pangong Tso?

Different motives have been attributed to the Chinese chess moves.

To cite a few, Beijing wanted to stop the Darbuk-Shyok-DBO Road, protect China's projects in Gilgit Baltistan (and Shaksam valley occupied by China); gain strategic advantages on the ground; enhance Chairman Xi's prestige; boost the standing of the People's Liberation Army; humiliate an arrogant competitor (India) in a period of weakness; it was even rumoured that Gen. Zhao Zongqi, the Western Theatre Command chief, thought he would get a seat in the powerful Central Military Commission after Ladakh.

China is today the loser: infrastructure development will continue, India will not renounce its legitimate claims on Gilgit-Bakistan, and so on.

Further, Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong or Xinjiang may come up for discussion in the not-too-far future and the "One-China" policy may be questioned in many quarters.

This didn't stop Zhao Lijian, the Chinese foreign ministry's "wolf warrior" spokesman, to continue with his anti-India tirades: "China does not recognise the so-called 'Ladakh Central Territory' and 'Arunachal Pradesh' illegally established by India, and opposes development of infrastructure construction in border dispute areas for the purpose of

military control."

This diplomat had the cheek to add: "Neither party should take any actions in the border area that would complicate the situation in order to avoid affecting the efforts of both parties to ease the situation." This was the day Beijing announced a new strategic road leading up to Metok, north of the McMahon Line.

A Chinese TV report said the Pai-Metok Highway will be completed by the end of September 2022: "After completion, the length of the road from Nyingchi City to Metok County [North of Upper Siang of Arunachal Pradesh] through Bomi County will be shortened from 346 km to 180 km, and the driving time will be shortened from 11 hours to 4.5 hours."

At the same time, the world is fast becoming aware of the constant double standards in Chinese propaganda, and for the first time it is taking steps to counter Beijing's moves.

Take France for example. In the past, Paris was often reluctant to offend China as it was "doing business" with Beijing. But things are changing; realising the danger of Chinese hegemony for the planet, French President Emmanuel Macron recently appointed Christophe Penot, his ambassador to Australia, to the new post of ambassador for the Indo-Pacific.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported: "The coronavirus has catalysed European concern over Chinese government actions in Hong Kong, the treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, military incursions into the South China Sea and political interference." In June, Mr Penot had already warned that international standards were increasingly called into question, adding that the current Covid crisis was likely accelerate the process: "France and Australia have a particular

responsibility here to ensure that the post-Covid world does not get worse and, if possible, that it becomes better than the world before."

The Australian newspaper commented: "France is the last European power to change its vision of China and the region. In September, Germany, Europe's largest economy, which has long enjoyed close ties with Beijing, released its first Indo-Pacific strategy focused on increasing diplomatic pressure on China."

FRANCE IN THE QUAD?

A couple of years ago, I had asked an Indian observer why France was not included as a participant in the Quad. "Nobody thought of it", he had told me. This has changed after President Macron's visit to India in March 2018. Addressing a French gathering in New Delhi, the young President reminded his countrymen: "France is a power of the Indian and Pacific Oceans; we are present at Reunion, we are also there in French Polynesia and New Caledonia. And we are a maritime power, it is often forgotten but France is the second maritime power in the world. We have a strong navy, we have nuclear submarines equipped like few other powers in the world; a maritime surveillance capability through our own satellites and technologies; it is obvious we are a military and intelligence power ranking us among the first nations in the world."

France is ready to work with India on the oceans.

A few months earlier, C. Raja Mohan and Darshana Baruah had written for Carnegie India about *Deepening the India-France Maritime Partnership*: "As maritime security acquires greater salience in India's foreign policy, New Delhi is increasingly looking to

In the past, Paris was often reluctant to offend China as it was 'doing business' with Beijing. But things are changing...

leverage its strategic partnerships, particularly with Paris. Although India and France have joined forces on a number of issues since 1998, regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific has never risen to the top of the agenda. However, this may be about to change."

After the Quad's last meeting in Tokyo last week, US spokesperson Cale Brown said the foreign ministers of the US, Japan, Australia and India had reaffirmed their collective efforts towards a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific: "they pledged to continue regular consultations to implement their vision of a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific."

US deputy secretary of state Stephen Biegun more recently explained: "The Quad is a partnership driven by shared interests, not binding obligations, and is not intended to be an exclusive grouping. Any country that seeks a free and open Indo-Pacific and is willing to take steps to ensure that should be welcome to work with us."

It seems that Paris's vision could perfectly fit into this scheme. So why can't France join the four founding nations?

Emmanuel Lenain, French ambassador to India, answered the question in an interview with *India Today*: "Indo-Pacific is a priority. Both the leaders [Modi and Macron] have been working on that at least for the past four or five years. It is about values. We want an open, transparent Indo-Pacific. Now, what would be the framework. I don't think anything is exclusive... All like-minded countries should join efforts towards an open, transparent Indo-Pacific."

It sounds like the US secretary of state's definition.

Whether France joins or not, there is no doubt all these new collaborative efforts should be credited to President Xi and his reckless foreign policies. One more "loss" in his balance sheet.

The writer is based in South India for the past 42 years. He writes on India, China, Tibet and Indo-French relations.

LETTERS

PUNCHY CARTOON

Today's cartoon on Trump was one of the best from Subhani. Surely the punch line is for US only. May God give more power to his pen.

G. Navyaleela
Hyderabad

CORPORATOR MISSING

No corporator helped us in clearing our cellar or restoring power (*Building watchmen the worst hit, DC, Oct. 20*). It was all done by a few residents who also followed up with the electricity department on their own by going there personally. The electricity department people also did not tell us about any intervention from the corporator and neither the quoted resident informed us about her appeal to the corporator. The watchman and his family are being taken care of by the residents.

Madhuvanti Nene
Hyderabad

HISTORY LESSON

The much hyped 6pm speech by Prime Minister Narendra Modi felt like my history teacher extolling the past values and culture to tackle the present situation. He has patiently reminded the nation that war is still on against Covid and not to be negligent till we have the victory. To sum it up it was a 13-minute history class advising caution and seasonal greetings.

Chodagam Sai Ganesh
Hyderabad

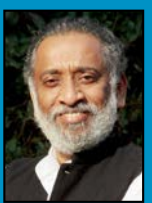
The PM spoke without addressing serious issues. The government must help the poor. Lower middle classes are slipping into poverty line due to lack of jobs. There is no mention about air pollution in capital, hunger index, growth, or jobs, or attack on women.

Vikas Panchareddy
Hyderabad

U.S. officials ignore arrival of Mrs. Gandhi

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 21 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and party arrived here last night on a four-day visit for the 25th anniversary commemorative session of the United Nations General Assembly, now in progress. Mrs. Gandhi is due to speak in the Assembly on October 23. As already indicated by her during her stopover in London, Mrs. Gandhi has passed up President Richard Nixon's invitation to her to attend the mass dinner he is giving in Washington on October 24 for all visiting heads of State and Government.

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



CIC sans chief, only 10 of 28 panels worked during lockdown

Fifteen years after the Right to Information (RTI) Act came into force, does the nation have more transparency or less? The story is quite sombre. More than 2.2 lakh cases are pending at the Central and State Information Commissions. Nine out of 29 information commissions are functioning without a chief, one-fourth of information commissioner posts are vacant and the state commissions in Jharkhand and Tripura are defunct. No new commissioners have been appointed.

Even the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has refused to disclose details on the PM-Cares Fund stating that the fund is "not a public authority" within the ambit of the RTI Act!

The absence of a commissioner has serious ramifications for the effective functioning of the information commissions. But even the Central Information Commission, which hears second appeals against all central government departments and UTs, has been without a chief since August this year. Bimal

Julka, who headed the CIC for barely six months, demitted office in August, upon reaching the age limit stipulated in the Act.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, only 10 of the 28 information commissions worked and even these hardly heard any appeals.

Yet, it is not just the transparency law that has suffered. There are other vacancies in key organisations that indicate a drift not usually associated with the Modi sarkar. Sources say that the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PSEB) has been headless for more than a month after Rajiv Kumar, a former finance secretary, demitted office at the end of August and was appointed Election Commissioner in place of Ashok Lavasa. Similarly, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal has been headless for more than seven months, among others.

Apparently, as many as six ministries and departments are awaiting regular secretaries. Some estimate that dozens of board-level positions in several central PSUs are lying vacant with no sign of

when these will be filled.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

The 360-degree method of empanelment of officers has been a major administrative "reform" introduced by the Modi sarkar to judge the performance of officers. However, not all officials have been happy with it, since it allows retired officers to influence their careers. Many careers have been marred as a result, say sources.

But that may have changed, with the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) deciding not necessarily to act on the advice of the 360-degree committees, and even rejecting their recommendations as and when required. The case of UT cadre IAS officer G. Narendra Kumar is often cited as an example of the subjectivity often behind recommendations of these committees.

In September 2017, Mr Kumar who was posted in Puducherry was booked by the CBI for alleged irregularities in admission to postgraduate medical courses in private colleges. Though the allegations turned out to be false, Mr Kumar's

career was damaged. It is only now that his name has finally put on the list of the review empanelment order issued last month, after missing the opportunity for empanelment in 2018 due to the case against him. The consensus among babus is that Mr Kumar is among the best officials but suffers from the "disability" to network. Mr Kumar had got caught in the political battle between the chief minister and then lieutenant governor of Puducherry and has paid a price. Some retired senior officers are said to have played a part in this episode and their advice proved costly to Mr Kumar, in career terms.

The damage may have been done, but observers say that the government's belated move does send out a message that fair dealings may be delayed for a while, but not forever.

NEW PORTFOLIOS FOR RBI DEPUTY GOVERNORS

The recent appointment of Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s senior-most executive director M. Rajeshwar Rao as the deputy governor of the bank, has now led to a reallocation

of portfolios of the four deputy governors. Mr Rao replaced N.S. Vishwanathan, who stepped down three months ahead of the end of his tenure on health grounds. Mr Rao will oversee the department of regulations and also the departments of communication, enforcement, inspection, legal and risk monitoring.

The RBI's other three deputy governors are B.P. Kanungo, M.K. Jain and Michael Debabrata Patra. While Mr Patra will continue to look after the monetary policy department, Mr Jain will be in charge of central security cell, corporate strategy and budget departments, while Mr Kanungo will oversee coordination, currency management and external investments and operations. In April this year, the government had extended Mr Kanungo's tenure by a year.

Deputy governors of RBI are appointed for an initial period of three years and can be reappointed.

Share a babu experience! Follow diliphecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,707.31	0.40
Nifty 50	11,937.70	0.34
S&P 500*	3,448.44	0.15
Dollar (₹)	0.87	-0.15
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.02	-0.96
Euro (₹)	87.25	-0.82
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,354,444	0.87
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.93	-1.23
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.912	-0.019
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.817	0.021

* As of 9:30 PM IST

AirAsia India starts flights on 6 new local routes

Budget carrier AirAsia India on Wednesday launched flights on six new routes, connecting Chennai with Ahmedabad, Goa, Mumbai and Visakhapatnam, Mumbai with Goa, and Jaipur with Kolkata as it expects an increase in demand during the festive season. All new routes are now open for bookings. It also offered 'Flex Fares' allowing customers the flexibility to change their travel dates unlimited number of times.

Fire breaks out at Royal Enfield's Jaipur stockyard



Eicher Motors on Wednesday said a fire broke out at Royal Enfield's Jaipur-based transit stockyard facility. Royal Enfield is a part of Eicher Motors. At around 12.30 pm on Wednesday, a fire incident occurred at Royal Enfield's transit stockyard facility at Kukas, Jaipur. "All manpower and personnel have been evacuated. There has been no harm or injury to personnel working at the facility," Eicher Motors said.

L&T Infotech shares zoom 5% on Q2 earnings

Shares of IT company L&T Infotech, the tech arm of L&T, gained nearly 5 per cent on Wednesday after the company reported a 26.7 per cent increase in consolidated net profit for the quarter ended September 2020. The stock jumped 4.73 per cent to close at ₹3,105 on the BSE. During the day, it rose by 5.88 per cent to ₹3,139. On the NSE, it gained 4.73 per cent to close at ₹3,105.

Bajaj Finance Q2 net profit drops 36% to ₹965 cr

Bajaj Finance Ltd (BFL) on Wednesday reported a 36 per cent drop in its consolidated net profit at Rs 965 crore for the second quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal year. The NBFC had posted a net profit of ₹1,506 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago. Its total consolidated income grew 3 per cent to Rs 6,523 crore during Q2FY21 as against ₹6,323 crore in the same quarter a year earlier.



Centre plans sops for industry

More sectors likely to get production-linked incentives to boost manufacturing

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Enthused by initial response of industry with regard to the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, economic affairs secretary Tarun Bajaj on Wednesday said that the government is considering an extension of the scheme to 7-8 more sectors to promote domestic manufacturing. With the view to make India a manufacturing hub, the government recently announced the PLI scheme for mobile phones, pharma products and medical equipment sectors.

"I have a lot of confidence and hope on the PLI scheme that we have brought out for mobile phones, pharma products and medical equipment, and in the offing are about 7-8 sectors where the PLI scheme would be extended," Bajaj said while addressing a virtual CII conference.

The PLI scheme, unlike other schemes, is an outcome- and output-oriented programme where manufacturers get cash incentives over 5-7 years for production, he said.

Focus on investments, jobs, reskilling: Report

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The government should focus on increasing investments, creating jobs and skilling workforce for the next 10 years, else it may be on the path to a breakdown nation.

Since the 1990 reforms, six per cent real GDP growth in India was a given. It no longer is and the potential growth is estimated to be below 6 per cent from FY22-FY25, according to a report by Quantum India Advisors.

India's labour force participation rate and the demand in the world now, to have a diversification of supply chains, and India can definitely take advantage," he said.

employment rate have fallen consistently over the last five years. The employment situation has become worse. The Indian economy and its informal workforce suffered a major blow post the shocks of demonetisation, GST and the credit crisis.

Distress in rural India was ignited by demonetisation of November 2016. While rural areas haven't been hit as hard in the Covid-19 related lockdown, demand is yet to recover fully from past shocks. Lower aggregate demand in urban and rural India as a result of

the demonetisation suppressed corporate profits and gave little incentive to industry to invest in new capacity. This resulted in lower job creation.

Further, the government's self-imposed fiscal constraints have not helped in stimulating the flagging demand.

The report wants the country to focus on more investment and exports to drive growth and incomes. Emerging economies which have grown and broken out of the low income have all done it by investing, producing at large scale and exporting.

tant sectors are proposed to be covered in these areas," Bajaj said.

He added that "so, I think that with all these efforts and as finance minister (Nirmala Sitharaman) said we are seeing what all other things can we do (to boost manufacturing and economy)."

Speaking about raising infrastructure spending, Bajaj said the government is trying to cajole chairmen and managing directors of public sector enterprises to meeting their capital expenditure (capex) plan for the current financial year.

The government has been doing review meetings at all levels to push infrastructure spending, he said, adding that the finance minister recently announced another tranche of ₹37,000 crore going into the infrastructure spend. "While we are in the process of making our budget for the next year, we are also looking at what has been the expenditure this year and what is the extra requirement that is required by various sectors," he said. — PTI

1 in 2 adults worried about jobs, 2 in 3 expect reskilling

New Delhi, Oct. 21: More than half of the working adults globally are concerned about losing their job in the next 12 months, including 57 per cent in India, but more than two-thirds are hopeful that their employers will help them retrain for new employment opportunities, a global survey showed on Wednesday.

The survey, released at the World Economic Forum's *Jobs Reset Summit* being held online, showed wide variations between countries, while an average of three in four workers in Russia feared job losses, it was just one in four in Germany.

In India, nearly 57 per cent of respondents said they are 'concerned' about their jobs — over 25 per cent are 'very concerned' and 31 per cent are 'somewhat concerned'.

Globally, 54 per cent concerned about job losses in the next 12 months, the WEF-Ipsos global survey of more than 12,000 working adults in 27 countries showed.

The prevalence of job-loss concern was highest at 75 per cent in Russia, followed by 73 per cent in Spain and and 71 per cent in Malaysia. Germany

JOB WORRIES

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Globally, 54 per cent concerned about job losses in the next 12 months, the World Economic Forum-Ipsos global survey of more than 12,000 working adults in 27 countries showed.

The prevalence of job-loss concern was highest at 75 per cent among people in Russia, followed by 73 per cent in Spain and and 71 per cent in Malaysia.

scored the best with 26 per cent, while it was 30 per cent in Sweden, and 36 per cent in the Netherlands and the US.

However, 67 per cent of workers worldwide said they can learn skills needed for the jobs of the future through their current employer. Nearly nine in 10 workers in Spain think they can gain essential new skills on the job, whereas fewer than half in Japan, Sweden and Russia.

Across the 27 countries, perceived ability to learn and develop those skills on the job was found to be the most widespread in Spain (86 per cent), Peru (84 per cent), and Mexico

(83 per cent) and the least common in Japan (45 per cent), Sweden (46 per cent), and Russia (48 per cent). India also scored very high at 80 per cent.

World Economic Forum managing director Saadia Zahidi said, "The current crisis means that the job creation rate has gone significantly down compared to two years ago but there is an optimistic scenario overall compared to the rate of job destruction."

The countries where those who can gain new skills on the job outnumber those who are concerned about losing their job by the largest margins are the US and Germany (by 40 points). — PTI

India needs bond market: Sebi

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 21

Development of bond market is necessary to help the government to achieve its target of investment in infrastructure and there is an urgent need to diversify funding requirements from the banking sector," the Sebi chairman said.

The Sebi chairman also acknowledged that illiquidity in the bond markets was an issue and that it needed a long-term solution. "It would be a challenging task to achieve the government's target of achieving ₹100 lakh crore investment in infrastructure by 2024-25 unless the bond market is adequately developed," said the Sebi chief, while addressing

the CII Financial Markets Summit.

"The corporate bond market needs to become more robust because there is an urgent need to diversify funding requirements from the banking sector," the Sebi chairman said.

The Sebi chairman also acknowledged that illiquidity in the bond markets was an issue and that it needed a long-term solution.

The Sebi chief further mentioned that the recovery in capital markets after the initial hit by the pandemic in March 2020 has been broad-based.

"Retail participation has gone up with 63 lakh new

IT WOULD be a challenging task to achieve the government's target of achieving ₹100 lakh crore investment in infrastructure by 2024-25 unless the bond market is adequately developed

AJAY TYAGI, Sebi chief

demat accounts opened between April-September 2020 compared to 27 lakh demat accounts opened during the same period last year, marking 130 per cent rise. Also the Indian market has seen inflows

Small cities drive e-tail, sales up 48% in festive season

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 21

The e-commerce sector has clocked ₹22,000-crore or \$3.1 billion worth business during the first four days of the initial festive season sales event, according to the data of RedSeer Consulting. The seven-day festive sales event began on October 15.

E-commerce players have achieved 77 per cent of the predicted sales of \$4 billion or around ₹28,000 crore for the first festive sales event.

While RedSeer expects that the festive month from October 15 to November 15 will see total sales of \$7 billion, Forrester has predicted the total sales to be around \$6.5 billion. Of this, 75 per cent of \$4.8 billion sales could happen in the first seven-day event.

Going by RedSeer's estimation of \$4 billion, the e-commerce sector has seen a 48 per cent growth at \$4 billion in sales during the first event compared to the last year's \$2.7 billion.

"Sharper sales growth against the last year, especially in the first three days, indicates that the industry is on track to reach or even surpass our forecasts of \$4 billion," said a researcher at RedSeer.

Some of the factors that have helped the growth are the demand growth in tier-2 cities driven by reverse migration, digital adoption and value offers post Covid-19.

Flipkart saw over 666

● GOING BY RedSeer's estimation of \$4 billion, the e-commerce sector has seen a 48 per cent growth at \$4 billion in sales during the first event compared to the last year's \$2.7 billion.

● SOME OF the factors that have helped the growth are the demand growth in smaller cities driven by reverse migration to hinterland, digital adoption and value offers post Covid-19 pandemic.

million visits with over 52 per cent of these visits recording from tier-3 cities and beyond. It has seen 51 per cent growth in customers from tier 2+ markets in fashion.

Tier-3 customers drove the sale of large appliances with nearly 50 per cent demand coming from these cities. Of the 35 per cent new seller base this time, around 60 per cent were from tier-2 and tier-3 towns.

"Over 1.1 lakh sellers receiving orders, 66 per cent sellers, 91 per cent of new customers, and 66 per cent of new Prime sign-ups from small towns, shopping in five Indian languages and orders from over 98.4 per cent of India's pin-codes in just 48 hours — it's truly Bharat's biggest celebration on Amazon ever," said Manish Tiwary, Vice President, Amazon India after two days of the event.

SBI slashes home loan rate by 0.25%

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, OCT. 21

State Bank of India on Wednesday announced up to 25 basis points (bps) concession on home loan rates as part of its festival offers. SBI home loan customers would get an interest concession of 25 bps for buying their dream homes of above ₹75 lakh based on CIBIL score and through YONO app.

"In an extension of its festive offers announced recently, SBI offers a credit score based concessions of up to 20 bps from 10 bps earlier, for a home loan of above ₹30 lakh to ₹2 crore across India. The same concession would also be

applicable for home loan customers for a loan amount of up to ₹3 crore in eight metro cities. An additional 5 bps concession for all home loans is given if applied through YONO," said the lender.

SBI now offers interest rates starting at 6.90 per cent for a home loan of up to ₹30 lakh and 7 per cent for above ₹30 lakh.

SBI commands nearly 34 per cent market share in home loans and nearly 33 per cent in the auto loans segment.

SBI has already announced a slew of special offers for its retail customers with 100 per cent processing fee waiver on car, gold, personal loans.

StanChart to lease biggest campus in TN

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 21

In one of the largest commercial realty deals in recent times, Standard Chartered GBS is leasing 7.7 lakh square feet of office space in Chennai for its largest office globally.

The office space is located at DLF Downtown at Taramani in Chennai's IT corridor. DLF has inked an anchor deal with Standard Chartered GBS for their office building.

DLF and GIC, Singapore's sovereign wealth fund, had entered into a strategic partnership to develop a rental assets portfolio with GIC as one-third partner, under the consolidated portfolio of DLF Cyber City Developers Ltd (DCCDL), a subsidiary of DLF.

DLF Cyber City Developers, the joint venture of DLF-GIC and TIDCO, announced the launch of DLF Downtown, Chennai with an investment of ₹5,000 crore earlier this year.

According to reports, Standard Chartered could pay around ₹100 crore (\$14 million) each year for leasing the space.



SHORT TAKES

Anju vice-prez of athletics body

New Delhi: Incumbent Adille Sumariwalla is set to be elected unopposed as Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president for his third term while former long jumper Anju Bobby George will be made senior vice-president in the national governing body's polls on October 31. Sumariwalla and Anju were the only candidates who filed their nomination papers for their respective posts till the deadline of 4 pm on Wednesday. Returning officer Vijayalakshmy K. Gupta issued the list of nominated candidates after the deadline. The deadline for withdrawal of nominations is 6 pm on Friday. For Anju, the lone Indian to win a medal in the World Championships (a bronze in 2003), it will be her highest post in the AFI executive committee. She was in the executive committee of last term by virtue of being a member of the Athletes' Commission. The AFI constitution mandates at least one woman among five vice-presidents, five joint secretaries and eight executive committee members. — PTI

Three U-19 Bangla players Covid +ve

Dhaka: Three Bangladesh U-19 national team cricketers have tested positive for the novel Coronavirus, while 15 others are symptomatic. In a report published in Dhaka-based *The Business Standard*, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) game development manager AEM Kawser was quoted as saying that all the players were part of the training camp being held at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) as a part of Junior Asia Cup preparations, a tournament which now stands cancelled. "According to our protocol, we have to isolate everyone who has come into contact with symptomatic persons," Kawser said. The BCB has shut down the camp. — PTI

Covid-recovered F1 racer returns

Silverstone, England: Formula One driver Lance Stroll said he intends to race at the Portuguese Grand Prix this week after finishing a period of self-isolation following a positive test for the Coronavirus. Stroll, who drives for Racing Point, pulled out of the Eifel Grand Prix at the Nrburgring a day before the October 11 race because he felt unwell and said Wednesday he later tested positive for Covid-19. In a post on Instagram, Stroll said he spent 10 days at home in self-isolation with mild symptoms and returned a negative test on Monday. "I feel in great shape," the Canadian driver wrote, "and I can't wait to be back with the team and to race in Portugal." — AP

Coco in second round at Ostrava

Prague: American teenage sensation Coco Gauff beat Czech doubles specialist Katerina Siniakova in straight sets to clinch a second-round spot at the Ostrava Open WTA tournament on Tuesday. Gauff squandered her first three match points but the Czech hit the net on the fourth to bow out. Gauff will face third-seeded Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, the world number 12, in the second round. Daria Kasatkina of Russia saw off sixth seed Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, while her compatriot Veronika Kudermetova upset Croatia's Donna Vekic 6-2, 6-4. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET	
IPL: Rajasthan Royals vs Sunrisers Hyderabad from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD	
FOOTBALL	
Europa League: Young Boys vs Roma from 10.25 pm on Sony Six; Rapid Wien vs Arsenal from 10.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; Leicester vs Zorya Luhansk from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 3; Celtic vs AC Milan from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 1; Tottenham Hotspur vs LASK from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2; Hoffenheim vs Crevna Zvezda from 12.30 am (Friday) on Sony Six	

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SUPER SIRAJ SHOW

Seamer wrecks KKR as RCB win big

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 21: Pacer Mohammed Siraj took three wickets upfront as RCB hammered KKR by eight wickets in an IPL match, here on Wednesday. Skipper Eoin Morgan's knock of 30 was the best batting effort in KKR innings. Devdutt Padikkal top scored for RCB in their chase with his 17-ball 25. Mohammed Siraj and Yuzvendra Chahal wreaked havoc in a stunning display of swing and spin bowling as Kolkata Knight Riders could just manage a paltry 84 for eight. The masterstroke from skipper Virat Kohli to include Siraj in place of spinner Shahbaz Nadeem worked as Siraj (4-2-8-3) ran through the KKR top order to trigger a stunning batting collapse and became the first bowler in the history of IPL to bowl two maiden overs while Chahal (2/15) stymied their revival hopes. It is KKR's second-lowest total after their 67 all-out against MI in 2008. Playing without Windies star players Sunil Narine and Andre Russell, KKR struggled to get going after electing to bat and it was all over for them after skipper Eoin Morgan was dismissed by Washington Sundar for 30. Siraj began with a double wicket maiden over in which he dismissed opener Rahul Tripathi (1) and Nitish Rana (0) off successive deliveries. — PTI



Mohammed Siraj (right) of Royal Challengers Bangalore celebrates taking the wicket of Tom Banton of Kolkata Knight Riders during their IPL match at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Kolkata Knight Riders: S. Gill c Morris b N. Saini 1, R. Tripathi c de Villiers b M. Siraj 1, N. Rana b M Siraj 0, T. Banton c de Villiers b M. Siraj 10, D. Karthik lbw b Y. Chahal 4, E. Morgan c Gurkeerat b Sundar 30, P Cummins c Padikkal b Y. Chahal 4, K. Yadav run out 12, L. Ferguson not out 19. **Extras:** (LB-2, WD-1) 3. **Total (for 8 wickets in 20 overs) 84.** **For:** 1-3, 2-3, 3-3, 4-14, 5-32, 6-40, 7-57, 8-84. **Bowling:** C Morris 4-1-16-1, M Siraj 4-2-8-3, N Saini 3-0-23-1, I. Udana 1-0-6-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-15-2, Washington Sundar 4-1-14-1.

Royal Challengers Bangalore: D. Padikkal run out 25, A. Finch c Karthik b Lockie Ferguson 16, Gurkeerat Singh not out 21, Virat Kohli not out 18. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-3) 5. **Total (for 2 wickets in 13.3 overs) 85.** **For:** 1-46, 2-46. **Bowling:** Pat Cummins 3-0-18-0, M. Prasidh Krishna 2-3-0-20-0, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-28-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-17-1

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Delhi Capitals	10	7	3	0	14	+0.774
Royal Challengers Bangalore	10	7	3	0	14	+0.182
Mumbai Indians	9	6	3	0	12	+1.201
Kolkata Knight Riders	10	5	5	0	10	-0.828
Kings XI Punjab	10	4	6	0	8	-0.177
Rajasthan Royals	10	4	6	0	8	-0.591
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	3	6	0	6	+0.008
Chennai Super Kings	10	3	7	0	6	-0.463

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

Must-win game for SRH & RR

Dubai, Oct. 21: The inexperienced young guns of both RR and SRH would like to put their hands up in testing times when both teams square off in a must-win IPL game on Thursday. Whether it is Priyam Garg, Abdul Samad of Sunrisers or Kartik Tyagi, Riyan Parag of the Royals, the youngsters from both sides will be feeling the pressure of doing something out of the box in case their illustrious seniors fail in that pursuit. SRH are currently tottering at the second last place in the eight-team table with just six points from nine game while Royals are a notch ahead with eight points after their comprehensive win over CSK in the previous game. While SRH can't afford to slip up even one bit with five games remaining, RR would be hoping to continue the winning momentum. — PTI

NUMBERS GAME

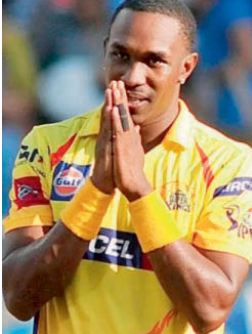
HEAD TO HEAD
OVERALL:
● Matches: 12
● Rajasthan: 6
● Hyderabad: 6
MEETING IN 2019
● Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Rajasthan Royals by 5 wickets at Hyderabad
● Rajasthan Royals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 7 wickets at Jaipur
MEETING IN 2020
● Rajasthan Royals beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 5 wickets at Dubai
FOR THE RECORD
● David Warner who scored 331 runs at an average of 41.37 in nine innings of as many matches, is the highest run-getter for Sunrisers Hyderabad in this IPL.
● Steven Smith who hit 99 sixes in 178 innings of 202 matches, needs just one six to complete a century of sixes in Twenty-20 cricket.
— S. PERVEZ QAISER

DHAWAN ON A HIGH AFTER TWO CENTURIES

Dubai, Oct. 21: In rampaging form, Delhi Capitals opener Shikhar Dawan says he is running faster, feeling fresher and has no fear of being dismissed this IPL season. Dhawan has scored two consecutive IPL hundreds, the first to achieve the feat, and slammed two fifties as well, making it a season to remember for him so far. "I have been playing for 13 years, and this is the first (back-to-back hundreds). So, really happy," said Dhawan after the unbeaten 106 off 61 balls, albeit in a lost cause against Kings XI Punjab on Tuesday. "I keep my mindset quite positive. Just look to score runs, and not think pitch is doing this or that. I play with courage. I am not afraid to get out," he added dissecting his approach to batting. — PTI

Bravo out of IPL with groin injury

Dubai, Oct. 21: Chennai Super Kings all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL with a groin injury, dealing a massive blow to the already struggling side which has very slim chances of advancing to the playoffs. The 37-year-old Bravo, an integral part of the CSK team for years now, couldn't bowl the final over against Delhi Capitals in a match in Sharjah on October 17. Skipper MS Dhoni was forced to bowl Ravindra Jadeja, who conceded three sixes. "Dwayne Bravo is ruled out of the IPL due to a groin injury," CSK CEO Kashi Viswanathan said. Bravo played six games and scored only seven runs in two innings. However, he got six wickets in as many



Dwayne Bravo

games with an economy rate of 8.57. CSK's campaign has already been derailed after seven losses from 10 games. They are currently currently lying at the bottom of the league table. CSK were already hamstrung by absence of senior players Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh, both of whom pulled out citing personal reasons. — PTI

Holder sad with no BLM in IPL

Dubai, Oct. 21: West Indies captain Jason Holder has expressed his disappointment over none of the IPL teams taking a knee in solidarity with the "Black Lives Matter" movement, which, he feels, has gone unnoticed in the world's most glamorous cricket league. Holder, who is member of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL, made the statement while receiving the prestigious Peter Smith Award on behalf of the West Indies cricket team in a virtual ceremony organised by the Cricket Writers' Club. The Peter Smith Award is an annual honour which recognises outstanding contribution to the presentation of cricket to the public. "To be honest, I haven't had one conversation up here around it (BLM). Sometimes it seems it has gone unnoticed, which is a sad thing," Holder said in his address posted on Cricket West Indies website. "Cricket West Indies has done an excellent job in continuing awareness of it. The women had a series in England where they wore the Black Lives



Jason Holder

Matter logo and continued to push the movement as well," he added. Taking a knee as a gesture of support to BLM started in the West Indies' Test series in England this summer. It followed the global furore over African American George Floyd's death at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis. But it was later discontinued for the subsequent tours of Pakistan and Australia. "...it's a long debate, a long hard challenge, a long road. We as people need to continue to come together...and genuinely find ways to fix the inequalities in the world," Holder further added. — PTI

Iyer wants batters to be responsible

Dubai, Oct. 21: It's a wake up call, said Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer as he urged his team's batsmen, with the exception of an in-form Shikhar Dhawan, to take "more responsibility" following a surprise IPL loss to Kings XI Punjab here. Delhi Capitals lost by five wickets after putting 164/5 on the board. Opener Dhawan continued to be in great form and his sequence of scores now read 69 not out, 57, 101 not out, and 106 not out, the last one coming in a losing cause. "This is like a wake-up call for us. Going forward we are going to face tough situations and tougher teams. We have played amazing cricket in the past but we have to leave that in the past," Iyer said at the post-match virtual press conference. "We have to come out all guns blazing, play with freedom and take more responsibility. We need one match to qualify and keeping that in mind, we will

take one match at a time," he added. Against KXIP, Dhawan alone scored 106 while the quintet comprising Iyer, Prithvi Shaw, Marcus Stoinis, Rishabh Pant and Shimron Hetmyer contributed 54 runs collectively. "I am really happy for Shikhar Dhawan for the way he is going. He is creating an amazing platform for us as batsmen. We should be knowing our roles pretty well," the DC skipper said. "Other than that, I feel all the batsmen are in really good frame of mind and few matches can go wrong here and there as fatigue creeps in. Keeping that aside we need to focus on our strengths," he further added. Iyer didn't blame the Dubai track as he felt that it played the same in both innings. Asked about what Dhawan is doing that others aren't able to do, Iyer spoke about clarity of mind and planning. — PTI

SYDNEY COULD BE INDIAN TEAM'S PORT OF ENTRY

Sydney, Oct. 21: Sydney and Canberra are emerging as potential venues to host India's limited-over series against Australia during the upcoming tour starting next month. The Indian team was initially supposed to land in Brisbane but apparently Queensland state health authorities won't allow the visitors to train during the mandatory 14-day quarantine period. According to a report in *ESPNCricinfo*, Sydney could emerge as Indian contingent's port of entry and the city may allow them to train during their quarantine. It is learnt that the SCG could be hosting four of the six white ball games (three T20 and three ODIs) while Canberra's Manuka Oval hosting two games. New South Wales state's sports minister Stuart Ayres confirmed that they have received a request from Cricket Australia to allow the Indian as well as the Australian team to undergo its mandatory quarantine as well as training. If CA and the NSW state government are able to reach an agreement, a revised plan would then be submitted by Cricket Australia to the BCCI for approval. — PTI

Rash rocks PSG, Barca win



Marcus Rashford (left) of Manchester United is poised to score a goal against PSG during their UEFA Champions League first-leg match at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Tuesday. Manchester United won 2-1. — AFP

Paris, Oct. 21: Marcus Rashford once again sank Paris Saint-Germain after netting the decisive goal in a 2-1 Champions League win in the French capital on Tuesday, while Barcelona sent a message with a thumping 5-1 victory over Ferencvaros. Rashford, who scored the winning spot-kick when United knocked PSG out in 2019, drilled home a low shot three minutes from the end which won a thrilling Group H contest at a near-empty Parc des Princes. United had taken the lead in the 23rd minute when Bruno Fernandes slotted home from the spot at the second attempt, but Anthony Martial inexplicably headed Neymar's corner into his own net 10 min-

THE RESULTS			
Barcelona (Lionel Messi 27-pen, Anshu Fati 42, Coutinho 52, Pedri 82, Dembele 89)	5	Juventus (Morata 46, 84)	2
Ferencvaros (Kharatin 70-pen)	1	Dynamo Kiev	0
Manchester United (Bruno Fernandes 23-pen, Rashford 87)	2	Lazio (Ciro Immobile 6, Hitz 23-og, Akpa Akpro 76)	3
Paris Saint Germain (Martial 55-og)	1	Borussia Dortmund (Erling Braut Haaland 71)	1
Chelsea	0	RB Leipzig (Angelino 16, 20)	2
Sevilla	0	Istanbul Basaksehir	0

utes after the break. The win sets United up nicely for next week's home clash with RB Leipzig, who are top of the group after beating Istanbul Basaksehir 2-0 in Germany. Meanwhile, Ronald Koeman got his first

Champions League campaign as Barcelona coach off to a winning start with a confident win over Ferencvaros that gives them control of Group G, top but level on three points with Juventus. Messi won and converted the penalty

to give the Catalans a 27th-minute lead and the match was as good as done when Ansu Fati clipped home Frenkie de Jong's sumptuous pass just before the break. Coutinho, Pedri and Dembele also scored for Barcelona. — AFP