

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | 8 SEPTEMBER 2020

## WEATHER

Max: 34.1°C  
Min: 25°C  
RH: 62%  
Rainfall: Nil  
Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
Rain likely. Max/Min  
temp. 34/24 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+76,411)	(+1,146)
42,76,777	72,809
covid19india.org	

## STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,802)	(+9)
TS: 1,42,771	895
(+8,368)	(+70)
AP: 5,06,493	4,487

## CASES AROUND THE WORLD

2,73,93,864	DEATHS
8,94,606	
COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES	213
worldometers.info/coronavirus	

## ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana
Tithi: Bhadrapada Bahula Shashthi till 12.01 am (Tuesday)
Star: Bharani till 8.24 am
Varijyam: 9.48 pm to 11.35 pm
Durmuhuram: 8.33 am to 9.22 am; 11.03 pm to 11.50 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
HIJRI CALENDAR
Muharram 19, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajr: 5.03 am
Zohar: 12.24 pm
Asar: 4.35 pm
Maghrib: 6.30 pm
Isha: 7.39 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.23 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.03 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 10.45 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 10.25 PM

## COUNTER POINT



They want to seek votes on their achievements... at least one!

## IN BRIEF

## Varavara Rao's kin get notice

Mumbai: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) sent legal notices to two relatives of Telugu poet Varavara Rao, currently in custody over a case filed in connection with Elgar Parishad. The relatives were identified as two of Rao's sons-in-law: Prof. Satyanarayana of the EFLU and a journalist with an English business daily.

They were served with notice to appear for questioning on September 9.

■ Full report on Page 3



## BUSINESS | 10

Rajan says it's time to take meaningful action



## SPORTS | 12

Stokes may miss first part of IPL

## TABLOID

Y+ security to Kangana



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## LAW OF THE LAND, CHANGED

Ahead of enacting new law, TS stops land registrations, tahsildars take over records from village revenue officers; people stage protests against freeze on registration

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

In a sudden move towards enacting the New Revenue Act to revamp the revenue system, the state government on Monday declared a holiday for land registrations from Tuesday till further orders.

Village revenue officers (VROs) were asked to hand over land records to the tahsildars concerned before 3 pm on Monday.

These orders make it clear that the government has decided to abolish the VRO system.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, while addressing a meeting of the TRS Legislature Party, is said to have disclosed that the New Revenue Act will be introduced in the Assembly on Thursday.

Stating that the objective of bringing the new Act was to provide quality, transparent and corruption-free land-related services to citizens including registration of property documents, Mr Rao asked the MLAs and ministers to explain its objective to the people and weed out misconceptions.

The Chief Minister is said to have told the ministers and MLAs to celebrate the new law by firing crackers in villages across the state when the Bill is introduced in the Assembly.

As far as the order of declaring the holiday of registrations concerned, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar in the government order said the orders had been issued under the Registration Act, 1908.

Accordingly, the authorities stopped booking slots for registrations and sale of revenue stamps. Only those who had booked slots on Monday, were allowed to get their lands and other properties registered as scheduled.

Earlier in the day the Chief Secretary directed district collectors to instruct VROs to hand over all the records including original, photo-stamp copies, online copies, printed and handwritten copies available with them, to the tahsildars.

Sources said the TS government has already been implementing Dharani on



Revenue officials hand over registration books to Hyderabad special deputy collector T.L. Sangeeta in the presence of Khairatabad mandal revenue officer S.M. Haseena.

— P. Surendra

## New law aims at ease of transfer

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The K. Chandrashekhar Rao government is aiming at providing a hassle-free mutation, the process of conferring the ownership of land, to the buyers of properties in Telangana.

Towards achieving this goal, the government will launch 'Dharani', an initiative for integrating land records with registration data.

Official sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that it would take a week to complete the integration after which the registration of properties would resume.

It is also learnt that the government had been

considering giving powers to register agriculture lands to tahsildars while retaining the power to register non-agriculture properties with sub-registrars.

a pilot basis in Parigi mandal where the property buyer need not apply separately for mutation. The mutation process would be automatically initiated by the tahsildar on receipt of information about the property transaction due to integration of the records.

In the pilot project, the only leverage given to the buyer is that he need not physically apply for mutation. The rest of the process of the VRO calling for objections and sending a report to the tahsildar to complete mutation remained the same," a senior revenue official said.

Sources said the TS government has already been implementing Dharani on

Page 2: VROs hand over 60% of land records

Full report on Page 3

## LANDOWNERS CAN APPLY FOR LRS ONLINE

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

In the midst of the rapid developments on the land front, municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday formally launched the online and Mee Seva services of Land Regularisation Scheme (LRS).

Releasing a poster designed to create awareness among people with regard to the scheme, he appealed to the people to make use of the LRS to regularise unauthorised and illegal plots.

Landowners can now apply for LRS by logging on to the website lrs.telangana.gov.in. The registration process will end on October 15.

The land regularisation scheme would be applicable to all urban local bodies (ULBs) across Telangana state. If approved, the applicants will have to pay all the prescribed charges to the urban local body before January 31, 2021.

He told legislators that he had conducted four surveys in the GHMC limits all of which revealed that the TRS would grab between 94 and 100 of the 150 divisions, it was learnt.

The BJP will get one or two more seats than it already has. He

Full report on Page 3

## Cabinet approves changes to land Act, end to VROs

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The state Cabinet on Monday has approved the Telangana Abolition of Village Revenue Officers Bill 2020. Village revenue officers (VROs) earlier in the day were asked to hand over all land documents with them to the tahsildars.

The Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao approved 15 Bills including the Abolition of VROs Bill, the Rights in Land and Pattadar Passbooks Bill, the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Gram Panchayat Transfer of non-Agriculture Properties Act 2018 Amendment Bill, which cover property assets. The Municipal Act, 2019, is also being amended.

The Cabinet gave the nod for the ordinance to increase the retirement age of teachers in Ayush medical colleges and the TS bPASS Bill which is intended to grant building

permissions online.

It approved the administrative expenditure for demolishing the old Secretariat complex and construction a new one, and also accorded administrative sanction for funds for the newly constructed integrated district office complexes.

The meeting also passed a resolution empowering Paswan to take a call on whether to continue with the alliance with JD(U) in the coming Bihar Assembly elections or pull out of it.

In an official statement, the party said that it would fight in 143 seats of the 243 Bihar Assembly seats and lists of candidates for the same would be submitted to the party's parliamentary board soon.

In the last elections, the LJP had contested 42 seats and won two. The JD(U) was with the Mahagathbandhan comprising the RJD and the Congress while the LJP was in alliance with the BJP.

Sources told this newspaper that some of the leaders asked why the LJP should continue its alliance with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's party when many JD(U) leaders have openly spoken out against the LJP. They also said that people in Bihar are unhappy with the decision to go ahead with elections despite the pandemic.

One of the options that Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan's party, now headed by his son, may consider is to remain a part of the BJP-led NDA at the Centre but to fight outside the coalition's fold in the state, while not contesting against the BJP.

## TRS to win 100 seats in GHMC polls: CM

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

was addressing the TRS Legislative Party meeting on Monday evening.

TRS sources said Rao brushed aside speculation that he would move to national politics. He told the MLAs that this was not the proper time; he would discuss it and disclose his decision at an appropriate time.

He said the TRS would win the Dubbaka by-election with a one-lakh majority.

The segment fell vacant with sudden demise of legislator Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy.

■ Page 2: Revenue wing may get more powers

## After NTR, KCR heralds major change in revenue law

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

K. Chandrashekhar Rao is a master disruptive thinker. An intrepid risk taker, master strategist and a genius in timing big gambits, he is unlike most politicians. He scores over his rivals and confounds the opposition party and leaders, leaving them

flummoxed just to decipher his moves. With the latest move, he has once again taken everyone, including officials and members of his own administration, the opposition, even his own party and common people by total surprise.

Initiating drastic changes in rules relating to registration of properties and confirming ownership to

property buyers, he has grabbed not just the headlines but the entire narrative and shifted it from every other news.

But knowing KCR, as Rao is popularly known as, a surprise from him should no longer be a surprise. After all, right from the days he took to leading the agitation for a separate statehood for Telangana or

implementing new administrative decisions after taking the reign of the new state as its first chief minister, he has consistently been ensuring to package all major decisions with a strong element of surprise.

Announcing an indefinite hunger strike in Hyderabad within hours of calling it off in Khammam, a turning point in

Telangana agitation, formation of a political JAC with all parties to take back control of agitation from students and Leftist forces, launching a household survey, thus instilling fear among settlers after coming to power and advancing dates for the Assembly polls are some of most disruptive decisions he has taken, and won.

In implementing the latest decision to abolish village revenue officer system, Rao seems to have borrowed from a distant predecessor in history, following the footsteps of a leader he personally admires a lot, former CM N.T. Rama Rao.

■ Page 2: Revenue wing may get more powers



I NEED to go back within and work on my disappointment and turn this all into a lesson for my growth and evolution as a player and human being. I apologise to the @usopen tournament and everyone associated for my behaviour.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC,  
World's No. 1 tennis player

off the tournament venue but later posted an apology on his Instagram page. "I need to go back within and

## IN BRIEF

## STATE TO AUTOMATE MUTATION

From Page 1

He added that the government is considering automating the mutation process too following the abolition of VRO system.

The TRS government had launched the Land Revenue Management System through which a massive exercise of digitising the land records like pattadar passbook and the crucial Record of Rights (pahani) was taken up a few years ago. Records of a major extent of land were upgraded following the due process of calling for objections. Records of lands in dispute could not be taken up.

The stamps and registration department on the other hand digitised its records long ago and the data is made available to the SROs through online. For instance, in the Hyderabad district registrar office, records since 1860 are available.

"Karnataka is at the forefront of integrating both revenue and registration data and maintaining even sub division of the properties," one official said adding that AP initiated online mutation a few years ago but discontinued it.

## ACB CONDUCTS MORE SEARCHES IN BRIBE SCAM

**Hyderabad, Sept. 7:** Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials were conducting searches on Monday at a person's home, who allegedly acted as a mediator in the case of ₹1.10 crore bribe.

The ACB teams seized crucial documents and other information from the mediator's residence at Boogaram on the outskirts of the city. Keesara tahsildar Erva Balaraj Nagaraj, Bongu Sairaj, assistant village revenue, and two realtors Ch. Srinath Yadav, and K. Anji Reddy, were arrested by the ACB on August 14 in the case of bribe.

The names of several more individuals including a few from the revenue department have already emerged. In his confession when he was in ACB custody, Srinath Yadav said he came into contact with Nagaraj via another tahsildar in March 2020. —INN

## AP COVID TALLY PAST 5L, VITAL DRUG RUNS OUT

**SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, SEPT. 7**

AP reported 8,368 new cases of Covid-19, taking the tally past the five lakh mark. The state now has registered 5,06,493 cases, and the toll stands at 4,487.

While this is so, AP is facing a short supply of life-saving Covid-19 drug Tocilizumab given to critically ill Covid-infected patients for helping them recover from the infection.

Currently, AP has 5.06 lakh Covid-19 patients of whom 4.04 lakh patients have recovered but 97,932 of the infected are undergoing treatment at various Coronavirus hospitals in the state. On an average, 70 to 80 Covid-19 patients are dying every day in the state.

At present, a good number of patients are surviving after getting a six vial course of Remdesivir injection, which the state government is providing free of cost at its Coronavirus hospitals in various parts of the state. Early start of Remdesivir saves many lives.

Doctors say in some cases, when the condition of patients is very critical, they prefer to give them Tocilizumab on a trial-and-error basis, as there is no clinically proven treatment for Covid-19 infection so far. Lucky patients are surviving after being given the injection.

Though Tocilizumab is in general used for treating autoimmune disease like rheumatoid arthritis, the Drug Controller General of India has recommended its restricted usage on a case-by-case basis to help save lives of Covid-19 patients who are severely ill.

However, there is shortage of Tocilizumab in some of the districts, threatening the lives of patients who are in desperate need of this injection. For instance, health authorities in West Godavari district maintain that they have no stock of Tocilizumab and as such, they are using Remdesivir injection for critically ill patients. So is the case in other districts like Prakasam, where no stock of Tocilizumab is available.

## REVENUE WING MAY GET MORE POWERS UNDER NEW REGIME

From Page 1

The late N.T. Rama Rao abolished the Patel/Patwari system (referred to as Karanam/Munasabu system in undivided Andhra Pradesh) with a stroke of pen and introduced a new model of administration, through mandal parishads and village revenue offices.

The move had a greater impact in Telangana and changed social and political dynamics in this region, then a part of undivided Andhra Pradesh. As a consequence, the Telugu Desam became a strong political force in region till it was uprooted after the bifurcation of the state.

"The VRO system which replaced the Patel / Patwari system managed to retain the basic structure of maintaining land records and gradually ensured status quo was restored and rendered the entire revolution to a mere change of nomenclature," a senior revenue official said.

As Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao has often fumed and fretted against the revenue administration and on a few occasions threatened to abolish the department completely. But going by indications, KCR changed his mind and gave more teeth to the department, though he decided to abolish posts of VROs. It could be learnt that revenue officials above the level of Tahsildar will become even more powerful in determining land ownership in the new system.

**NTR'S MOVE** had a greater impact in Telangana and changed social and political dynamics in this region, then a part of undivided Andhra Pradesh.

## VROs HAND OVER 60% OF LAND RECORDS BY DEADLINE

From Page 1

The process was to be completed by 3 pm and the Chief Secretary asked collectors to send a compliance report to the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration (CCLA) by 5.30 pm.

Until further orders, the records will be maintained at mandal level under the personal custody of the Tahsildars.

Meanwhile sources in the government disclosed that around 60 per cent of revenue records were handed over to tahsildars by the VROs by the evening and the remaining will be completed late in the night.

Earlier, people who visited sub-registrar offices across the state for land registrations were shocked by the decision and staged protests saying it was taken without giving prior notice.

Registration of will deeds, administration of marriages and franking services will continue.

## WITNESS ACCOUNT



VROs hand over files to tahsildar N.Venkata Reddy on the last day of duty in Karimnagar on Monday. — DC

## Tahsildars to register farm land in new Act

## Issues with landowner data may remain after changes

**N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7**

The government will introduce the New Revenue Act by abolishing the posts of village revenue officers and village revenue assistants, which Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao has said was a revolutionary move and the panacea for the increasing corruption in the revenue department.

Indications were given that the Bill envisaged changes in the process of registering properties and maintaining land records apart from renaming the posts of revenue officials from tahsildar to district collectors, which are more of a cosmetic nature.

Official sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the major change would be to make tahsildars the registering authority for agriculture lands. "It is quite

shocking. The move could be counter-productive both on administrative and ethical grounds," a senior official said, pointing to the increasing incidence of corruption by revenue officials of the rank of tahsildar and above.

On the administrative count, tahsildars are burdened with several duties. Vested with magisterial powers, tahsildars move out of office frequently and may not have the time to attend to the additional duty of registering properties.

Instead, the government can follow the Karnataka model wherein the "Bhoomi" and "Kaveri", the revenue and registration data, are linked to ensure hassle-free mutation, a process confering the ownership of land to the purchaser, said a legal expert involved in the process of the New

**TAHSILDARS ARE** already burdened with several duties. Vested with magisterial powers, tahsildars move out of office frequently and may not have the time to attend to the additional duty of registering properties.

Revenue Act.

The CM had gone back on his announcement of conducting a fresh survey of land across the state, fearing backlash before the 2018 Assembly elections. "Fresh survey of lands and upgrading the existing Land Records Management System accordingly is the best solution," an official said.

The government has to address issues relating to lands in dispute and cases where the mutation is either kept on hold or the

records in LRMS are not upgraded incorporating the names of new owners.

"In some cases, names of previous owners are reflecting in the revenue records. To avoid the previous owners from registering the property afresh, the software available with tahsildars should also read the Encumbrance Certificate," one official pointed out.

Problems pertaining to sub division of land and excess land in records against the physical availability will remain the same without comprehensive survey, he added.

"Noppokataithe mandokati" goes a famous adage in Telangana state to illustrate that a particular solution provided to address a problem is ineffective, just as the proposed changes mooted by Rao in the revenue administration in villages could turn out to be.

## BJP claims changes will help 'doralu', Cong for deep study

**S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7**

Opposition parties have slammed the state government's move to abolish the village revenue officers (VRO) system by bringing in the new Revenue Act.

**CONGRESS MLA D. Sridhar Babu** said without reforming the VROs system, replacing it with another is meaningless.

regime.

The state BJP chief said reasons for declaring a holiday for land registrations was best known to the Chief Minister. He went on to allege that the state government had introduced the Land Regularisation Scheme only to ensure that valuable lands are grabbed by TRS and family members of the Chief Minister.

Congress MLA D. Sridhar Babu said that

without taking measures to reform or rectify flaws in the VROs system, replacing it with another is meaningless. Stating that bringing in new Acts is not a solution for rectifying lacunae in the system, he said that faults can be set right only through dialogue and deliberations between all parties.

Sridhar Babu asked why the Chief Minister had not constituted a committee with efficient officers to study and recommend reforms in the revenue system.

CPI state secretary Chada Venkat Reddy accused the Chief Minister of taking a unilateral decision on abolishing the VRO system. He said such unilateral decisions of the CM are undermining aspirations of various sections of poor in the state.

Meanwhile, Telangana

VROs' Welfare Association has expressed concern at abolition of the VRO system by state government. Office bearers of the association said they are not against the act of the state government. But blaming VROs as corrupt to abolish the system has pained them a lot. They wanted the state government to ensure that their service conditions and benefits are maintained while merging them with other departments.

V Ravinder Reddy and Goutham Kumar, president and general secretary of Telangana Revenue Officers Association, welcomed the decision of the state government to abolish the posts of VROs. They however urged the state government to protect the service conditions of VROs while adjusting them in other departments.

Some VROs and VRAs expressed dissatisfaction with the decision to introduce the new revenue Bill. They expressed worries over their future and said that it will be difficult for them to go to other departments. They asked the government for job security.

## AROUND THE STATE

## People say VROs demand money

**RAVINDRA SESU | DC KHAMMAM, SEPT. 7**

**KHAMMAM**

The people of Khammam district, particularly farmers, are most happy over abolition of the village revenue officer (VRO) system and wanted it replaced with a foolproof system which is simple, flexible and accessible. Further, they said revenue services should be available in villages and not faraway places.

The worst phase of VRO system came when the government commenced purification of land records followed by the sada binama (blank paper agreements). The two programmes made hundreds of VROs crorepati while landowners faced hardships at their hands.

Farmers of many villages realised that their land records had been tampered with by the VROs. There were scores of instances when farmers went to the collector's office with petrol bottles, threatening to end their lives for their pattadar passbooks.

Nelluri Bhadraia, a farmer of Mandalapalli in Dammappet mandal, said, "VROs are villains for farmers who demand money for every work."

Following the abolition of the VRO system, all VROs handed over their land records to mandal tahsildars.

**KARIMNAGAR**

## UNCERTAINTY: VROs ASK FOR JOB SECURITY

**PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 7**

Around 60 per cent of revenue records were handed over to the collectorate following orders to village revenue officers (VROs) to submit their records in Karimnagar district.

District additional collector Shyam Prasad Lal informed that after receiving the orders from the government, records were collected from VROs without any untoward incidents or opposition from the revenue staff present in the district.

Though people waited till late evening hoping the server will get restored, they had to return home without completing their tasks.

Many people of Adilabad who wanted to register their lands, plots, and houses on Monday got disappointed when officials of the sub-registrar office told them that registrations could not be done as their server was down.

Meanwhile, village revenue officers (VROs) have submitted all records pertaining to lands in their respective gram panchayat, apart from information related to Shadi Mubarak, Kalyana Laxmi and other schemes, to their respective tahsildars, as directed by the state government.

The tahsildars, in turn, will hand over their documents to their respective collectors. The handing over of records is part of the process of implementing the New Revenue Act.

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## Chaos as registry works are halted

**NARENDER PULLORO | DC NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 7**

**NIZAMABAD**

REAL ESTATE association representatives protested against the decision to stop registrations and submitted a memorandum to the district registrar.

There are 10 sub-registrar offices in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. On an average, around 500 documents are registered each day in these offices generating around ₹50 lakh revenue.

The district registrar post has been vacant in the undivided Nizamabad district and sub-registrar (audit) in Hyderabad Damodar Rao was posted as in-charge district registrar. Recently, he was promoted as district registrar but he took charge. He is retaining the sub-registrar post in Hyderabad.

Of the 10 sub-registrar offices, only Nizamabad, Bheemguda and Kamareddy offices have regular officers. In Domakonda, Yellareddy, Bichukonda, Banswada, Bodhan, Nizamabad rural,

"We will not take up registration of property documents until we get orders from higher-ups," he said.

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

"It was like there was a flood when everyone picks up what they can and evacuates to escape the waters. There were people emptying almirahs, there were people packing up file folders. The only thing that was being said was orders have been received to send every piece of paper that is a land record to the office of the district collector."

This was the scene at the Pudur mandal revenue office on Monday, according to a farmer who was there to check about registration of a piece of land

he had purchased.

"There was panic as the news spread that all registration activity was stopped. This made more and more people rush to the MRO's office. Every one of those who gathered there was in the same boat. None knew what was happening. Everyone had the same question. What happens next now that all land records will be with the collector. Will the MRO office be open tomorrow? When will our land records be verified and registrations completed," the farmer, who preferred to remain anonymous, told *Deccan Chronicle*.

"May be the panic is

ONE OF the concerns raised by the farmer was that all along, it was the local VRO, who managed the issues through knowledge gained over the years about local land affairs.

unwarranted as part of a larger picture. But the village revenue officer (VRO) I spoke with was stressed. 'I don't even know where I will be tomorrow,' he told me. The mandal revenue officer (MRO) said the online systems were shut down in the morning and that nothing could be done until further instructions are received. 'Please leave

us alone today,' the MRO told me," the farmer said.

At the Pudur mandal revenue office, once the staff managed to encourage everyone to leave the building, it was locked up from inside. The confusion from the sudden government orders asking every VRO to physically hand over every land record document to the government to be shipped away to the collector's office led to a lot of insecurities among those with a stake, those who were waiting for the registration process to begin, or to be completed, farmers who gathered to collect pass books or with ques-

tions about Rythu Bandhu funds, the farmer said.

Now that the MRO office does not have any records anymore, not even photocopies of documents, Pahani papers etc., all of us have many questions on what will come next, the man said.

One of the concerns raised by the farmer was that all along, it was the local VRO, who managed the issues through knowledge gained over the years about local land affairs.

"Even if clarity comes from top down, there are questions about how maps can be drawn or redrawn without local participation," the farmer said.

## SHORT TAKES

## SUSPEND NEW LRS, DEMANDS KONDANDARAM

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC  
WARANGAL, SEPT. 7

Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) president Prof. M. Kondandaram on Monday demanded that the state government suspend the new Land Regularisation Scheme (LRS) and redesign it in a way that it does not burden the people.

Speaking to the media at Hanamkonda, he said that apart from land regularisation, steps need to be taken for floodwater and drainwater movement. No colony or house should be affected by floods. "We demand that the state take up development works on priority, Kondandaram said.

"We believe the scheme will only help in taking away the land from the poor and middle class people. They have bought the land with their hard earned money. But now after the state cancelled the permits and registration, they are faced with the burden of regularising it at a high price. Unable to pay the fees, many may lose their lands. In the current form the land regularisation is not people friendly. Even if people want to pay for the regularisation they do not have as they have used up their savings during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is inhumane to implement this scheme in this form at this time," he said.

Speaking about private teachers, he said that the government must implement GO 45 and ensure they are paid ₹7,500 per month along with ration of rice, dal and oil.

**● SPEAKING TO** the media at Hanamkonda, he said that apart from land regularisation, steps need to be taken for floodwater and drainwater movement. No colony or house should be affected by floods.

**● THE TJS leader also** demanded that the state government should take up development works on a priority basis.

# Use LRS to regularise illegal plots, says KTR

Registration process will end on October 15: Minister

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

In the midst of the rapid developments on the land front, municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday formally launched the online and Mee Seva services of Land Regularisation Scheme (LRS).

Releasing a poster designed to create awareness among people with regard to the scheme, he appealed to the people to make use of the LRS to regularise unauthorised and illegal plots.

Landowners can now apply for LRS by logging on to the website lrs.telangana.gov.in. The registration process will end on October 15. The LRS would be applicable to all urban local bodies (ULBs) across Telangana state. If approved, the applicants have to pay all the prescribed charges before January 31, 2021.

Rama Rao said open spaces earmarked in any approved layouts as well as disputed lands including those belonging to the government, the endowment department and the



Municipal administration and urban development minister K.T. Rama Rao (Centre) launches the online and Mee Seva services of Land Regularisation Scheme on Monday.

Waik Board, will not be considered for regularisation.

The state government has decided to deny registration of plots purchased in unauthorised layouts to ensure planned sustainable development. Only layouts and plots with registered sale deed/title deed existing as on August 26 this year will be considered for regularisation on payment of prescribed charges.

payment of prescribed charges.

For regularisation of their plots, the applicants should submit an online application or at the Mee Seva centre in prescribed format along with relevant documents before October 15. They should also pay registration fee of ₹1,000 in case of individuals and ₹10,000 in case of layout developers.

**THE GOVERNMENT** has decided to deny registration of plots purchased in unauthorised layouts to ensure planned sustainable development. Only layouts and plots with registered sale deed/title deed existing as on August 26 this year will be considered for regularisation on payment of prescribed charges.

## Property tax records to be corrected

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has embarked on a special drive to correct the records pertaining to property tax assessment. Over the years, it has been levying property tax on buildings which were either partly or fully demolished for road widening and taking up

infrastructure projects. Instead, it will now levy vacant land tax at such structures.

To avail the benefit of the correction, the owner has to provide documents pertaining to the demolition as part of the one-time settlement scheme (OTS).

Official sources in GHMC said that as per the relevant government orders, the deputy com-

**AS PER** the preliminary report, there were over 8,000 such properties and all of them have to be reassessed and revised. An internal circular provides guidelines for the revenue wing for the purpose.

missioner can refer the proposal to the head office for demand of correction in above ₹5 lakh in

respect of vacancy remission, government properties and demolished buildings, double property tax identification numbers and other issues.

As per the preliminary report, there were over 8,000 such properties and all of them have to be reassessed and revised.

An internal circular provides guidelines for the revenue wing for the purpose.

after being kept pending for four years and expressed that there was no urgency to hear the matter.

Sivaraju Srinivas said if BPS is allowed then it could prove more dangerous than Covid-19. Concurring to the submission to some extent, the Bench observed that in the guise of regularization scheme, illegal structures, encroachments, easements in the city should not become legalized.

Justice Vijaysen Reddy said "Advise the GHMC to come out with a clear formula and show that it will implement rules on illegal constructions. Hyderabad city has become debris with such structures and more demolitions are needed".

The matter was posted to October 9 and in the meanwhile the GHMC should furnish the report to the court.

## Will submit BPS report in a week, GHMC tells HC

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA  
I DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

With the new Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) being unveiled recently, it seems like the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) wants to move ahead with the four-year pending issue of Building Penalisation Scheme-2016 (BPS) on ineligible constructions in Hyderabad.

After it was directed in 2016 by the Common High Court to give a report on how many unauthorised and deviated buildings would be eligible for regularization under BPS, the GHMC, in its hurry, on Monday submitted to the Telangana High Court that it would be ready with the report in a week's time and sought adjudication on the issue.

NGO Forum for Good Governance filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in 2016, challenging the BPS scheme. Dealing with the PIL, the then division bench of High Court had issued status quo orders and directed GHMC to submit the report about eligible buildings for regularization after scrutinising around one lakh applications. As well, it had ordered to prepare the data of structures, which do not follow BPS parameters and to take action against them.

The PIL was listed again on Monday, before the division bench, comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Bollam Vijaysen Reddy.

S. Niranjan Reddy, senior counsel, representing GHMC, said that the report directed by the Court would be submitted in one week and pressed for hearing the PIL.

Sivaraju Srinivas, counsel for the petitioner, said that the matter was listed

in 2016, challenging the BPS scheme. Dealing with the PIL, the then division bench of High Court had issued status quo orders and directed GHMC to submit the report about eligible buildings for regularization after scrutinising around one lakh applications. As well, it had ordered to prepare the data of structures, which do not follow BPS parameters and to take action against them.

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## NIA sends legal notice to Varavara Rao's sons-in-law

DC CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI, SEPT. 7

raids at the residence of Satyanarayana in August 2018. He has claimed to have no connection with the ongoing case.

The notice stated that their presence was needed to answer a series of questions in connection with the ongoing probe. They have been asked to appear with certain documents which are stated to be related with the case and the ongoing investigation.

"It is a fact that I am related to Varavara Rao but I reiterate that I have no connection with the case. The NIA notice adds to our family distress at a time when Varavara Rao's health condition is not

very good and the (Covid-19) pandemic is fast spreading in Mumbai," Prof. Satyanarayana said in a statement.

The Maharashtra police arrested Varavara Rao and nine other activists in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist link case which was initially probed by the Pune police and transferred to the NIA in January this year.

The case relates to alleged inflammatory speeches made at the Elgar Parishad conclave held in Pune in December 2017, which the police claimed triggered violence the next day near the Koregaon-Bhima war memorial.

## DO YOU OWN A PLOT IN UNAUTHORIZED LAYOUT?

### LAST & FINAL OPPORTUNITY TO REGULARIZE

### GREAT CHANCE TO REGULARIZE ALL UNAPPROVED LAYOUTS



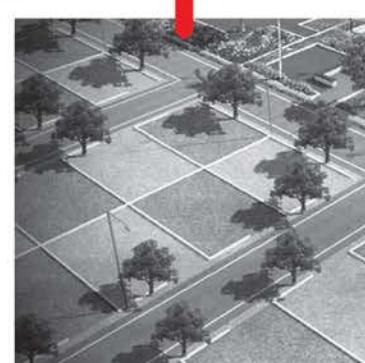
The Government of Telangana announces Layout Regularization Scheme (LRS) in Rural and Urban areas for regularizing unauthorized Plots & Layouts.



**Sri K. Chandrashekhar Rao**  
Chief Minister, Government of Telangana

If not regularized under LRS scheme, the unauthorized Plot will not get the following approvals/facilities:

- \* No Registration
- \* No Building Permission
- \* No Water Connection
- \* No Electricity



APPLICATION FEES PAYABLE:

FOR INDIVIDUAL PLOTS:

**RS.1,000/-**

ALONG WITH APPLICATION

Details of the Scheme & Regularization Charges are available at:

<http://lrs.telangana.gov.in/>

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

ONCE YOUR APPLICATION IS REGISTERED,  
THE ENTIRE REGULARIZATION CHARGES SHOULD BE PAID BY

**31/01/2021**

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

1. For Plots in HMDA: 1800 - 4258838
  2. For Plots in GHMC: 040 - 2111 1111
- e-mail: support-lrs@telangana.gov.in

### Information to be furnished while applying:

Details of the Applicant including Aadhar number and Mobile number (for receiving generated OTP)

### Documents to be uploaded:

#### For Individual Plots:

Scanned copies of the Sale Deed (both front and back pages) which clearly shows the Sale Deed number and SRO details

#### For Entire Layout Regularization:

- a. Scanned copies of the Layout & Ownership documents
- b. Scanned copies of the Sale Deeds/ECs of the Plot sold

#### Plot/Layout Details:

##### a. If Plot:

Locality*	Plot Number*	Survey number*	Area/Extent in Sq. Yds*	Sale Deed Number*	Sale Deed Year*	Registered at (SRO name)*

##### b. If Layout:

Locality*	Total number of Plots*	Total Layout Area/Extent in Sq. Yds*	No. of Plots sold*	Open Space provided*

\*along with details of extent including Mandal/Ward/Village etc., wherever applicable.



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

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[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=cgg.gov.in.lrs\\_2020](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=cgg.gov.in.lrs_2020)

Utilize this last & final opportunity - Get your plot regularized

Issued By: Commissioner, I & PR Department, Government of Telangana

## SHORT TAKES

**INSULTED MAN ENDS LIFE BY SUICIDE**

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC  
WARANGAL, SEPT. 7

A 26-year-old man committed suicide after he was insulted by the sarpanch in Kusumabai thanda under Raghunathpally mandal.

Villagers said the deceased Guguleth Ellesh questioned sarpanch Dharavath Ramesh regarding the absence of street-lights and sanitation in the village. This resulted in a heated argument between the two and the infuriated Ramesh hit Ellesh with his slippers. Feeling insulted, Ellesh went home and attempted suicide. He died on the way to a hospital.

Holding the sarpanch responsible for the death of Ellesh, villagers in large numbers went to Raghu Nathpally police station and demanded action against him.

Ramesh later gave ten guntas land to the family of Ellesh as compensation.

## BIRD HUNTERS RANSACK FOREST RANGE OFFICE

PILLALAMARI SRINIVAS | DC  
NIRMAL, SEPT. 7

Woman members of a family of traditional bird hunters who are popularly known as 'Pittalolu' attacked Khanapur forest range office alleging that forest officials had bashed up one of their kin, Putta Kishan, who reportedly fell unconscious, on charges of poaching of the forest animals in Nirmal district on Monday.

Family members of Kishan ransacked the office and pelted stones at the window panes on knowing that Kishan had fallen unconscious while conducting an inquiry in the office and shifted to a government hospital.

Kishan is a native of Lingapur village in Kadambam in Nirmal district. His family alleged that forest officials took him into their custody and were conducting an inquiry for the last four days.

While forest officials say that Kishan was a poacher and killed forest animals by erecting the live electric wires in the forests. It is learnt that forest officials released a video showing live electric wires erected allegedly by Kishan.

## STATE ASSEMBLY PAYS TRIBUTES TO PRANAB

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao recalling the fatherly guidance that former President Pranab Mukherjee gave him during and after the formation of Telangana state.

Moving the condolence motion for Mukherjee, the CM pointed to his being the head of the Cabinet Sub-Committee constituted by UPA-1 government for formation of a separate Telangana. Again, it was Pranab who signed the Bill as President declaring Telangana as a separate state.

Rao said, "This House places on record its deep sense of sorrow at the demise of Pranab Mukherjee, and conveys sympathy to members of the bereaved family". The Assembly later passed the condolence motion.

He described Mukherjee as a towering personality of the Indian political arena, who played a key role in development of the nation after 1970s. He said: "Pranab is the epitome of hard work. Born in a village in West Bengal, he used to swim across a stream to reach his school. He is a man of all seasons and held different ministries with ease, rendering yeomen service to the nation."

Rao said Mukherjee was one of the top five finance ministers of the world, who had experience in dealing with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and International Monetary Fund.

"He might have differed with others on issues, but never personally criticised anyone. Even if he did, he used to apologise," Rao said of Mukherjee. The former President was an excellent trouble shooter who played a key role in achieving a common ground in running coalition governments, he said.

Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, describing the former President as a beloved son of the nation, recalled that he had sought Mukherjee's advise on introducing the bifurcation Bill and other issues related to separate Telangana.

# Session to take up Revenue Bill

**State Assembly to move resolution on Bharat Ratna for Narasimha Rao**

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

ddy and attended by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka and MIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi.

The Legislative Council will follow the schedule of the Assembly. The BAC has decided to limit the Question Hour to six questions and Zero Hour will be limited half-hour. On Tuesday, the second of the proceedings, the state government will move a resolution urging the Centre to award the Bharat Ratna

● IT IS EXPECTED that the government will introduce the new Revenue Bill on Thursday and have a discussion on it on Thursday and Friday.

to former prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and after that House will take up government business.

It is expected that the government will introduce the new Revenue Bill on Thursday and have a discussion on it on Thursday and Friday.

CLP leader Mallu Bhatti demanded discussion on issues such as Covid-19, sharing of Krishna river water with AP, the Layout Regularisation Scheme, sanction of universities, belt shops, Podu cultivation, demolition of the Secretariat, SC, ST and BC sub-plans and the new education policy.

While opposing the shutting down of the Media Point, he demanded extension of the session beyond 18 days so as to take up all the issues for the discussion in the House.

The Chief Minister said the government had already agreed to discuss any issue in detail and was ready to extend the session further to accommodate meaningful debate on important issues.

The Speaker and the Chief Minister said that if necessary, the BAC will again meet on September 28, the closing day of the session, to take a decision on extending it.

## First day at Assembly meet



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao is received by Legislative affairs minister Vemula Prashant Reddy and Telangana Assembly secretary V. Narasimhacharyulu at the State Assembly in Hyderabad on Monday.

## RAMALINGA REDDY, A PEOPLE'S MAN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The Assembly on Monday paid rich tributes to the late Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, Dubbaka MLA, and unanimously adopted a condolence motion remembering his services. The Assembly also offered tributes to former legislators Kaveti Sammiah, Juvvadi Ratnakar Rao, Salluri Pochaiyah, P. Ramaswamy, Masku Narasimha, B. Krishna, Sunnam Rajaiyah, Yadma Kista Reddy and Mathangi Narsaiah who died in the inter-session period.

Moving the motion condoling the death of Ramalinga Reddy, Rao said, "Ramalinga Reddy grew as a leader along with the separate Telangana movement. He was down to earth and always a people's man. His death at a very young age is very unfortunate."

Recalling the late MLA's progressive attitude, the CM pointed said that Ramalinga Reddy was against dowry and other kinds of social evils.

IT and industries minister K.T. Rama Rao described Ramalinga Reddy as a very active leader who led a highly simple life. KTR said, "In 2004, when there was a heavy demand for Dommatta (now Dubbaka) seat, the TRS chief allocated the seat to Ramalinga Reddy knowing very well his deep-rooted sentiment towards Telangana."

## Covid impacts 1st day of monsoon session

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The impact of Coronavirus was clearly visible on the first day of the Monsoon Session of the Telangana Legislative Assembly and Council on Monday.

Assembly premises and lobbies, which used to be packed with huge crowds during every session, witnessed thin gatherings of personal staff belonging to the Chief Minister, Ministers and MLAs.

Attendance of officers was minuscule in both Assembly and Council premises. Entry was limited to

members of both Houses, employees of the legislature and media personnel, though after they tested negative of Covid-19.

The Media Point will remain out of bounds for the entire duration of the session. This area is usually packed with media persons and visitors during the session. But it wore a deserted look due to the restrictions imposed.

Surprisingly, deployment of police personnel too appeared less compared to earlier sessions. Entry of visitors was, however, prohibited. Thermal screening stands were installed at

entry points of members, media gallery, and Chief Minister's office. Movement of gunmen was also restricted to parking lots.

Apart from supplying a kit, which contained an oximeter, sanitiser and a mask to each member of both the Houses, a small sanitiser bottle was placed on the desk of each member.

As the Media Point was made out of bounds, television channels made arrangements at the Gun Park opposite the Assembly, so that members could express their reactions on the ongoing proceedings in the two houses.

## HC for effective 104 service

VUJJINI VAMSIDHARA | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The Telangana High Court on Monday directed the state government to make effectively functional the helpline number 104 which has been set up for guiding and helping Covid-19 patients get treatment.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy on Monday

day was dealing with a PIL filed by Jaswal complaining against the ineffective and unproductive handling of 104 by the state health department. The bench observed that the helpline is not really helping people as it should. It asked if there was a need for more than one helpline number and also asked the government to ensure that there will be sufficient number of persons for responding to the calls. In another

matter alleging that government hospitals were not conducting Covid-19 tests, the court issued notices to the government and the hospitals to submit an explanation within two weeks.

The petitioners stated that he had lost his wife due to the approach adopted by private and government hospitals when they were made to run around and the hospitals refused to admit his wife in the absence of a Covid-19 test report.

## Krishna, Godavari are lifelines, must be protected, say experts

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

Conserving Godavari and Krishna rivers is paramount for the state, maintained officials during a meeting at the Institute of Forest Biodiversity here on Monday.

Rajeshwar Tiwari, special principal secretary, ministry of forests and environment, said: "Krishna and Godavari basins are in danger of becoming extinct over a period of time. This conclusion, officials said, was a result of excessive reliance on rivers, human and industrial habitats along the river banks, encroachments and declining forest-cover which have become hurdles to the river's natural flow."

"Proposals are being prepared for the revival of 13 rivers. This is a good opportunity for cleansing Krishna and Godavari rivers," said D. Krishnan, director, Institute of Forest Biodiversity.

The meeting discussed the current status of the two rivers, steps to be taken for conserving the catchment area, role of various departments and preparation of a viable project report. The par-

ticipants also discussed the role of the forest, agriculture, irrigation and other concerned departments involved in the river cleansing process.

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A comprehensive proj-

ect report on the revival of the Godavari River is also being prepared. The director said that the report would be prepared after consultations with the forest department and other related departments. The Institute of Wood Science and Technology (Bengaluru) would be preparing proposals for the revival of Krishna River, said Dr Madan Prasad Singh, director of the institute.

Principal chief conservator of forests R. Lokesh Jaiswal will be the additional nodal officer on behalf of the state forest department, for cleansing of the rivers and for maintaining ecological balance. The meeting discussed issues such as the need to protect the ecosystem of 5 km on both sides of large rivers and 2 km on either side of tributaries, to

plant trees accordingly, control of soil erosion along the river bank and to be strict on sand mining beyond the permitted extent.

It was decided that forests should be given priority for river flow and measures should be taken to protect forest, animal and wildlife in catchment areas.

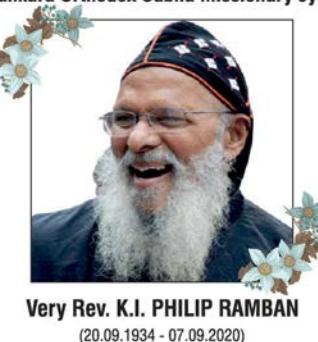
"The rivers and tributaries regulated by the Union environment ministry should work together to revitalise dense forest areas, measures to ensure continuous flow of so-called living rivers and conserve clean water resources," Rajeshwar Tiwari said. Based on the issues discussed at the workshop and the views expressed, officials said they would prepare a project report on cleansing of the two rivers and send it to the Centre.

## HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR BEREAVED

Hyderabad: Director of Health Services Dr G. Srinivasa Rao's father Suryanarayana Rao passed away after being in the hospital for the past few days. Health minis-

ter Etala Rajendar expressed shock at the death of Suryanarayana Rao on Monday. Rajendar spoke with Dr Srinivasa Rao on phone and conveyed his condolences.

Our Respectful Homage to Malankara Orthodox Sabha Missionary Jyothis



Very Rev. K.I. PHILIP RAMBAN  
(20.09.1934 - 07.09.2020)

"At the great day of your coming, O Son of God remember those Priests who served you well and give them bright good face"

Visar and Members of Hyderabad Region Orthodox Churches  
St.Gregorios Orthodox Cathedral, Hyderabad  
St.Andrews Orthodox Valiyapally, Secunderabad  
St.Mary's Orthodox Church, Ramachandrapuram  
St.George Orthodox Church, Jeedimetla

Our Respectful Homage to Malankara Orthodox Sabha Missionary Jyothis



Very Rev. K.I. PHILIP RAMBAN  
(20.09.1934 - 07.09.2020)

With profound grief we inform the demise of PUSHPANJALI SIDDAMSETTY  
Inserted by Sons Ramesh Sunil Kishor Grand Children Vikram-Sanjana, Santhosh-Riha, Nitin, Vaishali, Bhavana-Chetan, Madhuri-Rohit Great Grand Children Ranvir, Om, Aanvi, Vidhan Condolences: 9849896512, 9849902243 (CA-3406)

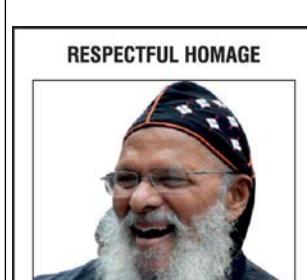
1st Death Anniversary In Loving Memory of



MRS. SAROJA SAMMALA Teacher, MPPS Kolur, Sangareddy Dist. 11th July 1976 - 8th Sept. 2019 The pain of losing you is immeasurable. Days will pass and turn into years, but you will always be remembered. Death is the last chapter in time, but the first chapter in eternity. Rest in peace.  
Inserted by: Family Members, Husband: Pilli David S/o Late P.J. Mathew & Sons: Jessi Richards and Joe Rithvik Sanathnagar, Hyd. 9866660770

1st Death Anniversary

"Good people will be remembered as a blessing" Prov. 10:7



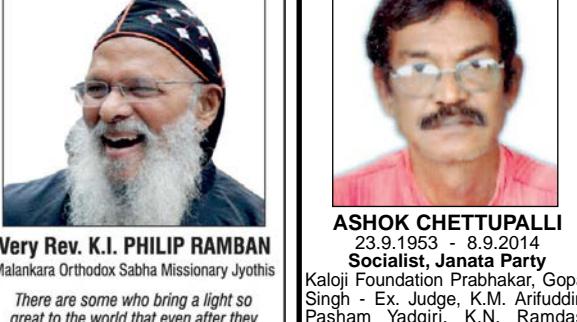
Mrs. PARSE ESTHER (W/o. Parse Srinivasa Rao)  
DOB: 24-02-1952 Died in the Lord - 08-09-2019  
Mom - You are missed each & every day; for you were some one special who meant more than words can say. We Love You Husband & Children

Inserted by Shobitha, Arpith and Joe

1st Death Anniversary

"It's hard to forget someone who gave us so much to remember  
A well-wisher

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE



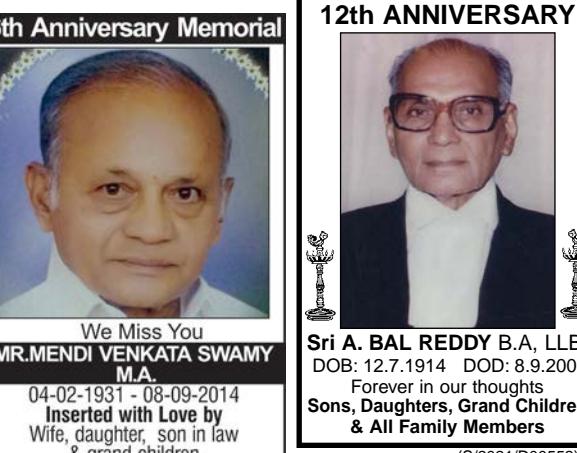
Very Rev. K.I. PHILIP RAMBAN  
Malankara Orthodox Sabha Missionary Jyothis

Inserted by Mathews' Family, Balanagar

6th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

ASHOK CHETTUPALLI 23.7.1953 - 8.9.2014 Socialist, Janata Party Kaloji Foundation Prabhakar, Gopal Singh - Ex. Judge, K.M. Arifuddin, Pasam, Yadgiri, K.N. Ramdas, Ch. Balkishan Rao, Gattu Babu, P.J. Suri. 9849431998 (CA-3405)

12th ANNIVERSARY



Sri A. BAL REDDY B.A., LL.B.  
DOB: 12.7.1914 DOD: 8.9.2008  
Forever in our thoughts  
Sons, Daughters, Grand Children & All Family Members

(S/2021/D00552)

## SHORT TAKES

## FICCI TO ORGANISE WEBINAR ON TAXPAYERS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The FICCI Telangana State Council will organise an interactive webinar, 'Transparent Taxation — Honouring The Honest TaxPayers', on September 11. The programme, scheduled to begin at 4 pm, will be streamed live on Webex and YouTube. The event is the fourth in a series of programmes organised by FICCI as part of its 'dialogue for actionable insights'.

Among those scheduled to speak at the event are Mallika Arya, Chief Commissioner of Hyderabad GST & Customs Zone, and J.B. Mohapatra, Principal CCTT, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Region.

Those interested in joining the webinar can register at [https://webinar.ficci.com/fida\\_i](https://webinar.ficci.com/fida_i), FICCI said in a news release. More details can be obtained from contacting FICCI at [ficcts@ficci.com](mailto:ficcts@ficci.com) or its assistant director K.N. Chandra Sekhar Rao at [k.rao@ficci.com](mailto:k.rao@ficci.com), or via phone at 9818255944.

## COVID SURVIVOR GETS LOWER JAW RECONSTRUCTED

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

A 45-year-old cancer patient who had recovered from Covid-19 had his lower jaw reconstructed with the help of 3-D technology and cosmetic surgery at Apollo Cancer Institute. The patient from Hyderabad had a massive tumour in the lower jaw and there was extensive growth in the last three months. Due to the lockdown and fear of contracting the virus, there was delay in his treatment.

When he approached the hospital, his blood test showed him to be Covid-19 positive. But the CT scan of lungs were clear, indicating him to be asymptomatic. He was treated for Covid-19 in the hospital. His subsequent tests showed him negative and the treatment for cancer was started. He required the surgery of the lower jaw as the tumour affected his speech and swallowing. Dr Umanath Nayak, senior consultant, head and neck surgical oncologist, and Dr B. Rahul, reconstructive surgeon, performed the surgery and reconstructed the jaw. The procedure took 10 hours. The patient is now stable.

## KISHAN REDDY LAUDS DRDO FOR SUCCESS OF HSTDV

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy on Monday applauded the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for realising the vision of Atmanirbhav Bharat as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi by successfully flight-testing the indigenously developed Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV).

Pursuant to the anti-satellite missile test conducted in March 2019, that demonstrated India's technological prowess, the HSTDV is the second achievement which presents yet another account of the successful development of indigenous critical technology.

Kishan Reddy felt that the success of this test was crucial to the development of hypersonic cruise missiles and vehicles in the country. This technology will enable cruise missiles to travel at hypersonic speeds, a feat that puts India into a select club of nations comprising the US, Russia and China who have demonstrated such a feat.

## Metro is back



Passengers travel on Hyderabad Metro Rail which resumed its operations on Monday on the red line corridor between LB Nagar and Miyapur after five months of lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Metro Rail authorities ensured that passengers followed social distancing and sanitisation norms while travelling.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

## Kids pose trouble on Day 1 of Metro run

## Those violating Covid-19 guidelines to be penalised

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

Children and infants travelling in Metro Rail trains are posing grave concerns to Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL) authorities after operations were resumed on Monday following an unprecedented 168-day Covid-19 lockdown.

Frenzied kids ran all over the coaches after removing face masks, in the train that this reporter travelled in to experience first-hand how the service would be with Covid-19 restrictions.

Meanwhile, despite a few Covid-19 violations, Metro Rail operations resumed on an encouraging note but there were few takers on the red line corridor from LB Nagar-Miyapur where services resumed on Monday.

Prakash, who boarded at Miyapur station, said, "Though Metro officials have ensured all Covid-19 guidelines and standard operating procedures, it is difficult to keep a check on children. HMRL should not allow kids and infants till the Covid-19 vaccine comes to the market."

He was taking his five-

**PASSENGERS WERE** allowed only after thermal screening and provided sanitisers at all entry and exit points. The T-Savari app irked some commuters since it was dysfunctional. However, they managed to book online tickets through other mobile applications.

year-old son Vishnuvardhan to Niloufer Hospital for a general check-up.

When the issue was taken to the notice of the authorities, they said HMRL would take a call on allowing children in the train.

HMRL managing director N.V.S. Reddy said, "Around 120 train trips were made today from 7 am to 12 noon and 4 to 9 pm, as against about 800 trips on all corridors during the pre-Covid-19 days. Around 19,000 passengers travelled today, which was on expected lines." The usual daily load is said to be about 50,000 passengers on the line.

"Passengers were happy with the sanitisation measures and maintenance of physical distancing. They mostly behaved responsibly. We will resume operations on Corridor 3 (Blue Line from Nagole to Raidurg) on Tuesday with the same timings and then all the corridors from Wednesday from 7 am to 9 pm," Reddy said.

HMRL citing safety of

commuters reduced the number of seats to one third, leaving a gap between every two seats and standing place vacant to ensure physical distancing. Close to half the seats were seen lying vacant on Day 1.

On the trip, a few commuters removed face masks to click selfies, others were busy chatting in close proximity.

HMRL authorities claimed that they would penalise violators by monitoring CCTV cameras. There was no staff deployed on coaches to monitor Covid-19 guideline violations.

Passengers were allowed only after thermal screening and provided sanitisers at all entry and exit points. The T-Savari app irked some commuters since it was dysfunctional. However, they managed to book online tickets through other mobile applications.

Passengers were happy with the sanitisation measures and maintenance of physical distancing. They mostly

behaved responsibly. We will resume operations on Corridor 3 (Blue Line from Nagole to Raidurg) on Tuesday with the same timings and then all the corridors from Wednesday from 7 am to 9 pm," Reddy said.

The authorities did not maintain the AC temperatures at 24-30°C. Since it was a bright sunny day, the AC at the cabin roof was 22°C and on the wall panel, 25°C.

Outside, cabs fares surged during the peak hour. Autorickshaw drivers fixed a base fare of ₹100 within two kilometres and anything beyond was charged ₹200 and more.

"Since city buses were unavailable, I was forced to take a cab from Ameerpet to Miyapur. I paid ₹220 while the Metro price is ₹40," said Archana Reddy.

She said that the government should either subsidise or put a cap on cab fares at least until public transport and shuttle services resume.

HMRL shut the Bharatnagar and Moosapet stations which are in containment zones. The regular announcements were made. Currently, the service is available at a five-minute frequency.

Till March 22, HMRL was operating 55 trains carrying about 4.5 lakh passengers every day.

## Prabhas adopts 1,650 acre Khazipally forest reserve

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

The Green India Challenge, launched by TRS Rajya Sabha member Jogninapally Santosh Kumar which has found widespread and enthusiastic support, received yet another massive boost. On Monday, popular film actor Prabhas adopted the 1,650-acre Khazipally reserve forest, close to Dindigul and about 20 km from Hyderabad city at its centre. It may be recalled that Santosh Kumar had adopted the 2,042-acre Keesara forest block in August last year as part of the Green India Challenge.

Prabhas donated ₹2 crore to the forest department for the development of the forest block, one of the larger lung spaces around the expanding urban agglomeration with Hyderabad city at its centre. It may be recalled that Santosh Kumar had adopted the 2,042-acre Keesara forest block in August last year as part of the Green India Challenge.



Actor Prabhas seen with TRS Rajya Sabha member Jogninapally Santosh Kumar at the launch of Green India Challenge in the Khazipally forest block on Monday.

## Santosh: Got inspired by Haritha Haram

BALU PULIPAKA | DC HYDERABAD, SEPT. 7

"This is one of the most satisfying things I have done in my life," said Jogninapally Santosh Kumar, TRS Rajya Sabha member, whose brainchild, the Green India Challenge, has been going from strength to strength with people from all walks of life, and across the country, joining it and planting saplings and plants running into a few crores so far.

"It began with inspiration drawn from Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao's Telangana ku Haritha Haram programme. There have been so many other challenges, such as the ice-bucket challenge or the bottle-cap challenge. They are fun but I wanted to do something that makes a difference, that will find acceptance and benefit people and society. That is how the Green India Challenge was born," Santosh Kumar told *Deccan Chronicle*.

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# DECCAN Chronicle

8 SEPTEMBER 2020

## 'Justice for Sushant' holds mirror to media

**W**ild and unabashedly outrageous, a little far out in its brazen attempt to exploit the voter's sentiment as son of the soil, the BJP's improbable "Justice for Sushant" campaign, launched ahead of the elections to the Bihar legislative Assembly, invites the media today to a spot of introspection. The media is guilty of according the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput too much priority. To this end, it has blithely allowed itself to play into the hands of political lobbies that quickly converted the coverage into a running skirmish between the ruling party at the Centre and the Opposition-led Maharashtra government. Hungry for TRPs, the media remained oblivious. Rigour, due diligence and facts were tossed to the winds in the course of a media trial, masquerading as an investigation.

As floods raged through Bihar, alongside Coronavirus and recession, the big media invisibilised the sufferings of the poor and the marginalised. The post-truth media was shy of putting governments on the mat. The social media fostered echo chambers, cancel culture, and trolling and real life stalking of ones with uncomfortable views. But the cardinal sin committed by the media was trying to reverse-engineer the tastes of its audience and in so doing it underestimated it, badly. The masses are intelligent. They do not enjoy an exact overlap with the classes to which the journalist aspires to belong like every other middle class citizen. But they vote out governments. They have sections that are semi-literary and they also comprise minds that are not influential but are far more educated than the journalist themselves. The masses may be entertained by melodrama and kitsch but they know how to distinguish between news and entertainment. Sometimes, they knowingly opt for the latter. At other times, they do so in the former's absence. But to perpetuate their particular frauds, journalists were encouraged to buy into the toxic middle class culture of misogyny, shame, fear and fascination of "drugs" and various "nobler than thou" tribalisms that coexist as cognitive dissonances, indeed neuroses, in people's psyches and milk them no end. It was surprising how the journalist of a television channel kept steering the conversation away to the topic of drugs even after Rhea Chakraborty dropped repeated clear hints about Sushant Singh being stressed out about the possibility of a "#MeToo-type allegation" prior to his death. Chakraborty has just been interrogated by the CBI and this adds to her statements new weight. It is also surprising how large sections of the media gave zero currency to the possibility that Sushant Singh's death might have been the result of a suicide. This behaviour by the media invalidates the needs of people suffering from depression that the death had urgently highlighted.

There is a growing suspicion that the media is instinctively refusing to consider and/or present the actor as having been an overthinking, perfectionist, high-achieving, fallible human, with talent and flaw, and instead placing him on the pedestal of "the wronged genius" that it believes its audience wants him to occupy. Should it be otherwise, the ensuing shame withers its own pet narrative. All of which is typical of the regressive society that the media aims to cater to and likes to place itself above. The coverage of this case is indeed a study in its midsize history of hypocrisy.

## Djokovic's fault

**N**ovak Djokovic, world's top ranked player, has been thrown out of the US Open. And rightly so too for hitting a line judge in the throat with the ball he had smacked behind him in frustration after dropping his service to Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain in a fourth round match. The ball hitting the woman official was clearly accidental but then Djokovic is known to be a habitual offender in this regard and he had no business demonstrating his displeasure at himself or otherwise in this fashion on court. It may be deeply disappointing for fans to see the winner of 17 Grand Slams disqualified like this, especially since he adds such colour to the sport. But then Djokovic is also expected to be a paragon of good behaviour. The argument that there would have been little fuss and possibly just a small fine had the ball missed the line judge is futile. These are extraordinary times with the pandemic having changed the lives of everyone globally and the quirky turn of events comes just when Djokovic has been preparing to launch a controversial players' association which excludes women players. The US Open loses its charm as the Serbian was the lodestar in the men's half in the absence of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. Modern tennis has evolved from the age of John McEnroe and his rage for perfection erupting in abysmal behaviour. Djokovic sounds contrite in his apology and he should be taking a leaf out of Federer's playbook in being an epitome of grace on court. A loose cannon like him may lack the sangfroid of great champions but he can't blame it on the pandemic-induced "cabin fever" or his being targeted for the event in Serbia-Croatia that became a virus super spreader among tennis players.

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Anita Katyal  
Political Gup-Shup

## 'Pro-changers' for voter lists; Anar ambition worries BJP

Subhani



## Wuhan and the garden of false expectations

V Sudarshan

**P**icture this mood setter: It is a cool April evening on the banks of the East Lake in Wuhan, the year is 2018, some months after a testing standoff in Doklam, Bhutan, between Indian and Chinese troops. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese strongman Xi Jinping are listening to the dulcet tones of ancient Chinese string instruments and flutes playing a sweet Bollywood hit of yester-years. By the time the music sets the mood, the two leaders have taken a stroll by the East Lake without their official delegations in tow, have sat in a houseboat, without their delegations, partaken of Chinese tea, teased only by the gentle lakeside breezes. The song the Chinese musicians are playing with elegance, plucking pear shaped lutes, zithers, blowing melodiously on Chinese flutes, is a carefully chosen Kishore Kumar-Aasha Bhosle duet which goes, Mil Jaye is tarah, do lehren jis tarah, phir na hona juda, han yeh wada rahan.

It is a song where two lovers pledge never to separate. This song helped define the so-called "Wuhan Spirit". Later the following year, in Mamallapuram in another informal summit setting, which is to say, without the rigidity of official positions, Xi was to tell the media, looking as pleased as a fat Chinese cat that just tasted its favourite cream, that he had "heart to heart discussions" with Modiji on bilateral matters. This heart to heart moment was branded by spinmeisters as the "Chennai Connect". What the formal communications were to claim later, after both these mutually rewarding meetings, where each leader much better

understood the other's strategic perspectives on a range of issues, reveal as much as they conceal. But Modiji was to declare with much satisfaction: "The first informal summit between India and China last year in Wuhan led to fresh stability in our relations and gave a fresh momentum. Strategic communication between our two countries has also increased. The Wuhan summit instilled a new momentum and trust in our relations and today's 'Chennai Connect' is the start of a new era in India-China relations."

Significantly, Xi Jinping said that such informal summits have helped "initiate discussions on many issues" and he was happy that Mr Modi had mooted the idea. So we know whose idea it was, these one-on-ones to better understand the other. That the Chinese responded, and that after 18 meetings between Modiji and Xi Jinping, the comfort of "strategic communication" has entered the lexicon of diplomacy. It is also appropriate to underline the phrase "fresh stability" that Modiji highlighted.

Now, consider the surprising remark that external affairs minister S. Jaishankar made in an interview to the Hindustan Times a few days ago: "We have very large number of Chinese forces (in Galwan and other areas) and frankly, we (emphasis added) are at a loss to know why." It is at some variance with the statement by Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat to the same newspaper a week prior to that. In it he said two things broadly, one suggesting that there is proper intelligence coordination between the various agencies, thereby downplaying the possibility of intelligence failure, and second, that the military

option was always there if all else fails, a foreshadowing of intent. Indeed, there could be evidence that by October the aviation wing of the Research and Analysis Wing had produced compelling visual and other evidence which when pieced together showed that the Chinese were consistently massing, moving, constructing, like worker ants. This couldn't have been filed away in some cupboard without the necessary dissemination. The answer lies elsewhere.

Is it even possible that in the 18 times Modiji met Xi in the past six years, one-to-one, they failed to probe each other's perspectives on the boundary issue? After all, there are over 460 incursions a year. The Wuhan summit followed the numbing Doklam experience. And now Galwan, Hot Springs and Pangong Tso follow Mahabs. How does this make any sense? Especially after Xi's political endearment, declared so openly: "Yesterday, Prime Minister, as you said, you and I had engaged in candid conversations like friends, heart to heart discussions on bilateral relations."

The fact is the strategic framework of how to take the relationship forward, in place since Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to Beijing, which downplayed the urgent resolution of the boundary question and made it a secondary goal while seeking to expand the horizon of relations, had long collapsed by the time Modiji started meeting the Chinese leadership in 2014. Was Modiji still waiting for a strategic communication when he declared on June 19: "Neither have they intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them (China)?" After all our Prime Minister had a chance to broadly survey and review what the two countries had been able to achieve and, more importantly, had a chance to map the path where the two were heading in an uncertain world. It was quite an unparalleled achievement, expending so much political capital to better get a handle on this complicated relationship. Modiji must surely have factored in the negative signals the Chinese have sent over the years, on the Nuclear Suppliers Group, on Jaish-e-Mohammed, on Pakistan, Arunachal Pradesh. Or were they, like the two characters in Chirocco's painting, just conversations among the ruins, with the high Himalayas providing the barren backdrop? Could it be that for a while Modiji and his policy-makers, based on Modiji's various heart-to-heart conversations with Xi, had thought there could be somehow a disconnect between Xi and sections of the PLA and that he would somehow prevail? Was this the context that we should have viewed our man in Beijing's special pleadings in the middle of August with the director of the Office of International Military Co-operation of the Central Military Commission of China? Is it even possible that Modiji, chowkidar exemplar, was blindsided by Xi and let himself be led up the garden path? If we allow for that possibility, then the recent surprise expressed by our external affairs minister, in the collective second person "we", starts to make sense. He speaks not only for himself, but for those who provided close support in Wuhan, Mahabs and 16 other salubrious settings. Thus have the scales fallen from their eyes. That would explain the additional, proactive military scrambling, the forward deploying, in the areas of the Ladakh UT where we continue to plug the gaps. A delightful reworking of Nehru's much-maligned forward policy.

*The writer is the author of Adrift: A True Story of Survival at Sea and Anatomy of an Abduction. He writes, among other things, on diplomacy, security, strategic affairs and foreign policy.*

## LETTERS ENGG LECTURERS

It really pains to see that educated people are being paid too little in India (Engg lecturers work at petrol bunks, DC, Sept. 7). Big companies extract the work from engineers and exploit them but they don't pay them accordingly. After spending huge bucks on education, what security is the government giving to the educated youth?

Idris Saberi  
Hyderabad

## COVID-19 CASES

The number of Covid-19 cases is exponentially increasing and hence the well-meaning honest tax-paying citizens of India who are not politically inclined to any political forum/party want Central and state governments to immediately take up improving/increasing hospitals to Covid-19 cases (India overtakes Brazil as Unlock 4 starts, DC, Sept. 7). They may like to take the considered opinions of doctors and all health workers and appropriate the medical treatment.

T.M. Uday Shankar  
Hyderabad

## IPL, FINALLY

Indian cricket fans have something to cheer after a long gap of six months as the IPL 2020 schedule is out and the on-field action is set to begin at three venues in the UAE (Royal Opening, DC, Sept. 7). While this will be interesting to see how players adapt to new conditions such as bio-secure bubble, empty stadia and other Covid-19 related restrictions, fans across the world are eagerly waiting for some action. Kudos to the BCCI and the UAE government for arranging the league amidst the pandemic which will bring some cheer to action-deprived fans.

Jitesh Mathur  
Hyderabad

## FORMER RULERS ARE COMMONERS

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7  
The 320 rulers of erstwhile States in the country became commoners today with their de-recognition by a Presidential order.

The Finance Minister, Mr. Y.B. Chavan

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle told a cheering Raja a Sabha today that the privy purses and privileges of the rulers had been ended "with immediate effect."

Mr. Chavan declared that with the de-recognition of rulers, "the princes have ceased to be rulers."



**T**he Coronavirus pandemic has come in handy for the Modi government to control the flow of information to the media.

**M**aneka Gandhi (who was once called the kutta bili minister when she headed the environment ministry) may no longer be in the government but she is keeping herself busy dashing off letters to resident welfare associations in the Capital on her favourite subject - stray dogs. Her letters have pointed out that it is illegal to relocate dogs and that irrational phobias should not be entertained and gone on to draw attention to specific laws on strays and that punishments for breaking the law go up to three years and fines. The problem of stray dogs has been a subject of an animated debate in recent weeks as many residents from across the city have complained about it following increasing cases of dog bites. They are also upset with residents who do not feed the dogs at designated spots and don't bother to sterilize them. This has predictably invited a backlash

from dog lovers like Maneka Gandhi.

**T**he Gujarat unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party is getting worried as Anar Patel, the high-profile daughter of former chief minister and Uttar Pradesh governor Anandiben Patel, has become politically active and is said to be eyeing a seat in one of the Gandhinagar Assembly constituencies. An entrepreneur by profession, Anar Patel joined the BJP a couple of years ago and had tried for a ticket in the 2017 Assembly elections but failed to make the cut. Though the next Assembly election is due only after two years, BJP insiders maintain Anar Patel has started preparing for it by meeting party workers and voters of the area. This has not gone down well with the local party leaders, especially the sitting MLAs. Anar Patel had courted controversy when her mother was chief minister. Emerging as a parallel power centre, she was wooed and sought by party workers, industrialists and others. She was in the eye of a storm following media reports that her business partners were allotted land

at a throwaway price for the construction of a holiday resort. In fact, Anar's role was cited as a major reason for Anandiben's removal as chief minister.

**T**he Coronavirus pandemic has come in handy for the Modi government to control the flow of information to the media. Take the case of the ministry of external affairs. The ministry earlier held regular briefings where the official spokesperson responded to queries from press persons on the beat. These physical press briefings were discontinued when the lockdown was announced and replaced by virtual press conferences. When the new system was first put in place, media persons were given the option of asking their questions during the virtual briefing. But this has changed. Journalists are now required to send their questions in advance. Very often, a whole lot are bunched together while inconveniences are ignored. Plus, there is no scope for any follow-up questions. This has naturally upset the beat reporters but none can afford to complain for fear of being ostracized by the ministry.

**T**he letter by Abdul Manan, leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, to Sonia Gandhi demanding that senior leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury be appointed president of West Bengal Congress, is being interpreted in party circles as a done deal. Manan is close to Chowdhury and the latter is apparently keen on taking up this post which has been lying vacant after the last incumbent Somen Mitra's death. This move serves a double purpose. The party needs a strongman like Chowdhury in election-bound West Bengal and, at the same time, it will pave the way for replacing him as the party's Lok Sabha leader. But the question is: who is best suited for the job. Shashi Tharoor or Manish Tewari are obvious choices except the two have fallen from grace after they signed the famous pro-change letter to Sonia Gandhi.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

## SHORT TAKES

## RHEA FILES PLAINT AGAINST SSR'S SISTER

Mumbai, Sept. 7: Actress Rhea Chakraborty, who is accused of abetting the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, has filed a complaint with Mumbai Police, accusing Rajput's sister Priyanka Singh and a Delhi-based doctor of forgery and preparing a "fake" prescription of medicines for anxiety.

In her complaint sent to the Bandra police here on Sunday, Chakraborty sought that Priyanka Singh and Dr Tarun Kumar, working with Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in Delhi, be booked under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code for forgery, the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and the Telemedicine Practice Guidelines.

The 28-year-old actress in her complaint said Rajput was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and was undergoing treatment for various other mental health issues.

However, Rajput was not disciplined in following the treatment and would often abruptly stop his medications, she further said in the complaint.

"On June 8, 2020, Rajput showed me the messages he and his sister Priyanka had exchanged in which Priyanka sent him a list of medicines to take. I explained to Rajput that he has already been prescribed medicines by doctors who are treating him," Chakraborty said in her complaint.

"He (Rajput), however, disagreed with me and insisted that he would only take the medicine his sister was prescribing," she said.

On the same day, Rajput asked Chakraborty to leave the house as his sister Meetu Singh was coming to stay with him for a few days, according to the complaint.

## INDIA ENTERS INTO HYPERSONIC REGIME

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 7

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Monday demonstrated its hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology with the flight test of Hypersonic Technology Demonstration Vehicle (HSTDV) at 11.03 am from DR APJ Abdul Kalam Launch Complex at Wheeler Island, off the coast of Odisha.

With this successful demonstration, the country enters into the hypersonic regime paving way for advanced hypersonic vehicles.

The hypersonic cruise vehicle was launched using a proven solid rocket motor, which took it to an altitude of 30 km, where the aerodynamic heat shields were separated at hypersonic Mach number.

"The cruise vehicle separated from the launch vehicle and the air intake opened as planned. The hypersonic combustion sustained and the cruise vehicle continued on its desired flight path at a velocity of six times the speed of sound i.e., nearly 02 km/second for more than 20 seconds. The critical events like fuel injection and auto ignition of scramjet demonstrated technological maturity. The scramjet engine performed in a text book manner," DRDO said.

## C'GARH OPPOSES NATIONAL DIGITAL HEALTH MISSION

RABINDRA NATH CHOURHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 7

Chhattisgarh health minister T.S. Singhdeo on Monday expressed strong reservation about Centre's National Digital Health Mission, fearing that the policy may be used as a tool for surveillance on citizens by an 'authoritarian state'.

In a letter to Union health minister Harsh Vardhan, Singhdeo cautioned that the policy can be 'misused by an authoritarian state for surveillance purposes' and also can be misused to manipulate the sensitive personal information for the purpose of 'overt coercion'.

The National Digital Health Mission, draft policy of which was announced by National Health Authority functioning under Union health ministry on August 26, seeks to digitize the personal health records of citizens of India by developing a digital health ID, using Aadhaar, the 12-digit unique identification number linked to a person's biometric details.



Army soldiers carry the mortal remains of martyr Nyima Tenzin who laid down his life in a face-off with China on Aug 30, during his funeral in Leh on Monday.

— DC

## For high altitude warfare, ponies, mules are crucial

Equines can walk non-stop for 30 kms and carry loads upto 150 kg

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD SEPT. 7



### EQUINES & THE ARMY

- During World War II, British ships were modified especially to carry a total of 4,179 miles from the US to India for use by British and Indian troops operating in Burma
- Equines are called by their hoof numbers
- The Indian Army has recognised the contribution of the equines
- PLA also uses equines and Yaks, which have huge lungs which are perfect for high altitude
- Ponies are many breeds like the Zanskar ponies of Ladakh, Manipuri ponies, Spiti ponies and Bhutia ponies
- Mules and ponies are used to transport mortars, grenades, guns, ammo, kerosene and food among other material
- Riding and animal management skills are a pre-requisite for even Special Forces

the Army's logistics and there cannot be a substitute to it. High altitude regions experience hostile weather, heavy snow and rainfall in winters besides low visibility. In some areas along the LAC, there is thick vegetation and these conditions restrict the movement of helicopters which disrupts surveillance. These animals have been loyal to us at all our frontiers," sources said, adding that it is essential not to waste manpower during war time.

The PLA uses mules, ponies and even yaks, which not only transport material but also provide warmth when soldiers sleep next to the animals. The animals were used for evacuating the injured besides carrying artillery

guns. The Pakistan Army uses mules on its borders.

The equines, which have natural resistance to diseases and insects, can walk non-stop for 25 to 30 km and carry loads between 75 and 150 kg. Just before the Kargil war, there was a proposal to disband the animal transport units that function under the Army Service Corps but it was shelved.

The Remount and Veterinary Corps later established the Zanskar pony breeding and training centre in Ladakh, which is the highest stud farm in the world. This unit is currently providing strong and hardy Zanskar ponies for use by the Army in high altitude for its adaptability to extreme climatic conditions.

## Efforts on to secure release of 5 abducted youths

MANOJ ANAND | DC with agency inputs GUWAHATI, SEPT. 7

The Indian Army has begun efforts to secure the release of five villagers from Arunachal Pradesh who were reportedly abducted by the People's Liberation Army of China from Sera-7 area below the McMahon Line in Upper Subansiri in Arunachal Pradesh.

Disclosing that the Indian Army has made contact at the commander level and sent a hotline message to its counterpart in Eastern frontier of Arunachal Pradesh, sources said that local villagers have been assured that no stone will be left unturned to secure their release.

But reports quoting state-run *Global Times* quoted Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian as saying, "China's position on the eastern section of the China and India boundary and China's southern Tibet is consistent and clear. We have never recognised the so-called Arunachal Pradesh illegally established on the Chinese territory."

He also refuses to give details on five civilians who were abducted by the Chinese Army from Arunachal Pradesh.

"We have no details to release yet about the question on Indian army sending a message to PLA about five missing Indians in the region," he said.

The five youth, who have been missing since September 3, were part of a group of porters who carried supplies for the Army through an area without a motorable road or mobile connectivity.

Union minister Kiren Rijiju had on Sunday announced that the Indian

● THE FIVE youths, who have been missing since September 3, were part of a group of porters who carried supplies for the Army through an area without a motorable road or mobile connectivity. Parents of the abducted youths have expressed confidence in the Army.

● THE INDIAN Army has already sent a hotline message to the counterpart PLA establishment at the border point in Arunachal Pradesh. Response is awaited

KIREN RIJUJI,  
Union minister

Army has sent a hotline message to the Chinese Army and a response was awaited.

"The Indian Army has already sent a hotline message to the counterpart PLA establishment at the border point in Arunachal Pradesh. Response is awaited," said Mr Rijiju.

Kento Danggen, the deputy commissioner of Upper Subansiri district, told this newspaper that they dispatched a police team from the headquarters town of Daporijo to Nacho, about 120 km north, for an investigation but it will take some time for them to reach the frontier villages.

Parents of the abducted youth have expressed confidence in the Indian Army.

"We have very strong bonding with our Indian Army. They are always there to help us in our challenging days. We have been assured by local Army officers that they are trying to rescue the youths," a villager said.

attempt to hound Mr Zubair through the misuse of legal apparatus.

An attempt is being made to hound co-founder of AltNews Mohammed Zubair (@zoo\_bear) through misuse of legal apparatus. AltNews stands by Mohammed Zubair. Zubair has been in the forefront of fighting fake narratives and his work hurts those who have weaponised posts made by JSINGH2252 on his Twitter handle.

Meanwhile, Pratik Sinha, another co-founder of AltNews, shared some screenshots of obscene and salacious posts made by JSINGH2252 on his Twitter handle.

Earlier, on August 6, Mr Zubair responded to an abusive message from Twitter user Jagdish Singh, who uses the handle @JSINGH2252.

He posted Mr Singh's display picture, which features a little girl who is perhaps his granddaughter. Mr Zubair blurred her face in the image posted.

Hello Jagdish Singh. Does your cute granddaughter know about your part time job of abusing people on social media? I suggest you to change your profile pic," he wrote.

Later, on Monday, the National Commission for Women taking account of the post made by Mr Sinha filed a complaint with the cybercrime cell and also asked Twitter to take action against Twitter user JSINGH2252.

"NCWIndia has come across this post enclosing offensive tweets by @JSINGH2252 which has posted pictures of women with misogynistic comments. Our chairperson @sharmarekha has written to @TwitterIndia for deleting the account & to stop transmission of such content at the earliest," NCW tweeted.

Mr Sinha, in a statement on Twitter, stood by his colleague and alleged that the FIRs were an attempt "absolutely frivolous." "I will be responding to it legally," he said.

## Fact-checker draws support after police case

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

Days after two FIRs were registered against fact checking website AltNews co-founder Mohammad Zubair in Delhi and Raipur for alleged online harassment of a minor girl, "#IStandWithZubair" was trending on Twitter on Monday.

Meanwhile, Pratik Sinha, another co-founder of AltNews, shared some screenshots of obscene and salacious posts made by JSINGH2252 on his Twitter handle.

He wrote, "It must be noted that NCPCC commission headed by @KanoongoPriyank has acted against @zoo\_bear on the basis of a bogus complaint by @JSINGH2252. Who is this @JSINGH2252? Here's a preview into the vulgar mindset of this person. Is the establishment a voice for such people now?"

Meantime, the NCPCC has registered a complaint with the cybercrime cell and also asked Twitter to take action against Twitter user JSINGH2252.

Later, on Monday, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights took note of the matter.

The commission had acted on a complaint filed by the Forum for Indigenous Rights-North East India.

The commission wrote to the Delhi deputy commissioner of police and the nodal cyber cell officer seeking action against Mr Zubair for "stalking of a minor girl on Twitter."

Mr Zubair called the complaint "absolutely frivolous." "I will be responding to it legally," he said.

## There's no need to use lantern: Nitish Kumar

NAYEER AZAD | DC PATNA, SEPT. 7

in the night without any fear", the Chief Minister said.

He also used the occasion to highlight the achievements of his government. He said that number of steps were taken to improve the situation in the state.

While taking a dig at the RJD he said, "there is no need to use lantern (RJD's party symbol) as electricity has reached every household in the state. Besides, the road network has also improved".

He further added that his government identified 65 panchayats and carried out a special drive in villages where Naxalism was at its peak during Lalu-Rabri regime.

The situation improved in villages and there has been no incident of Naxal violence in the state.

According to political experts the NDA which is battling the anti-incumbency wave in the state hopes to return to power by highlighting the failures of the RJD government between 1990 and 2005.

Assembly elections for 243 seats in Bihar are scheduled in November.

**TWITTER | WAR Senior leader accuses BJP's IT cell of 'putting out fake ID tweets to make personal attacks'**

## Now, Swamy wants Malviya sacked as BJP IT cell head

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

Known for taking Bharatiya Janata Party's opponents head on on the social media and sometimes ending up getting entangled in political controversies, BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya faced a bizarre situation on Monday when the party's own Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy demanded that he be

sacked.

Accusing the BJP's IT cell for being "gone rogue" and "putting out fake ID tweets to make personal attacks" on him, Dr Swamy tried to keep the party leadership out from personal attacks against him by stating that he cannot be held responsible if his "angered followers make counter personal attacks just as the BJP cannot be held responsible for the rogue IT cell of the party."

Malviya is the in-charge of BJP's national information and technology cell. "The BJP IT cell has gone rogue. Some of its members are putting out fake ID tweets to make personal attacks on me. If my angered followers make counter personal attacks I cannot be held responsible just as BJP cannot be held responsible for the rogue IT cell of the party," tweeted Dr Swamy, who often takes a different stand than the BJP like on the JEE-NEET issue.

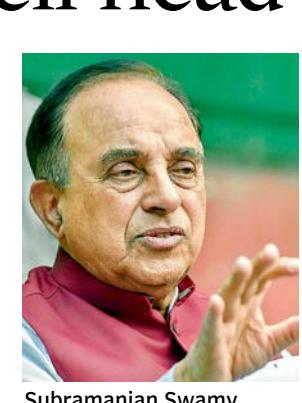
Dr Swamy had earlier asked the government to come clean on news reports that Chinese

Army had re-entered Doklam and had slammed the Good and Services Tax.

When asked by his followers to ignore the personal attacks against him, Dr Swamy said that he will but the party must sack those who are involved.

One Malviya character is running riot with filth. We are a party of *maryada purushottam* not of Ravan or Dushasan," tweeted the

BJP MP. It may be recalled that a case was lodged against the BJP president J.P. Nadda and Malviya in Rajasthan earlier this year over a tweet by the latter for allegedly tarnishing the image of Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi. The Rajasthan High Court later stayed the entire proceedings against the BJP president as the tweet was from Malviya's personal account.



Subramanian Swamy

## SHORT TAKES

ANTIBODY TEST  
MUST FOR GUEST  
WORKERS IN SURAT

**Surat, Sept. 7:** As guest workers have started returning to Surat, the city civic body has asked their employers to follow the state labour department's guidelines for their mandatory Covid-19 testing and quarantine or else face action.

As per the guidelines, any guest worker showing Coronavirus symptoms will have to be mandatorily quarantined for seven days before joining work, the Surat Municipal Corporation said on Monday.

Also, all guest workers returning to Surat will have to undergo antibody tests for Covid-19.

If they are not found to have antibodies, they will have to undergo an antigen test, the civic body said.

If the antigen test is negative even if the labourer shows symptoms of Covid-19, then RT-PCR test will be conducted, it said. "If any labourer is found to have Coronavirus symptoms, he/she will have to be mandatorily quarantined for seven days," it further said.

The civic body said if employers do not follow the guidelines, action will be taken against them under IPC Section 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) and their factories or shops will be sealed.

ANOTHER OSIDHA  
MINISTER TESTS  
+VE FOR COVID

**Bhubaneswar, Sept. 7:** Odisha minister of tourism and culture, J.P. Panigrahi, on Monday said he has tested positive for Covid-19 and was undergoing home isolation.

Panigrahi is the fourth minister in the state to have contracted the disease. Earlier, higher education minister Arun Kumar Sahoo, rural development minister Susant Singh and textile minister Padmini Dian were diagnosed with the disease.

The minister requested people who have come in contact with him recently to isolate themselves.

"Mid March 20 onwards doing public and official works. Not missed a day. Tried hard during this pandemic, people don't feel alone and worked as desired by CM. Finally, Covid-19 caught hold of me. Who all were in my contacts in last 7 days, please isolate," the Simulia MLA said on Twitter.

As many as 21 legislators in the state have so far contracted the disease. In July, BJP MLA from Nilgiri, Sukanta Kumar Nayak, became the first legislator in the coastal state to test positive for the infection.

TMC MPs AGED  
OVER 65 TO SKIP  
PARL SESSION

**Kolkata, Sept. 7:** A majority of TMC MPs above the age of 65 years are likely to skip the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament to avoid the risk of contracting Covid-19, party sources said.

Although there has been no official communication by the party leadership in this regard, the sources said MPs over 65 years have been advised not to attend the session. Sudip Bandopadhyay, the 67-year-old Lok Sabha MP from Kolkata Uttar, said he would coordinate from here with his party colleagues in the Lower House.

"I won't be attending the Parliament session as I am above 65, and vulnerable. I will be coordinating with my party colleagues in the Lok Sabha," he said.

TMC chief whip and party's Rajya Sabha MP, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, too, said he won't be attending the session.

Roy cited the Unlock-4 guidelines by the Union home ministry, which advised persons aged above 65 to stay at home except for emergencies, to make his point.

"I won't be there as I am 71 years old. I will abide by the Unlock-4 guidelines. I have already written to the Rajya Sabha chairman informing him about it," he said.

Senior TMC leader and Dum Dum MP Saugata Roy, however, did not want to give the parliamentary proceedings a miss. "There is no blanket rule from the party. If anybody above 65 years is willing to attend, he or she can... I will attend the session," Roy said. The Parliament's monsoon session will begin on September 14 and continue till October 1.

## After 5 months, Metro operations resume

Lucknow Metro becomes first metro service in the country to use UV technology for token sanitisation

**New Delhi, Sept. 7:** As a part of the Unlock exercise, Metro train services resumed in several cities on Monday after being closed for over five months due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as both the DMRC and the commuters trod with caution amid the new normal in the rapid transport system.

The Delhi Metro resumed services with curtailed operations on the Yellow Line on Monday after being closed for over five months due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as both the DMRC and the commuters trod with caution amid the new normal in the rapid transport system.

Trains will operate in batches of four-hour each from 7-11 am and 4-8 pm, officials said. The operations in the first four hours from 7-11 am were smooth and around 7,500 passengers availed the services, the DMRC said in a statement.

Platforms and key hub stations, including Rajiv Chowk, wore a deserted look, eateries remained closed and the ambience far removed from the usual hustle-and-bustle of the Delhi metro stations.

Station employees frequently sanitised areas of the metro station and ensured social distancing norms, even as very few commuters opted for the metro services on the first day.

Metro Rail services in Bengaluru also resumed on Monday after being closed for over five months. As part of Unlock 4.0, Metro Rail services started on the Purple Line from Byappanahalli station at 8 am towards Mysuru Road and vice versa.

"The six-coach train from Byappanahalli had 12 passengers whereas 15 to 16 passengers boarded the train at the Nayandahalli station on Mysuru Road," a BMRC official said.

Services on the Metro Green Line from Yelachenahalli to Nagasandra will start from Wednesday.

These trains will operate for six hours only during peak hours from 8 am to 11 am and 4.30 pm to 7.30 pm till September 10.

From September 11 onwards, the trains will ply on both the lines from 7 am to 9 pm.

"The number of commuters allowed in each train is limited to 400 passengers to ensure social distancing norms," a BMRC official said.

Metro Rail services in Kochi also resumed even as Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the newly finished Thykooram-Pettai stretch. The Metro services between Thykooram and Aluva resumed at 7 am, adhering to Covid-19 protocols.

The inauguration of the Thykooram-Aluva stretch of the Kochi Metro marked completion of the first phase of the urban transport mobility in the coastal city at a cost of ₹6,218 crore.

The Chennai Metro Rail



BENGALURU

CRPF personnel monitor as a commuter passes new security checks at a Metro station on Monday as BMRC services resume after over five months suspension due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

— DC



LUCKNOW

Passengers maintaining physical distance travel in a metro train as Lucknow Metro resumes services after over five months suspension due to Covid-19 outbreak on Monday.



NEW DELHI

A commuter wearing gloves recharges her Smart Card as Delhi Metro resumption operations in a graded manner on Monday.

— PTI



GURUGRAM

A commuter sanitises her hands from a handsfree kiosk at HUDA City Centre station after DMRC resumed services with curtailed operation of the Yellow Line and Rapid Metro, amid the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic on Monday.

— PTI

## Covid cases likely to rise as Metro Rail services restart

**DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs**

**NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7**

A record 90,802 persons were found to be infected with Coronavirus on Monday, taking India's overall Covid-19 tally past 42 lakh. India is now at second position, behind the United States in terms of total numbers of cases. The cases are expected to rise further as India opened its Metro Rail services in several cities on Monday.

Health ministry said five states are contributing 60% of total cases with Maharashtra at the top with 21.6%, followed by Andhra Pradesh (11.8%), Tamil Nadu (11.0%), Karnataka (9.5%) and Uttar Pradesh at 6.3%.

Maharashtra also contributed 26.76% of the active cases in the country, followed by Andhra Pradesh (11.30%), Karnataka (11.25%), Uttar Pradesh (6.98%) and Tamil Nadu (5.83%).

These five states presently contribute 62 per cent of total active cases and 70 per cent of total fatality reported in

India, officials said. In the last 24 hours, Andhra Pradesh recorded the highest recoveries with 11,915 recovered cases. Karnataka saw 9,575 and 7,826 recoveries while Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh witnessed 5,820 and 4,779 new recoveries, respectively. These five states together contributed 57% of the recoveries in the last 24 hours.

With 1,016 new deaths, the country's total fatalities due to the deadly virus was 71,711.

There have been 32.50 recoveries too taking the national recovery rate to 77.31 per cent as active cases remain at 8.82 lakh — which comprises 20.99 per cent of the total case load.

According to the Union health ministry, case fatality rate is 1.70 per cent.

Meanwhile, the Congress accused the Central government of failing to control the spread of the virus and demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi answer the nation on the way forward. Surjewala said experts have feared that the deaths due to the pandemic could reach as high as 1,75,000.

Congress chief

spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said despite warnings by experts and the Congress party, the pandemic was not controlled by adhering to the policy of 'Test-Trace-Isolate-Treat'.

"Prime Minister must answer the nation on the strategy going forward. Will Modi answer for his failed leadership? How will the government stop the alarming rise in corona infection?" Surjewala said adding the Coronavirus infection is now spreading to smaller cities, towns and villages across the country, yet the Modi government carries on in a state of "ignorance and indifference".

Surjewala said most experts have predicted that India is going through a second wave of infections, while some have opined that community transmission has begun, but the Modi government remains either unaware or refuses to even acknowledge.

Surjewala said experts have feared that the deaths due to the pandemic could reach as high as 1,75,000.

**GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,  
SEPT. 7**

Back-to-back sexual assault on Covid-19 women patients has shocked Kerala, with state government now directing health authorities to strictly avoid putting women alone in ambulances and ensure that health workers accompany them.

The direction came in the wake of the rape of a 19-year-old Covid-19 patient by an ambulance driver in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala on Saturday night.

Another shocking incident has also come to light at Pangode in Thiruvananthapuram district in which a junior health inspector has been accused of sexually harassing a woman who required Covid-19 negative certificate to rejoin her duty post-quarantine.

In the first case, the ambulance driver Naufal, 29, has been arrested by police and charged with rape, assault. Prevention of SC/ST Atrocities Act

**STATE GOVERNMENT** directed health authorities to strictly avoid putting women alone in ambulances and ensure that health workers accompany them.

and violation of Covid-19 safety protocol. In the second case, the junior health inspector Pradeep was taken into custody and charged with sexual assault.

With the two incidents causing huge embarrassment to the government, health minister K.K. Shailaja directed the authorities to remove Naufal from 108 ambulance services and suspend Pradeep from service pending inquiry.

The back-to-back incidents have caused outrage in the state with many asking the government to scale up the safety of patients and those under observation.

According to police, the Pathanamthitta case appears to be a crime pre-planned by the ambulance driver.

On Saturday at 10 pm Naufal put the victim in the ambulance. Instead of taking her to Pandalam hospital which is just 10 minutes away from where

the pickup place, she was put in a different ambulance from Adoor General hospital along with another Covid-19 patient.

After dropping the other patient at the local taluk hospital, the driver took the ambulance to an isolated area and sexually assaulted the victim.

She secretly recorded the statement of the ambulance driver in which he is heard pleading with the woman to not reveal the incident to any one or else he would lose his job. The police said the audio clip will help in proving involvement.

Naufal has a criminal past. Cases of attempt to murder and assault are pending against him. He got recruited without producing the mandatory police clearance certificate, which is a grave lapse.

They said there was a grave lapse on the part of authorities in recruiting ambulance drivers with criminal background.

In the second incident, the junior inspector Pradeep had asked the woman who was in quarantine in Thiruvananthapuram to come to his flat in Bharathanoor to collect the Covid-19 negative certificate.

According to the victim's complaint, her hands were tied and she was kept in the house through the night and sexually assaulted.

The health inspector threatened her that he would get a case registered against her for jumping quarantine and get her arrested by police.

The victim is working as a home nurse in Malappuram district. She was asked to go under quarantine after she returned from Malappuram.

The opposition Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party stepped up their attack against the government for failing to protect Covid-19 patients.

They said there was a grave lapse on the part of authorities in recruiting ambulance drivers with criminal background.

## IN BRIEF

**Pakistan mine collapse kills 6**

**Peshawar:** At least six labourers were killed on Monday when a marble mine they were working in collapsed due to landslides in northwest Pakistan, a senior official said. The incident happened in Mohmand district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when the labourers were busy in excavation and the mine collapsed and buried them. "Six labourers have died in the incident and their bodies have been retrieved from the debris of the mine," Khaiteer Ahmed, DG Rescue 1122, said. He said that six other miners also received injuries and are undergoing treatment at a hospital.

**24 killed in Yemen clashes**

**Dubai:** More than 20 people were killed in clashes in Yemen's northern province of Al-Jawf late Sunday as government troops tried to reclaim positions lost months ago to Huthi rebels. Yemen's internationally recognised government has been fighting the Iran-allied insurgents since 2014, when the Huthis seized much of the north including the capital Sanaa. A Saudi-led military coalition intervened on the side of the government the following year. A government military source said 16 Huthis and eight loyalists were killed in clashes Sunday night. Government troops captured more than 40 rebels, the source said. Meanwhile, the insurgents advanced in the neighbouring Marib governorate, in particular the Mahiya district, after heavy fighting that also resulted in a number of casualties.

**Nirav reporting ban plea rejected**

**London:** A UK judge, presiding over fugitive diamantaire Nirav Modi's extradition case over the estimated \$2-billion PNB fraud and money laundering charges brought by India, rejected an application seeking a partial reporting ban at the start of a five-day trial here on Monday. District Judge Samuel Goozee dismissed the application after hearing representations in what he called a "high profile case in India", including from members of the press present at Westminster Magistrates' Court who stressed the importance of free and fair reporting of the proceedings. Modi's barrister, Clare Montgomery, applied for the partial restriction with reference to a BJP press conference held in India in May, giving "unfair commentary" on the evidence given by former Indian High Court Judge Abhay Thipsay during the first part of the extradition trial. Thipsay, as a member of the Congress party, was accused of "party political bias" in his expert legal opinion, which challenged the Indian government's case.

**RESPECT BREXIT WITHDRAWAL DEAL: EU TO UK**

**Brussels,** Sept. 7: The European Union warned the British government on Monday not to renege on commitments made ahead of its departure from the bloc earlier this year. Amid growing signs that trust between the two sides is evaporating ahead of another round of post-Brexit talks in London on Tuesday, the bloc said any attempt by the British government to unilaterally ride roughshod over the divorce agreement could jeopardise the hard-won peace process on the island of Ireland, as well as the prospects for a trade deal.

Ursula von der Leyen, president of the EU's executive commission, said she expected Boris Johnson's government to implement the withdrawal agreement that paved the way for the UK's smooth departure from the bloc on January 31.

She said in a tweet that the agreement was an "obligation under international law" and a "prerequisite for any future partnership". She added that the section in the agreement that ensures an open border between Northern Ireland, which is part of the UK, and EU member Ireland, is "essential to protect peace and stability on the island" as well as for the "integrity" of the EU's tariff-free and frictionless single market. Her comments followed a report that the British government is planning domestic legislation that would effectively override the international treaty obligations enshrined within the withdrawal agreement, particularly over issues related to the Irish border.

# Unicef to procure, supply vaccines

**It is to ensure that all nations have safe, fast and equitable access to initial Covid doses**

**United Nations, Sept. 7:**

In what could possibly be the world's largest and fastest ever operation of its kind, Unicef has announced that it will be leading the procurement and supply of Coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe, fast and equitable access to initial doses when they are available. The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) is the world's largest single vaccine buyer, procuring more than 2 billion doses of various vaccines annually for routine immunisation and outbreak response on behalf of nearly 100 countries.

With several vaccine candidates showing promise, the UN agency, in collaboration with the Revolving Fund of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), will lead efforts to procure and supply doses of Covid-19 vaccines on behalf of the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility for 92 low and lower middle-income countries, whose vaccine purchases will be supported by the mechanism. "We are ready for an immense new challenge,"

Shafqat Ali | DC

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 7

Pakistan's Inter-Provincial Education Ministers Conference (IPEMC) on Monday decided to reopen universities, colleges and school for matric students in the country from September 15.

Federal Minister for Education and Vocational Training Shafqat Mahmood, chaired the conference on the issue. Ministers from all provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir attended.

The vaccine procurement and distribution effort, involving over 170 economies, has the potential to become the world's largest and fastest ever operation of its kind. "This is an all-hands-on-deck partnership between governments, manufacturers and multilateral partners to continue the fight against Covid-19 pandemic," Unicef executive director Henrietta Fore said. — PTI

## Belarus activist goes missing

**Kiev, Sept. 7:**

A leading opposition activist and several other members of an opposition council in Belarus went missing Monday and their colleagues feared they were detained as part of the authorities' efforts to squelch nearly a month of protests against the re-election of the country's authoritarian leader.

Maria Kolesnikova, a member of the Coordination Council created by the opposition to facilitate talks with President Alexander Lukashenko on a transition of power, was reportedly put on a minibus in the capital, Minsk, and driven away by unidentified people.

Her disappearance follows a massive rally Sunday that drew an estimated 100,000 protesters pushing for the resignation of Lukashenko, who extended his 26-year rule in the Aug. 9 election that the opposition sees as rigged.

— AP

## NAVALNY OUT OF COMA, SAYS HOSPITAL

**Berlin, Sept. 7:** Poisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny's condition has improved, allowing doctors to take him out of an induced coma, the German hospital treating him said Monday.

Navalny, a fierce, high-profile critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was flown to Germany last month after falling ill on Aug. 20 on a domestic flight in Russia. German chemical weapons experts say tests show the 44-year-old was poisoned with a Soviet-era nerve agent, prompting the German government last week to demand that Russia investigate the case.

"The patient has been removed from his medically induced coma and is being weaned off mechanical ventilation," Berlin's Charite hospital said in a statement.

— AP

## Khashoggi: 5 get death reprieve

**Dubai, Sept. 7:**

A Saudi court issued final verdicts on Monday in the case of slain *Washington Post* columnist and Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi after his son, who still resides in the kingdom, announced pardons that spared five of the convicted individuals from execution.

While the trial draws to its conclusion in Saudi Arabia, the case continues to cast a shadow over the international standing of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, whose associates have been sanctioned by the US and the UK for their alleged involvement in the brutal

killing, which took place inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

The Riyadh Criminal Court's final verdicts were announced by Saudi Arabia's state television, which aired few details about the eight Saudi nationals and did not name them. The court ordered a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for the five. Another individual received a 10-year sentence, and two others were ordered to serve seven years in prison. A team of 15 Saudi agents had flown to Turkey to meet Khashoggi inside the consulate on October 2, 2018. — AP

## Haishen lashes S. Korea after battering Japan

**Seoul, Sept. 7:**

A powerful typhoon damaged buildings, flooded roads and knocked out power to thousands of homes in South Korea on Monday after battering islands in southern Japan, killing one person and injuring dozens of others. The Korea Meteorological Administration said Typhoon Haishen was passing over waters off the eastern coastal city of Sokcho on Monday afternoon after barreling through South Korea's southern and eastern regions.

The typhoon was weakening, with its maximum winds measured at 108

kilometres (67 miles) per hour after blowing at 144 kilometres (80 miles) in the morning, and was forecast to be downgraded to a tropical storm within six hours.

Japanese disaster management officials in Kagoshima said a woman in her 70s died of a head injury after falling into a roadside ditch while evacuating from a coastal town as Haishen lashed southwestern Japan over the weekend with strong winds and rain.

Japan's Fire and Disaster Management Agency said at least 38 other people were injured, five of them seriously. Schools and department stores were closed



Stella Moris (L), partner of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, arrives with her father John Shipton (R) and Australian human rights lawyer Jennifer Robinson, at the Old Bailey court in London on Monday, for Assange's hearing to decide if Assange should be extradited to the United States to face trial over the publication of secrets relating to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The 49-year-old Australian, who is currently being held on remand at a high-security jail, faces 18 counts from US prosecutors that could see him jailed for up to 175 years. — AFP

## Assange in UK court to fight US extradition bid over espionage

**London, Sept. 7:**



Julian Assange

Wikileaks co-founder Julian Assange, who faces charges of computer hacking and espionage in the US, on Monday returned to a UK court to fight his extradition to the US. The 49-year-old Australian national, who has been in Belmarsh Prison for 16 months, is wanted over the publication of classified documents in 2010 and 2011 and faces a possible penalty of 175 years in jail if convicted on being extradited to the US.

He appeared before the Old Bailey court in London where the court was informed of his formal re-arrest on a new indictment issued in June, during the coronavirus lockdown, by the US government.

The fresh indictment contains 18 charges, including plotting to hack comp-

uters and conspiring to obtain and disclose national defence information. Wearing a dark suit, tie and white shirt, Assange sat behind a glass security screen at the back of the court and spoke only to say that he did not consent to his extradition.

James Lewis, the barrister

acting for the US authorities, accuses Assange's lawyers of conducting a defence consisting of "an attack upon the President of the United States (which) ignores the institutional competencies of the agencies relevant to this case, the Constitution of the United States and the independence of its courts". Neither mental health problems, nor Asperger syndrome prevented Assange's solicitation of, and orchestration of, the leaking of materials from the highest levels of government and state agencies, apparently on a global scale, he said.

Edward Fitzgerald, the barrister representing Assange, asserted that the prosecution was "being pursued for ulterior political motives and not in good faith". He said he had not seen his client in per-

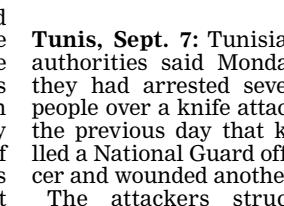
son for six months in part due to the pandemic — and he told the court the latest indictment had been made "at the 11th hour" without warning.

However, a bid to rule out the new charges failed as the judge ruled they must be heard in the context of the extradition request. Assange's partner, Stella Moris, who gave birth to their two children while he had sought refuge in the Ecuador embassy in London, went to Downing Street on Monday morning in an attempt to deliver a Reporters Without Borders petition against the extradition.

Assange's father John Shipton was among the supporters gathered outside the Old Bailey court. "Julian has two young children, what concerns me today is the rights of those children," he said.

## Birmingham stabbings: Man held 7 nabbed for knife attack in Tunisia

**London, Sept. 7:**



Eddine Jebabli

A 27-year-old man was arrested on Monday on suspicion of murder and attempted murder in connection with a stabbing spree in Birmingham which claimed one life and injured seven others, UK police said. West Midlands Police said the suspect was detained at an address in Selly Oak area of the city in the early hours of Monday after detectives worked through the night in a bid to catch the suspect, who remains in police custody for questioning over the knife attacks.

"Officers worked through yesterday and into the early hours of this morning in a bid to trace the man we believe responsible for these terrible crimes," said Chief Superintendent Steve Graham, the Birmingham Police Commander. "We issued CCTV footage of the suspect and had a strong response from the public... Clearly, this is a crucial development but our investigation continues. We still need to speak to any witnesses who saw what happened who've not yet spoken to us, or anyone who may have video footage or photos of the incidents or the attacker," he said.

During the attack in the early hours of Sunday, a 23-year-old man suffered fatal injuries in Irving Street having been stabbed in what police believe was a "random attack". A man and a woman, aged 19 and 32, suffered serious stab wounds and remain in hospital in a critical condition.

On five other people, aged between 23 and 33, were less seriously hurt. The first attack happened in the Constitution Hill area, followed by further stabbings in Livery Street, Irving Street and finally Hurst Street. — PTI

## WE DO HAVE 2 JUSTICE SYSTEMS IN U.S.: HARRIS

**Washington, Sept. 7:** The US has two systems of justice for PoC and White Americans, Democratic vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris has said, as the Indian-origin Senator rebuked President Donald Trump and his Attorney General for denying there is systemic racism in the country's justice system.

The strong criticism from Harris, the first Indian-American woman on a major party vice presidential ticket came less than two months before the US presidential election.

Democratic Party's presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate Harris are challenging incumbent President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence of the Republican Party in the November 3 election.

But she said that as a nation, Americans hold dear to an ideal that is inscribed in marble on the Supreme Court, which is that ideal of equal justice under law. — PTI

## Haishen lashes S. Korea after battering Japan

### 5 BOATS SINK DURING TRUMP PARADE

**Austin (US), Sept. 7:** Five boats sank in a Texas lake during a nautical parade in support of President Donald Trump as tightly packed boats created large waves, officials said.

Boaters began calling for help "almost immediately" after the procession for Trump's re-election got underway on a lake west of Austin on Saturday, according to Kristen Dark of

the Travis County Sheriff's Office.

Deputies ultimately responded to 15 distress calls and received three other reports of boats taking on water. No one was injured or killed.

Images of the event show

the water of Lake Travis choppy with the wakes of dozens of boats flying American, Texas and "Trump 2020" flags. — AP



A coastal road is damaged in Ulsan, South Korea, on Monday. A powerful typhoon flooded roads, damaged buildings and knocked out power to thousands of homes in South Korea after battering islands in southern Japan and injuring dozens of people. — AP

## quick BITES

### INDICATORS %

Sensex	38,417.23	0.16
Nifty 50	11,355.05	0.19
S&P 500*	3,426.96	-0.81
Dollar (₹)	73.34	-0.25
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.98	0.24
Euro (₹)	86.87	-0.28
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,877▲258	0.49
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.99	-0.67
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.993	0.063
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.721	0.00

\* As of 9:30 PM IST

### Maruti Suzuki production up 11% in August

Maruti Suzuki India said its total production in August increased by 11 per cent to 1,23,769 units. The firm had produced 1,11,370 units in the same month last year. Passenger vehicles production stood at 1,21,381 units last month compared to 1,10,214 units a year ago, a growth of 10 per cent. Production of mini cars were at 22,208 units as against 13,814 units, up 61 per cent. Compact car production stood marginally up at 67,348 units.

### Dumping probe into vitamin C from China



India has initiated a probe into the alleged dumping of vitamin C, used by pharmaceutical firms for the production of medicines, from China following complaint by a domestic manufacturer. Bajaj Healthcare Ltd has filed the application before the commerce ministry's investigation arm DGTR, seeking initiation of the probe. The company alleged the domestic industry is impacted due to the dumping of vitamin C from China PR.

### PFC seeks to raise borrowing limit to ₹ 6 L cr

Power Finance Corporation will seek shareholders' nod to hike borrowing limit to Rs 6 lakh crore from Rs 4 lakh crore now in the AGM later this month. The company said considering the fund requirements of PFC over the next three-to-four years, the board on August 13 approved seeking shareholders' nod for raising the borrowing limit to Rs 6 lakh crore over and above aggregate paid up capital and free reserves.

### Plan to recruit 14,000 staff this year: SBI

State Bank of India said it proposes to recruit 14,000 employees during the current year and its 'on tap VRS' is not a cost-cutting exercise. An SBI spokesperson said the proposed VRS is not a cost-cutting exercise, as "it was thought to provide a congenial solution to employees who expressed desire for making strategic shift in their vocations, either due to professional growth limitations, mobility issues..."

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■ RBI accepts Kamath panel suggestions

## Debt recast: Ratios for 26 sectors set

FALAKNAAZ SYED

MUMBAI, SEPT. 7

The expert panel appointed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to suggest the financial and sectoral parameters for restructuring loans for companies hit by the Covid-19 pandemic has recommended financial ratios for 26 sectors that could be factored in by lending institutions for the debt recast.

The committee headed by veteran banker K.V. Kamath has said that only borrowers classified as standard (did not default) and with arrears of less than 30 days as at March 1, 2020, should be eligible under the resolution framework. Banks can adopt a graded approach based on impact severity.

"Time is of essence at the present juncture. Considering the large volume and the fact that only standard assets are eligible under the proposed scheme, a segmented approach of bucketing these accounts under mild, moderate and severe stress, may ensure quick turnaround. To complete this task simplified restructuring for mild and moderate stress may be prescribed. Severe stress cases would require comprehensive restructuring," said the expert committee report released by the central bank on Monday.

The 26 sectors selected by the panel for the resolution framework are power, construction, iron and steel manufacturing, roads, real estate, trading, wholesale,



textiles, chemicals, consumer durables/FMCG, non-ferrous metals, pharma, logistics, gems and jewellery, cement, auto components, hotels, mining, plastic products manufacturing, automobile, auto dealership, aviation, sugar, port and port services, shipping, building materials, and corporate retail outlets.

For sectors where ratios have not been specified, lenders can make their own assessment.

The committee selected five financial parameters related to leverage, liquidity, debt serviceability, etc. The financial parameters included total outside liability to adjusted tangible net worth, debt to Ebitda, current ratio, debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) and average debt service coverage ratio (ADSCR).

As per the report submitted by the panel, 72 per cent debt of the banking sector has been impacted by Covid-19.

The committee said the resolution framework may

be invoked not later than December 31, 2020 and the resolution plan needs to be implemented within 180 days from the date of invocation.

"The recommendations of the committee have been broadly accepted by the Reserve Bank," said the RBI.

The plan has to be prepared based on the pre-Covid-19 operating and financial performance of the borrower and impact of Covid-19 on its operating and financial performance in the first and second quarter of this fiscal and to assess the cash-flows for this, next and subsequent years.

In these financial projections, the threshold total outside liability to adjusted tangible net worth and debt to Ebitda ratios should be met by fiscal 2023.

The other three threshold ratios should be met for each year of the projections starting from fiscal 2022. The base case financial projections need to be prepared as part of the resolution plan.

### ED arrests Deepak Kochhar under PMLA

FC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday arrested Deepak Kochhar, husband of former ICICI Bank MD & CEO Chanda Kochhar, in connection with the money-laundering probe into the ICICI Bank-Videocon case.

According to sources, Deepak Kochhar has been arrested by the agency in Mumbai under the stringent sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). He will be produced before a court in Mumbai on Tuesday.

On January 22, 2019, the CBI had registered an FIR for alleged cheating, criminal conspiracy under the Prevention of Corruption Act against Chanda Kochhar, Deepak Kochhar and Videocon Group promoter Venugopal Dhoop and his companies—Videocon International Electronics Ltd and Videocon Industries Limited. It also named Supreme Energy, a firm founded by Dhoop, and NuPower Renewables, controlled by Deepak Kochhar, in the FIR.

On January 31, the ED lodged a case of money laundering against Chanda and Deepak Kochhar, Dhoop and others to probe alleged irregularities and corrupt practices in sanctioning of Rs 1,875-crore loans by ICICI Bank to the corporate group.

## Vodafone, Idea rebranded as Vi; tariff hike on cards

MICHAEL GONSALVES  
PUNE, SEPT. 7

Vodafone Idea, India's third largest mobile operator, on Monday announced rebranding of the Vodafone and Idea brands as 'Vi' (read as We), in a move aimed at attracting digital customers and hinted at tariff hike for prepaid and postpaid users, as it looks to increase the average revenue per user (Arpu) figures.

The rebranding by the company comes amid intense competition in the country's highly-indebted telecom sector.

"Everyone is selling below cost and the telco is not shy to take the first step," Ravinder Takkar, MD and CEO at Vodafone Idea, said at a media briefing on Monday.

He also added that the telecom regulator would have to reconsider tariff charts.

Increased tariff rates will help the telco improve its Arpu, which is currently at Rs 114, compared to rivals Airtel's Rs 157 and Jio's Rs 140, Takkar pointed out.

According to analysts, higher Arpu will be an essential requirement for the company, with a net debt of Rs 1.7 lakh crore (including AGR liabilities) to service its annual cash obligations.

Vodafone Plc's Indian arm had merged with Idea Cellular in August 2018, but the telcos had since maintained two separate brands.

The new brand identity is an attempt to mount another challenge in the



space that has seen Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel strengthen over the past few quarters.

"The integration of two brands is a culmination of the largest telecom integration in the world," Takkar said as he announced the rebranded entity. "It's time for a fresh start," he said.

The board of Vodafone Idea had approved fundraising up to Rs 25,000 crore on September 4 to pay off the hefty dues owed to the government. It plans to raise up to Rs 15,000 crore through debentures and an equal amount by issuing shares and warrants.

Through the unified brand and a bigger bet on digital, Vodafone Idea now hopes to attract fresh subscribers.

The company's customer base dropped sharply to around 280 million at the end of June from 408 million at the

time of its merger with Idea two years ago.

Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel had lost around 47 lakh wireless subscribers each in May 2020, according to the Telecom Authority of India data released in August.

Vodafone Idea is making efforts to keep its business running in India, after the Supreme Court (SC) gave telecom companies 10 years to pay adjusted gross revenue dues (AGR) dues.

Takkar said the 10 years granted to telcos by the SC to clear past outstanding dues was "a good outcome."

Vodafone Idea owes slightly over Rs 50,000 crore to the Department of Telecommunications as AGR-related dues.

The SC asked telecom companies to make an upfront payment of 10 per cent of the balance AGR dues by March 31, 2021.

## Rajan terms GDP fall alarming, tells bureaucrats to wake up

New Delhi, Sept. 7: Terming the 23.9 per cent fall in the economic growth in June quarter alarming, former Reserve Bank Governor Raghuram Rajan has said bureaucracy should come out of complacency and take meaningful action. The current crisis requires a more thoughtful and active government, he said, adding unfortunately, after an initial burst of activity, it seems to have retreated into a shell.

The sharp decline in economic growth should alarm us all. The 23.9 per cent contraction in India (and the numbers will probably be worse when we get estimates of the damage in the informal sector) compares with a drop of 12.4 per cent in Italy and 9.5 per cent in the United States, two of the most Covid-19-affected advanced countries," Rajan wrote in a post on his LinkedIn page.

If all transactions are only to be routed through a particular bank, there would be no flexibility or back up available in case of any unforeseen issues with that particular bank or freeze on transactions with that bank.

If an MFI does not have more than 10 per cent exposure to any bank, it is not clear as to how the banking transaction requirements of that MFI would be met, said Sa-Dhan. It is not clear if an MFI having more than 10 per cent of exposure to a bank can do debit transactions from its collection account.

If there is a silver lining in the awful GDP numbers,



Raghuram Rajan

hopefully it is that".

Rajan, currently a professor at the University of Chicago, said the pandemic is still raging in India, so discretionary spending, especially on high-contact services like restaurants, and the associated employment, will stay low until the virus is contained.

The eminent economist pointed out that the government's reluctance to do more today seems partly because it wants to conserve resources for a possible future stimulus. "This strategy is self-defeating," he opined. Emphasising on the importance of government relief or support in the current scenario, Rajan said, "Without relief measures, the growth potential of the economy will be seriously dam-

aged." He said Brazil, which has spent tremendously on relief, is seeing a much lower downgrade to medium term growth than India.

"So, government officials who hold out the possibility of a stimulus when India finally contains the virus are underestimating the damage from a more shrunken and scarred economy at that point," Rajan noted.

Citing an example, Rajan said if one thinks of the economy as a patient, relief is the sustenance the patient needs while on the sickbed and fighting the disease. "Without relief, households skip meals, pull their children out of school and send them to work or beg, pledge their gold to borrow, let EMIs and rent arrears pile up."

He also suggested that reforms can be a form of stimulus, and even if not carried out immediately, a timeline to undertake them can boost current investor sentiment. "The world will recover earlier than India, so exports can be a way for India to grow," he said.

— PTI

## Samsung to stop production at sole China TV factory by Nov.



JOYCE LEE  
SEOUL, SEPT. 7

Samsung Electronics has decided to cease production at its only TV factory in China by the end of November, a spokesman said on Monday, the latest in a series of moves by the South Korean firm to shift production from the world's second-largest economy.

The TV factory in Tianjin is the only Samsung Electronics TV production base in China, the spokesman said. The decision is part of "ongoing efforts to enhance efficiency" in its production facilities, Samsung said in a statement earlier.

The factory has about 300 workers, Yonhap news agency reported on Monday. Samsung declined to comment on the number of workers, but said some of the workers and equipment are expected to be retained.

The latest exit leaves Samsung Electronics in China with a home appliance factory in Suzhou and chip production facilities in Suzhou and Xian.

The decision follows Samsung Electronics' display unit confirming separately last week that it is selling off a majority stake in its Suzhou liquid crystal display (LCD) production unit to TCL Technology Group Corp's Star Optoelectronics Technology unit.

Samsung Display said in March it decided to end all of its production of LCD panels in South Korea and China by the end of this year. In August, Samsung said it will halt operations of its last computer factory in China.

— Reuters

## OIL RETREATS AS SAUDI ARABIA SLASHES PRICES FOR OCTOBER

JAMES THORNHILL  
SEPT. 7

Oil extended its slide after Saudi Arabia cut its pricing for oil sales in October, a sign that the world's biggest exporter sees fuel demand wavering amidst more coronavirus flares up around the globe.

Brent crude was at \$42.04 a barrel, down 62 cents or 1.4 per cent by 0859 GMT, after earlier sliding to \$41.51. US West Texas Intermediate crude skidded 63 cents, or 1.6 per cent, to \$39.14 a barrel after earlier dropping to \$38.55, the lowest since July 10.

The performance of the banking sector has been the bright spot among the various industries. Public sector banks, which have been grappling with the NPA overhang until FY19, recorded a growth of 20.8 per cent in net sales and 32.1 per cent in net profits.

weak. Asia is Saudi Arabia's largest market. The kingdom's state producer Saudi Aramco reduced its key Arab Light grade of crude by a larger-than-expected amount for shipments to Asia, its main market. It also lowered pricing for US buyers. — Bloomberg

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dition cost (-34.5 per cent).

Although the average growth in employee cost in Q1FY21 is 5.1 per cent, as many as 52 out of the 65 industries have recorded a growth less than the average growth. Out of the 52 industries, 46 industries have recorded a growth in employee cost.

Robust growth in employee cost expenditure was seen in industries like public sector banks (32.1 per cent), stock broking (17.5 per cent), ports (12.1 per cent), household and personal products (11.4 per cent) and telecom service providers (9.8 per cent).

Net profits of the sample companies declined by almost 60 per cent during the quarter as against a growth of 4.7 per cent in same quarter last year.

## SHORT TAKES

## Sindhu to play in Thomas, Uber Cup

New Delhi: Reigning world champion P. V. Sindhu has agreed to compete in next month's Thomas and Uber Cup after deciding to pull out of the event earlier due to personal reasons, national federation's president Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday.

"I have requested @Pvsindhu1 to join the team as we have a favourable draw and have the best chance to take a shot at a medal at the ThomasUberCup," Badminton Association of India (BAI) chief Biswa Sarma tweeted.

"She has agreed and will prepare her family function so that she can be part of the Indian Team and play for the country."

The Indian women's team has been clubbed with 14-time winners China, France and Germany in Group D. — PTI

## No Thai flavour in Thomas, Uber Cup

Bangkok: The Thai badminton federation says it has withdrawn from the Thomas and Uber Cups after high-profile players pulled out because of concerns regarding Covid-19.

The federation says the absences of former world champion Ratchanok Intanon, No. 3-ranked mixed doubles pair Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai and others meant the country couldn't field a team in the October 3 to 11 world teams event in Denmark.

Thailand badminton federation says "We respect the players' decision."

The BWF said last month the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals would go ahead in Aarhus, Denmark, despite an overhaul of the tournament calendar following the shuttering of international competition during the Coronavirus pandemic. — AP

## Anand all praise for Kramnik

New Delhi: Five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand says there was nothing to separate between him and his one-time arch rival Vladimir

Kramnik, who announced a shock retirement in 2019.

Russia's Kramnik, the first unified world champion, had an intense rivalry with Anand for many years. He lost to Anand in the 2008 World Championships. "Out of the 20 odd years we have swapped the number 2-3 position. We were always very close to each other in terms of points, so close that when he retired our scores were absolutely identical even after more than 150 games," Anand said.

Anand became the first undisputed world champion in 2006, holding both the FIDE and Classical titles, since Garry Kasparov split from FIDE in 1993. — PTI

## Bajrang, Manoj seek SAI course

New Delhi: Former Commonwealth Games champion boxer Manoj Kumar and three-time Asian medalist boxer Bajrang Lal Takhar are among 33 sportspersons who have applied for Sports

Authority of India's (SAI) coaching diploma course after a revamp of the selection criteria. For the academic year 2020-21, in which Olympians will get direct admission at NIS Patiala without having to go through the mandatory entrance exam, SAI has received applications from

Bajrang, Manoj, Kunju Muhammed (athletics) and Poonam Rani (hockey) among others.

All of them are Olympians. The course is due to start in mid-October. — PTI

## Live on TV

## CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Semifinals: Trinbago Knight Riders vs Jamaica Tallawahs from 7.30 pm; Guyana Amazon Warriors vs St Lucia Zouks from 3 am (Wednesday) on Star Sports 1, 2, HD

## CRICKET

England vs Australia Third T20 from 10.30 pm on Sony Six, HD

## US OPEN TENNIS

Matches from 8.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, 2, HD

## UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Georgia vs North Macedonia from 9.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD; France vs Croatia from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD; Denmark vs England from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

## WWE NXT

Bouts from 5.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

## NO DJOKE!

## Novak out of Open after hitting line judge with ball



Novak Djokovic of Serbia checks a line judge after hitting her with a ball in reaction to losing a point to Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain during their US Open fourth round men's singles match in New York on Sunday. Djokovic was disqualified from the tournament for the reckless hit. — AP

## Extremely sorry, says Djokovic

New York, Sept. 7: Novak Djokovic apologised for his US Open disqualification on Sunday, declaring himself "extremely sorry" for the moment of madness which saw him defaulted from the tournament.

In a statement on Instagram just hours after his sensational exit in New York, the Serbian world number one said he had been left "really sad and empty" by the controversy.

The 33-year-old was tossed from the tournament after accidentally hitting a tennis ball into the throat of a line official during his fourth round match with Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta.

"This whole situation has left me really sad and empty," Djokovic said in a statement on Instagram. "I checked on the lines person and the tournament told me that thank God she is feeling ok."

"I'm extremely sorry to have caused her such



This whole situation has left me really sad and empty. I checked on the lines person and the tournament told me that thank God she is feeling ok.

— NOVAK DJOKOVIC

stress. So unintended. So wrong."

Djokovic, who left Flushing Meadows without speaking to reporters following his exit, said he would try to learn from the incident. "As for the disqualification, I need to go back within and work on my disappointment and turn this all into a lesson for my growth and evolution as a player and human being," he said.

"I apologize to the @usopen tournament and everyone associated for my behavior. I'm very grateful to my team and family for being my rock support, and my fans for always being there with me."

— AFP

## Stokes may miss first part of IPL

New Delhi, Sept. 7: IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals are likely to miss their premier all-rounder Ben Stokes during the first part of the T20 event as the World Cup-winner is currently in New Zealand to be with his ailing father Ged.

Stokes, considered the world's best all-rounder right now, left for Christchurch in the middle of the Test series against Pakistan last month after his father, a former All Blacks International, was diagnosed with brain cancer.

"As per quarantine rules in New Zealand, Ben has just completed his 14-day isolation period after reaching New Zealand. Now he will be meeting his father and obviously he would like to spend some quiet time with his family

## 'Calm' Kohli eyes better season

## NEESHAM LOOKS TO MAKE IT COUNT IN IPL

New Delhi, Sept. 7: Back in IPL after six years, New Zealand all-rounder James Neesham says his much "steadier head" and international success should help him immensely in his stint with Kings XI Punjab this season. By his own admission, Neesham did not know much about his game when he made his IPL debut with the Delhi franchise six seasons ago.

"It is my first time getting involved in a long time. It is exciting to come as an older player and as an experienced player. Last time I played for Delhi, I was young and talented but didn't really know much about my game. I did not know what I needed to do to succeed. It was a challenge back then," Neesham said.

Neesham was bought by KKR for the 2015 edition but could not take part due to an injury.

"This time I have come with a steadier head and knowledge under the belt and hopefully I can pass that knowledge to some of the younger guys in the squad."

— PTI

ing September 19 in Abu Dhabi. Kohli said that could be the "breakthrough season" when both he and AB de Villiers feel that this franchise which has flat-

## Nick trolls Nole with Twitter poll

Sydney, Sept. 7: Nick Kyrgios opened a cheeky Twitter poll on Monday asking how many years he would be banned if he had hit an official with a ball, after 17-time Grand Slam winner Novak Djokovic's default at the US Open.

The Australian has waged a running battle with the Serb in recent months over his ill-fated Adria Tour exhibition series, lashing out at the world number one's "stupidity" after several players contracted coronavirus.

And he was quick to have his say after Djokovic was sensationally disqualified from the US Open for hitting a woman line judge in the throat with a ball bashed away in disgust after losing his serve.

The combustible Kyrgios, who was hit with a suspended 16-week ban last year for a series of on-court outbursts, jumped onto social media to ask his followers what would happen if he had hit the line judge.

"Swap me for jokers incident," he said, using Djokovic's nickname.

"Accidentally hitting the ball kid in the throat. How many years would I be banned for?" asked the Australian.

The options given were five, 10 or 20 years with the poll attracting more than 60,000 answers in its first hour, with the majority voting for 20 years.

The United States Tennis Association said Djokovic, who apologised, would lose all ranking points and

prize money from the tournament.

While most took the Kyrgios's tweet as a light-hearted dig, not everyone was impressed.

"Light difference: you did much worse," noted one user, while another wrote: "Same penalty as Djok. Stop victimising yourself, get on with it."

The ATP opened a probe into Kyrgios last year following an explosive meltdown at the Cincinnati Masters where he smashed two racquets and launched into an abusive tirade at the chair umpire before appearing to spit at the official.

He was fined US\$113,000 for ball abuse, leaving the court without permission, an audible obscenity and unsportsmanlike conduct during his loss to Russia's Karen Khachanov.

While Kyrgios was penalised for the Cincinnati outbursts, he avoided further punishment for calling the ATP "pretty corrupt" during the 2019 US Open after he "clarified" his comment.

Kyrgios, ranked just 40 but a big drawcard, opted to remain in Canberra and not play this year's US Open due to the pandemic. — AFP

## Osaka powers into quarters

New York, Sept. 7: Two-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka booked a place in the quarter-finals of the US Open on Sunday with a straight-set win over Estonia's Anett Kontaveit.

Osaka, the fourth seed, powered past her 14th seeded counterpart 6-3, 6-4.

The 2018 US Open champion said keeping her emotions in check was key to dominating the 1 hour 12 minutes match.

Osaka said she hadn't watched live the incident with Novak Djokovic earlier in the day when he was disqualified for accidentally hitting a lines judge with his ball after losing a game.

She was sleeping ahead of her night match, but after becoming aware of it she said it served as a reminder to remain in control while on the court.

"That's definitely like a warning to never do that," Osaka said.

## ROGERS, BRADY SCORE UPSETS

Shelby Rogers fought off four match points to upset sixth seed Petra Kvitova and reach the quarter-finals for the first time on Sunday.

The 27-year-old Rogers, who two years ago wondered if she would ever

## THE RESULTS

**Men's singles fourth round:** Pablo Carreno-Busta (ESP x20) bt Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) 6-5 default; Denis Shapovalov (CAN x2) bt David Goffin (BEL x28) 6-7 (0/7), 6-3, 6-4, 6-3; Borna Coric (CRO x27) bt Jordan Thompson (AUS) 7-5, 6-1, 6-3; Alexander Zverev (GER x5) bt Alejandro Davidovich (ESP) 6-2, 6-2, 6-1.

**Women's singles fourth round:** Jennifer Brady (USA x28) bt Angelique Kerber (GER x17) 6-1, 6-4; Yulia Putintseva (KAZ x23) bt Petra Martic (CRO x8) 6-3, 2-6, 6-4; Naomi Osaka (JPN x4) bt Anett Kontaveit (EST x14) 6-3, 6-4; Shelby Rogers (USA) bt Petra Kvitova (CZE x6) 7-6 (7/5), 3-6, 7-6 (8/6).

play again as she struggled to recover from knee surgery, battled into the last eight with a 7-6 (7/5), 3-6, 7-6 (8/6) defeat of Czech ace Kvitova in 2 hr 40min.

Later, Jennifer Brady, the 28th seed, steamrollered Kerber 6-1, 6-4, to reach her first Grand Slam quarter-final.

Brady said she had transformed her game this year by improving her physical and mental strength.

She defeated Angelique Kerber earlier Sunday before ousting second seed Sofia Kenin. — AFP

## BUTTLER TO SKIP FINAL T20 AGAINST OZ

Southampton, Sept. 7: England's wicketkeeper batsman Jos Buttler will miss the final T20 match against Australia on Tuesday to be with his family, the country's cricket board announced on Monday.

The 29-year-old, who hit a match-winning unbeaten 77 in the second T20, left England's bio-secure bubble on Sunday evening following the team's six-wicket victory over the arch-rivals.

"He will miss England's final Vitality IT20 against Australia on Tuesday at the Ageas Bowl," the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said.

England lead the three-match T20 series 2-0.

After the final T20, the two teams will move to Manchester for the three-match ODI series, starting Friday. — PTI



Ansu Fati of Spain celebrates after scoring his team's third goal during the UEFA Nations League football match against Ukraine at the Estadio Alfredo Di Stefano stadium in Madrid on Sunday. Spain won the match 4-0.

— AP

## Fati, Ramos put up show to send Ukraine packing

Madrid, Sept. 7: Ansu Fati became the youngest goalscorer in the history of the Spanish national team on Sunday by scoring in Spain's 4-0 win over Ukraine.

Aged 17 years and 311 days, Fati scored in the 32nd minute at the Alfredo di Stefano Stadium, when he cut in from the left and curled into the bottom corner. It came after a spell-binding opening half an hour from the youngster, whose driving run had already earned a penalty for Sergio Ramos to convert.

Ramos then headed in to make it two before Fati made history on his first start for Spain, beating the country's previous youngest scorer, Juan Errazquin, who scored three goals aged 18 against Switzerland in 1925.

Manchester City's new signing Ferran Torres made it four late on as Spain registered their first victory in this season's Nations League to go top of League A Group 4.

Luis Enrique's side had opened with a 1-1 draw on Thursday against Germany, whose second game ended in another 1-1 draw away at Switzerland.

Fati impressed off the bench against Germany, enough to be handed his first start by Luis Enrique on the left of Spain's front

### THE RESULTS

**Ukraine**  
**Spain**  
(Ramos 3-pen, 29,  
Fati 32, Torres 84)

**Germany**  
(Gundogan 14)  
**Switzerland**  
(Widmer 58)

**Hungary**  
(Salai 62, Nikolic 70)  
**Russia**  
(Miranchuk 15, Ozdoev  
34, Fernandes 46)

**Ireland**  
**Finland**  
(Jensen 64)

**Bulgaria**  
**Wales**  
(N. Williams 90+5)

**Moldova**  
**Slovenia**  
(Bohar 28)

**Andorra**  
**Faroe Islands**  
(K. Olsen 32)

team aged 10 and made his first team debut at the start of last season, becoming the second youngest player ever to play for the club.

He became the youngest ever scorer in La Liga after scoring off the bench versus Osasuna and then scored on his first start for the Catalans too, against Valencia in September, aged 16.

The next day, Barcelona newspaper *Mundo Deportivo* wrote "A star is born" and he continued breaking records by hitting the winner against Inter Milan in the Champions League in December.

Fati was expected to be given his debut for Spain earlier this year but he had to wait as fixtures were postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Ukraine never got to grips with the winger, who won a penalty in the third minute, converted by Ramos, and then almost scored with a bicycle kick.

He fired wide of the far post after another darting dribble down the left and after Ramos headed in, he finally scored, cutting in from the left and ripping the ball into the far bottom corner. Spain eased up in the second half but there was still time for a fourth, Torres finishing well at the back post to cap a memorable night.

— AFP

## Messi back at Barca ground, trains alone

Madrid, Sept. 7: Lionel Messi returned to Barcelona training for the first time on Monday since his failed attempt to leave the club this summer.

Barca confirmed Messi has started by training alone, in line with La Liga protocol.

"The 2020/21 preseaso

"The Barca number 10 trained on his own, as did (Philippe) Coutinho, according to La Liga protocol whilst the rest of the squad worked out together," the statement added.

The Argentinian super-

star said on Friday in his explosive interview with *Goal* that he would continue to give his best for Barca, despite admitting defeat in his bid to depart for free.

The 33-year-old maintained he tried to go because he "wanted to live his last years of football happily" while also blaming the club's president Josep Maria Bartomeu for "breaking his word" and forcing him to stay.

The return of Barcelona's embittered captain and greatest ever player may not be an easy one, particularly given some of his closest team-mates are likely to

— AFP

# Bucks cool off Heat

## Middleton stands tall for Milwaukee

Miami, Sept. 7: Khris Middleton starred as the Milwaukee Bucks, their backs against the wall and star Giannis Antetokounmpo injured, beat the Miami Heat 118-115 in overtime on Sunday to stay alive in the NBA playoffs.

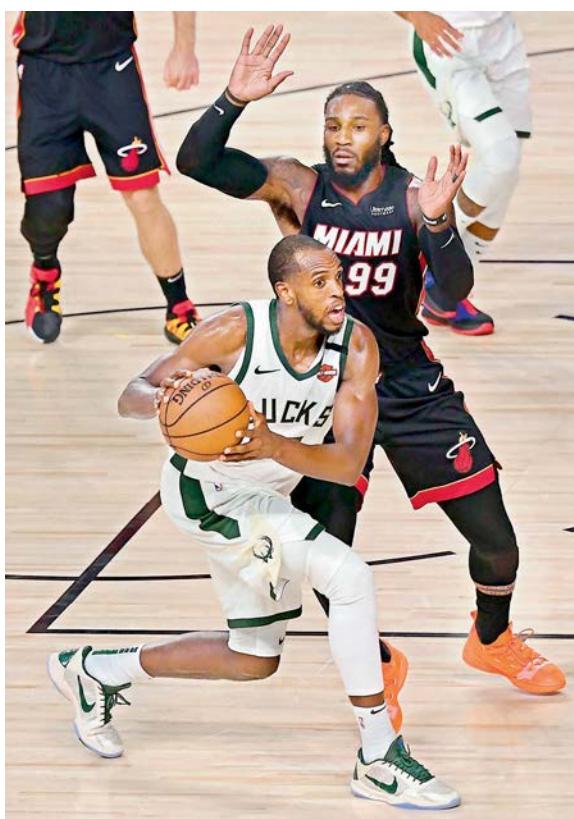
With reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Antetokounmpo ruled out after aggravating his sprained right ankle in the first half, Middleton stepped up to score 36 points — including nine of the Bucks' 11 in overtime.

A Middleton three-pointer put Milwaukee up 116-112 with 6.9 seconds left in the extra session. Miami rookie Tyler Herro drained a three-pointer to close the gap before Middleton made two free throws to seal the win.

Milwaukee, the Eastern Conference top seeds after posting the league's best regular-season record, trimmed the deficit in the best-of-seven East semifinal to 3-1.

In Western Conference action, Anthony Davis scored 36 points and grabbed 10 rebounds and LeBron James added 28 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Houston Rockets 117-109 to level their series at 1-1.

Milwaukee still have a mountain to climb as they try to become the first NBA team to rally from an 0-3



Khris Middleton (left) of the Milwaukee Bucks drives the ball past Jae Crowder of the Miami Heat during their NBA Playoff game in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

ed by team personnel. "Giannis put it all out there for us," said Milwaukee's Eric Bledsoe, who scored 14 points and pulled down 10 rebounds.

Heat forward Jimmy Butler, who scored 17 points. Bam Adebayo led the Heat with 26 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists.

"I think that we relaxed a little bit," said Butler, who scored 17 points. Bam Adebayo led the Heat with 26 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists.

It wasn't clear if Antetokounmpo will be available when the Bucks again try to fend off elimination in game five on Tuesday. Middleton came through in his absence, scoring 21 points in the third quarter to send the Bucks into the final frame trailing by three.

Middleton was 0-for-6 in the fourth, but Brook Lopez

poured in 10 of his 14 for the Bucks. After Herro put the Heat up 107-106 with a three-pointer, Milwaukee's Donte DiVincenzo drained one of two free throws to force overtime.

Butler remained confident the Heat have what it takes to close out the series, if they bring the same urgency they did to the first three games.

"We did what I always say you can't do, which is get comfortable. We thought this one was going to be easy and it was not," he said.

The game at Hyderabad Cricket Association has been bad of late. It has just got worse. President Mohammad Azharuddin has lodged a police complaint against treasurer Surender Agarwal and former vice-president Moizuddin for verbally abusing him.

Consequently, the Uppal Police summoned the HCA officials and recorded their statements on Monday.

Things went out of hand after one of the staffers acquired the signature of Azhar on bonus/ incentives and then approached the treasurer for his sign, which led to a protocol-related reprimand, following which the complaint was lodged.

Bad blood was been boiling at HCA offices lately. The other day, all the office bearers objected to a letter written by Azhar to Justice (retd) Deepak Verma, appointing him as Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the cricket body. They termed the decision unilateral and contended that such an appointment can only be made in the General Body Meeting. The HCA officials communicated the same to Justice Verma and also wrote to BCCI secretary Jay Shah about the infringement.

**SAHARA INDIA PARIWAR**

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is our strength as a saviour from all evils



On the other hand, till date, approximately ₹22,000 crore including interest has been deposited in the Sahara-SEBI account, whereas,

despite giving four rounds of advertisements in 154 newspapers by SEBI in last 7 years across the country, SEBI has repaid only ₹106.10 crore to the esteemed investors. In its last advertisement that was published around a year ago, SEBI made it clear that it would not entertain any further claim thereafter. It means there is no claimant left. The only reason that SEBI didn't receive any further claim was that Sahara Group had already repaid to its esteemed investors. As per the directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, this amount of ₹22,000 crore will eventually come back to Sahara after due verification.

However, we have a very solid footing. Not a single rupee of our esteemed investors or for that matter, of any creditor of SAHARA is at the slightest risk. Nobody should think apprehensively as their every penny is absolutely safe.

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