

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | THURSDAY 29 | OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 32°C
Min: 21°C
Rainfall: Nil

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Aippasi 13
Tithi: Thrayodashi
Star: Uthirathi/ Revathi
Rahukalam:
1.30 pm to 3 pm
Yamagandam:
6 am to 7.30 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.49 am
Zohar: 11.58 am
Asar: 3.14 pm
Maghrib: 5.46 pm
Isha: 6.58 pm

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+30,633)	(+256)
80,19,738	1,20,311

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+2,516)
TN: 7,16,751 **11,018**

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

4,45,45,799

DEATHS

11,75,945

COUNTRIES,
AREAS WITH
CASES **215**

worldometers.info

Vanathi made BJP women's wing chief

Chennai: Vanathi Srinivasan has been made the national president of BJP's women wing (Mahila Morcha) with immediate effect, according to a notification from the BJP national secretary Arun Singh. The 50-year-old politician from Coimbatore had held many posts in her political career that reportedly started with the ABVP during her college days. She was made a vice-president of Tamil Nadu BJP recently.

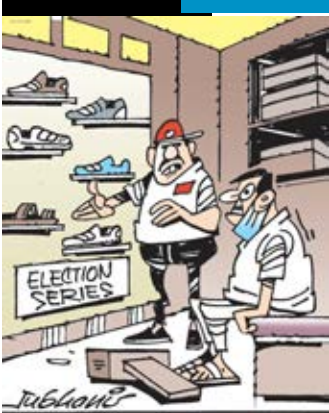


SC refuses to hear plea for disbursal of central funds to TN local bodies

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday refused to entertain a PIL seeking direction to the Centre to release grants for Tamil Nadu local bodies from 2016 till date. The plea alleged that on an average ₹4,000 crore annual funds for local bodies in the state have not been released since 2016 by Union ministries of finance and panchayati raj, stopping of development works

COUNTER

POINT



New range, tough and costs less... to throw at candidates!

Dividing districts, a new poll strategy

G BABU JAYAKUMAR & D SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, OCT. 28

The AIADMK and the DMK, the two major political parties in the State, have started gearing up for the 2021 Assembly elections adopting one common strategy: to divide their party districts and forming one district for every two Assembly constituencies.

Within Chennai, the AIADMK hitherto had three districts namely North

● **Both the AIADMK and the DMK feel that by bringing two constituencies under one district secretary, electioneering could be easily monitored and that the secretaries would be able to spend more time and energy in each of the constituencies**

Chennai South, South Chennai North and South Chennai South. Now, according to a party press release on Wednesday, six districts have been carved out of them for administrative convenience.

Now, the districts go by the

names North Chennai South (East), North Chennai South (West), South Chennai North (East), South Chennai North (West), South Chennai South (East) and South Chennai South (West) and each of them have different district secretaries.

The DMK, too, has increased its districts from 65 to 72 and plans are afoot to add more districts with a view to bringing two Assembly constituencies under one district, headed by a secretary. Both the parties feel that by bringing two constituencies under one district secretary, electioneering could be easily monitored and that the secretaries would be able to spend more time and energy in each of the constituencies.

Otherwise, the DMK had already called for booth committee meetings at the various districts and the party high command had been meeting district level office-bearers in Chennai for the past 10 days in batches. Party president M.K. Stalin had already addressed the district level leaders through video conference and met the district secretaries and office-bearers in Chennai, zone-wise. The series of meetings con-

cluded on Wednesday with Northern zone leaders meeting the president.

Apart from Mr Stalin, top leaders of the party like general secretary Durai Murugan, treasurer T.R. Baalu, principal secretary K.N. Nehru and other deputy general secretaries took part in the discussions in which district level functionaries were encouraged to come up their observations, views and ideas on winning the next elections.

■ P2

Southwest monsoon withdraws, northeast monsoon sets in: IMD

New Delhi, Oct. 28: The southwest monsoon finally withdrew from the entire country on Wednesday, 13 days after its normal date of retreat, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

With this, the northeast monsoon, a phenomenon that brings rainfall over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, parts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala during October to

December, has commenced, it said.

"In view of significant reduction in rainfall activity over most parts of the country, the southwest monsoon has withdrawn from the entire country today October 28." According to the weatherman, a cyclonic circulation lies over southwest Bay of Bengal, off north Tamil Nadu coast in lower and mid tropospheric levels.

— PTI

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Boiler blast: SC refuses to entertain plea challenging NGT order



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Don slams media for Joe graft case censor

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Mumbai Indians beat RCB by 5 wickets



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ARMY COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE

Talks with China to continue, troops standing firm: Rajnath

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 28

Defence minister Rajnath Singh said Wednesday that while Army troops were standing firm at the northern border with China, the ongoing talks for a peaceful resolution of the standoff will continue.

Addressing the ongoing Army commanders' conference in New Delhi, being held from October 26 to 29, Mr Singh said there were no budgetary constraints for capability development and meeting other requirements of the Army.

The eighth round of the corps commander-level talks between India and China to resolve the six-month military standoff in eastern Ladakh is likely to be held soon.

With initial snowfall reported in Ladakh, he said the best weapons and winter clothing will be provided to the troops. "It is our national responsibility to ensure availability of the best weapons, equipment and clothing to our troops braving extreme weather and hostile forces to defend our territorial integrity," said Mr Singh.



The commanders are deliberating on all aspects of the existing security scenarios, the situation in the hinterland and challenges for the security apparatus.

Referring to the situation along the western border, he complimented the Indian Army's response to cross-border terrorism and ceasefire violations. "I compliment the excellent synergy between the Central armed police forces, the police and the Army in tackling the menace of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. It is due to the synergised operations in the Valley that the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is moving to a stable and peaceful environment conducive for overall growth and development," said Mr Singh.

Border standoff with India bilateral issue, says China

Beijing, Oct. 28: China on Wednesday said its border standoff with India in eastern Ladakh is a bilateral issue, and asked the US to "stop" its Indo-Pacific strategy, terming it as an attempt to impose American hegemony in the region.

The remarks by the Chinese Foreign Ministry came a day after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assured India that the US stands firmly with it to confront threats to its sovereignty.

Reacting to the US push for closer defence ties with India, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here on Wednesday that "the border affairs between China and India are matters between the two countries."

"The border situation is generally stable at the moment. Both sides have unimpeded channels for communication, and are properly handling matters through consultation and negotiation," he said.

Delhi reports second wave of pandemic

VINEETA PANDEY | DC NEW DELHI, OCT. 28

The national capital Delhi appears to be reeling under a major second wave of coronavirus cases, as a substantially high number of cases were reported Wednesday. Delhi saw 5,673 fresh infections in just a day, that prompted the Delhi government to keep all schools closed for now, till further notice.

Delhi had on Tuesday recorded its then all-time high of 4,853 new cases. The

● **Among other states which are reporting a spurt in cases are Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu**

last time the city crossed the 4,000 mark was on September 9, when 4,473 cases were detected in a single day. Worried over the sudden spurt in cases, the Union health ministry is expected to hold a meeting with top Delhi government officials on Thursday to re-strategise containment measures.

Among other states which

are reporting a spurt in cases are Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. In fact, Kerala has overtaken Maharashtra, with the highest number of fresh cases, though both states are still contributing more than 5,000 new cases. Health ministry officials said 79 per cent of new infections are still coming from 10 states

and UTs.

Health ministry officials said the festive season, the opening up of public places and the onset of winter has possibly led to a spurt in these states. However, laxity on part of people who are now shunning distancing and mask rules due to pandemic fatigue too is a contributing factor. I

In Delhi, the numbers are also high as people from nearby areas are rushing to the big city for testing and treatment, thus adding to Delhi's own numbers.

ED arrests suspended IAS officer Sivasankar in gold smuggling case

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT.28

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday took Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former principal secretary M. Sivasankar into custody in Thiruvananthapuram minutes after Kerala High Court rejected his anticipatory bail plea in the gold smuggling case.

The ED officials took the senior IAS officer under suspension into custody from an Ayurveda hospital in Thiruvananthapuram where he was undergoing treatment.

■ P4

SHORT TAKES

Integrated farming scheme a success in Thanjavur

G. SRINIVASAN | DC
THANJAVUR, OCT. 28

The integrated farming scheme, implemented in Thanjavur district from 2018, has benefited a large number of farmers, said M.Govinda Rao, Thanjavur district collector, on Wednesday.

In a press release, he said that during 2020-21, so far 400 farmers in Pattukottai, Peravurani, Thanjavur and Budalur blocks benefited from the scheme with a disbursal of ₹2.40 crore as subsidy. During 2018-19, 500 farmers in Thiruvonam block gained from the scheme and a subsidy of ₹5 crore was disbursed.

During 2019-20, 300 farmers in Papanasam and Ammapettai blocks benefited and a subsidy of ₹3 crores was disbursed.

The collector said the scheme aims at creating income for farmers throughout the year by utilising farm wastes, growing fodder, growing horticulture crops along with paddy etc.

Farmers are also encouraged to rear cattle, poultry etc. Farmers with 1 to 2.5 acres of land are eligible and they will get Rs 1 lakh as subsidy for taking up activities permitted under the scheme.

Onion price in Southern districts stabilise

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUNELVELI, OCT. 28

Tamil Nadu government's measures to stabilise onion prices by enhancing the supply from outside the state has impacted positively on the price of the commodity in the southern districts.

The onion price at the Central market in Tirunelveli on Wednesday witnessed a slight dip by Rs 10 from the skyrocketed price price up to Rs 120. The wholesale rate of onion at the vegetable market in Nagercoil, Kanyakumari, district on Wednesday was between ₹80 and ₹100. This is because of the stringent measures taken by the state government, according to Ravichandran, joint registrar of cooperative societies, Thoothukudi district.

As a price control measure, the Tamil Nadu government through its cooperative department initiated the sales of onion at a subsidised rate of Rs 45 per kg through its farm fresh retail outlets. In addition to this, the department too directly procured onion from Maharashtra and Karnataka to enhance the supply of the commodity in the open market apart from taking action against hoarding, said the cooperative department official, who said that 20 tonnes of onion from Nasik in Maharashtra have been brought to Thoothukudi on Tuesday.

Of this 20 tonnes, Thoothukudi district got an allocation of 10 tonnes to be sold at Rs 45 through the 15 cooperative societies run Farm fresh retail outlets, while Kanyakumari district was allotted 8 tonnes and Tirunelveli district two tonnes, according to the joint registrar of cooperative societies, who too added that more loads of onion is expected from Maharashtra and Karnataka as the northwest monsoon. Traders are optimistic that prices will come down before Deepavali.

As a price control measure, the Tamil Nadu government through its cooperative department initiated the sales of onion at a subsidised rate of Rs 45 per kg through its farm fresh retail outlets

CM launches scheme to provide stipend to young advocates

Chennai, Oct 28: Chief Minister K. Palaniswami on Wednesday launched a scheme to provide monthly stipend of ₹3,000 to young advocates in the state. He announced the initiative in July this year with a view to helping junior lawyers from poor background, as it would take about four years for them to start practising after completing various formalities, including enrolling in the Bar Council, an official release here said.

Eligible advocates will get the sum for a two year period. The chief minister handed over the stipend orders to nine advocates at the Secretariat here to mark the rollout of the scheme, it added. Palaniswami had in July

CM handed over the stipend orders to nine advocates at the Secretariat here to mark the rollout of the scheme

announced that the monthly stipend will be paid to newly enrolled junior lawyers for two years to help them overcome financial difficulties in pursuit of their profession.

Many young advocates could not realise their ambition due to lack of income during their initial years of practice and many of them, mostly with rural or poor background, find it difficult to sustain and as a result change profession, he had then said. —PTI



Chief Minister K. Palaniswami hands over a petition for various highway projects in the state to Union road transport and highways and MSME minister Nitin Gadkari in Chennai on Wednesday. —DC

Boiler blast: SC refuses to entertain plea challenging NGT order

New Delhi, Oct. 28: The Supreme Court Wednesday refused to entertain a plea against an NGT order imposing an interim penalty of ₹5 crore on NLC India Ltd in connection with a boiler blast at Neyveli Lignite Power Plant in Tamil Nadu in which 13 workers died and 10 were injured on July 1.

A three-judge bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi asked the petitioner to approach the

The petitioner then withdrew the plea with liberty to approach the high court

high court in the matter. The petitioner then withdrew the plea with liberty to approach the high court. The apex court was hearing an appeal filed by Meenava Thantai K R Selvaraj Kumar Meenvar Nala Sangam against the order of the National

Green Tribunal slapping an interim penalty of ₹5 crore on NLC India Ltd in connection with a boiler blast at Neyveli Lignite Power Plant. The tribunal had said independent verification of facts in the incident is necessary and the industrial unit is liable to pay interim compensation on the principle of 'Absolute Liability'. The green panel had said an interim compensation of ₹30 lakh be paid to each deceased pending final assessment. —PTI



Dr P. Shankar, IAS, Director, DIPR, takes charge as Inspector General of Registration. —DC

'Purchasing power injustice to meritorious'

From P1

Candidates who have really worked hard and secured higher marks than these candidates will surely get an impression that there was something beyond merit that can secure admission to a candidate and which was the purchasing power.

The judge said if this situation was allowed to be continued year after year and no one takes any steps to redress the same, it results in injustice to meritorious candidates.

Obviously, these seats carry a lot of monetary value to it and a student with the necessary contact and financial wherewithal can purchase this seat and undergo the course along with students who had toiled and burnt the midnight oil to secure these seats on pure merit.

The judge said if this situation was allowed to be continued year after year and no one takes any steps to redress the same, it results in injustice to meritorious candidates

Parties seek doc's immediate removal

From P1

Demanding his immediate removal from the committee, TNCC president K.S. Alagiri said a massive protest will be organised by the Youth Congress if it was not replaced.

In a statement, Alagiri recalled that it was the Tamil Nadu Congress student wing president Aswathaman who complained to the police about the continuous

harassment of the woman by Dr Subbiah.

DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi tweeted, "This is an endorsement of indecent behavior and also an incentive for other BJP cadre to follow suit." Many other Twitter users posted their comments against the appointment of Dr Subbiah that the hashtag #AIIMS started trending.

Congress MP Jothimani reproduced

her letter to Union Health Minister Harsh Varadhan referring to the past behavior of the AIIMS committee member while dealing with his lone woman neighbour. Even news channels started referring to Dr Subbiah as the doctor who 'urinated at the woman's door', the image of which was caught in CCTV cameras.

Interestingly among those who tweeted

against the appointment were some doctors, who opposed the move. Dr Subbiah was the only doctor from the State to be appointed for the proposed AIIMS.

Meanwhile, a Twitter user pointed out that Dr Subbiah has been appointed as one of the directors for the proposed IIT in Palakkad, asking, "Does a premier institute in Kerala require a thug like this?"

PEW SEIZES 330 KG GANJA

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, OCT. 28

The St.Thomas Mount PEW (Prohibition Enforcement Wing) have seized around 330 kilograms of ganja transported from Andhra Pradesh in a vehicle, near Alandur in the early hours of Wednesday, amid an ongoing crackdown on drug networks across the city. The city police commissioner appreciated the team which made the recovery.

In a drive against drugs, the St Thomas Mount PEW team headed by Inspector Rajalakshmi and SI Jayaraman, and other officers inspected the vehicles in Asarkana, Alandur, on Tuesday night. Police said based on a specific tip-off, the team, at 3 am, stopped a Tata Eicher transporting dried fish from Andhra Pradesh to the city. The team said, as the occupants of the vehicle gave contradictory statements when questioned, the officials checked the vehicle and found a huge quantity of ganja hidden inside dried fish baskets.

M. Mahesh (29), Muthu Krishnan (36) from Red Hills, S. Murali (30), Puzhal and B. Magudeeswaran (35) were arrested and handed over to the St Thomas Mount police. Around 330 kilograms ganja, Rs 2,80,000 in cash, four mobile phones and the Tata eicher were seized from the accused.

On Wednesday, city police commissioner Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal rewarded the St.Thomas Mount PEW team for good work done by making an unprecedented seizure of 330 kg of ganja.

Childless for years, Covid patient delivers twins in TN

Erode(TN), Oct 28 (PTI) A 44-year-old pregnant woman, who was undergoing treatment for Covid-19, successfully delivered twins at a government hospital here.

Besides handling a Covid-19 patient, the doctors also encountered complications during the caesarean surgery as the woman started bleeding.

A few months back, the childless woman consulted doctors who got

her pregnant through artificial insemination and IVF method.

Later, she contracted coronavirus and was admitted to the Perundurai IRT Government Medical College hospital here.

On October 25, the woman went into labour and a team of doctors conducted the C-section.

She was delivered of twins and both the mother and babies are in good condition, and healthy,

hospital authorities said.

The woman was affected with various gynaecological problems for 15 years and a surgery was performed for removal of fibroid from her uterus, they said.

In a press statement, Erode district Collector C Kathiravan said a special team of doctors was attending to the woman and her twins round the clock.

—PTI



Seize shark fins.

3 AIADMK men, 7 others held for DMK worker's murder

Pudukkottai: The police on Wednesday arrested 10 persons including three AIADMK activists in connection with the murder of a DMK functionary. On Saturday when Balachandran (35) of Mathur was feeding his cattle, an unidentified gang came in a car and fatally attacked him with deadly weapons and fled. The Mathur police registered a case and formed a special squad.

The police arrested 10 persons including AIADMK functionaries Balamuthu, Muruganandham and Nandhakumar.

Balachandran was the deputy organiser of the Pudukkottai north district unit of the DMK youth wing. He was facing 7 criminal cases in Mandaiyur and Tiruchy Cantonment police stations.

His marriage was fixed for October 30.

Ooty carrot fetches windfall for farmers

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, OCT. 28

The price of Ooty carrot has touched the three-figure mark. Packed with a rich quantity of vitamin-A, the Ooty carrot, which is known for its brilliant colour and taste, had become a must buy farm produce even for tourists who visit the Nilgiris. Generally the price of Ooty carrot hovers around Rs 40 per kg. Now, for the past couple of weeks there had been an unprecedented upward trend as a kilogram of carrot began to fetch between Rs 100 and Rs 110.

Though the carrot price has begun to pinch the common man, it has brought unexpected tidings for the farmers. R. Rangasamy, the



president of the Nilgiris Potato and Vegetable Growers Association, said

that a couple of factors including the climate and lockdown effects brought a

<<<<

Fresh Ooty grown carrots arranged in boxes. —DC

new high for carrot price this year."

"Due to transportation issues after lockdown quite a few farmers stopped cultivating carrots. That resulted in carrots being cultivated in small acreage. The heavy rains in August and September in Ooty also played spoil-sport with the carrot sowing season. So, the farmers who braved these odds to take up carrot cultivation are yielding rich dividends now. This trend may continue for some more time" he elaborated.

SHORT TAKES

Minor dead, 12 hurt in C'garh road-rage

Raipur: Two persons, one of them the son of a local Congress leader, have been arrested for allegedly driving a car into a group of villagers, killing a four-year-old boy and injuring 12 others, in Gariaband village of Chhattisgarh, the police said on Wednesday. According to the police, Romit Rathore (25), the son of a local woman Congress leader, and his friend Saurabh Kutare (26) were arrested on Tuesday. The incident took place on Monday night in Malgaon village under City Kotwali police station area, when villagers were returning from a Dussehra celebration, said Sukhmandan Rathore, additional superintendent of police. Infuriated over one of the locals touching his car, the accused drove his speeding car into the crowd, killing the boy and injuring 12 others, the official said. — PTI

Sena's Parbhani MP alleges threat to life

Mumbai: Shiv Sena MP from Parbhani Sanjay Jadhav has filed a police complaint alleging threat to his life and claimed a contract of ₹2 crore has been given to a gang to eliminate him, a police official said on Wednesday. The Lok Sabha member along with his supporters went to Nanalpath police station in Maharashtra's Parbhani district on Tuesday and lodged the complaint. As per the complaint, Jadhav got information on October 18 that an influential person man had given "supari (contract)" of ₹2 crore to a gang in Nanded, the police official said. The police have started an investigation into the complaint and so far no offence has been registered, he said. — PTI

Abducted dentist rescued, 7 arrested

Hyderabad: A doctor from Hyderabad was rescued from Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh a day after he was allegedly kidnapped from his clinic here by a seven-member inter-state gang, the police said on Wednesday. The kidnapers, demanded ₹10 crore as ransom to be paid in bitcoins for the release of the 56-year-old dentist, the police said. The prime accused is a close relative of doctor's wife, they said. After learning about the dentist's financial status, the accused hatched a plan along with other gang members from Maharashtra, Karnataka and from Hyderabad to abduct him to extort money by threatening him and his family, the police said. — PTI

1 more arrested in TRP rigging scam

Mumbai: The Mumbai police on Wednesday arrested one more person in the Television Rating Points (TRP) manipulation scam, an official said. This is the eleventh arrest in the case. Ashish Abidur Choudhary (50), a resident of Thane, was arrested by the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) which is probing the scam, the police official said. Choudhary is accused of paying bribes, on behalf of some TV channels, to households where "barometers" recording viewership data were installed to put on those particular channels. The police has alleged that some channels were paying bribes to boost TRP fraudulently so as to increase advertising revenue. — PTI

Man gets life in jail for killing mother

Hyderabad: A court on Wednesday sentenced a 45-year-old man to life imprisonment for killing his octogenarian mother in July 2016. The XIV ADJ (additional district judge) court convicted the man under relevant IPC sections and sentenced him to undergo life imprisonment besides imposing on him a fine of Rs 2,000, a press release from the Rachakonda police commissionerate said. The convict, a native of Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh, had come to Hyderabad along with his 80-year-old mother and other family members. As the man was facing financial problems he had asked his mother some money but she refused because of his vices, the police said. — PTI

Telangana, Kerala see spurt in Covid cases

Kerala reports 8,790 new cases; TS numbers double

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 28

In a setback of sorts, new Covid-19 cases clambered back in most south Indian states on Wednesday with Telangana and Kerala reporting a surge. The Telangana health department reported 1,481 fresh cases on Wednesday. The rise in cases, from 837 on Monday, also reflects an increase in the number of

tests that rose from 21,099 on Monday to 40,081 on Tuesday.

There were four deaths in the last 24 hours. While the total Covid-19 cases in Telangana stand at 2,34,152, the cumulative fatalities reached 1,319. As many as 2,14,917 people have so far recovered from the disease.

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation area recorded 279 new

cases, followed by 138 in Medchal-Malkajgiri, and 111 in Ranga Reddy districts. Khammam and Nalgonda districts each had 82 fresh cases, while Karimnagar and Bhadrachalam-Kothagudem recorded 79 cases each.

Covid numbers in Kerala too showed a surge after a brief lull on Wednesday when it reported 8,790 new cases, including 94 health workers, tak-

ing the total count to 3.98 lakh. The death toll climbed to 1,403 with 27 more fatalities.

The state had reported 5,457 cases on Tuesday and 4,287 on Monday. The total recoveries have gone up to 3,16,692, with 7,660 getting cured today, the minister said in a press release.

Andhra Pradesh registered 2,949 new Covid-19 cases scaling up the tally to 8,14,774 and 18 deaths

taking the toll to 6,643 in the last 24 hours.

Of a total of 77,73,681 samples tested so far, 7,81,509 patients were discharged after recovery while 26,622 are under-going treatment. Among daily cases of Covid-19, West Godavari topped the state with 492 followed by 457 in Krishna.

(With inputs from Thiruvananthapuram, Vijayawada)

BJP says Rahul violated code, sends plaint to EC

Patna, Oct. 28: The BJP in Bihar on Wednesday lodged a complaint against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with the Election Commission, charging him with violating the model code of conduct by "asking for votes" in a tweet on a polling day. State BJP legal cell head S.D. Sanjay shot off the written complaint to the Chief Electoral Officer of Bihar, requesting "legal action" against Mr. Gandhi, who also addressed a couple of rallies in the state earlier in the day.

As per the complaint, Mr Gandhi had "issued a

statement on Twitter asking for votes... today. The time for making appeal for the first phase of polls was over 28 hours earlier".

According to Mr Sanjay, who is a former additional solicitor-general of India, such an appeal made on the day of polling was "in utter violation of Model Code of Conduct, warranting action against him".

Polling took place for 71 constituencies of the 243-member Assembly in the first of the three-phase election on Wednesday.

— PTI



Voters undergo thermal screening at a polling booth as they stand in queues to cast their votes for the first phase of the Bihar Assembly polls, amid the Covid pandemic, in Kaimur district on Wednesday. — PTI

C'garh brings agri bill to counter farm laws by govt

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY
BHOPAL, OCT. 28

Amid opposition to the Centre's new farm laws, the Bhupesh Baghel government has brought an agriculture amendment bill providing to regulate market prices of farm produce to protect farmers from exploitation.

The bill christened as Krishi Upaj Mandi (amendment) Bill, 2020, was passed in the Chhattisgarh Assembly on Tuesday after a 2-day-marathon debate on it.

The bill aims to protect the farmers from fluctuating market prices and payment risks, Chhattisgarh agriculture minister Ravindra Choubey said while tabling the bill in the Assembly.

The bill did not violate any Central law, thereby avoiding confrontation with the Union government, he added.

He said 80 per cent of farmers in Chhattisgarh are small and marginal farmers who lacked capacity to store grains or bargain for fair prices.

"Hence, it was necessary to establish deemed mandis and electronic trading platforms for them," he added.

The bill allows the government to establish deemed mandis (agriculture markets) or declare private markets as deemed mandis for regulation of marketing notified agriculture produce, he added.

Chhattisgarh Swabhimanchi chief Raj Kumar Gupta, however, criticised the state government for not ensuring guarantee of MSP of farm produce in the bill as was done by Punjab government in its recently legislated bill.

Colors TV sorry for 'anti-Marathi' remark

BHAGWAN PARAB
MUMBAI, OCT. 28

The Colors TV channel on Wednesday issued an apology to the Maharashtra government over the controversial remarks used towards the Marathi language in its popular reality show *Big Boss*. We had no intentions of hurting the sentiments of the people of Maharashtra, said the channel.

"We have received objections regarding the refer-

ence to Marathi language during the episode broadcasted on 27th October 2020 on Colors channel. We have taken note of these objections and have taken corrective measures of removing the said part from all future broadcasts of the episode," Viacom18 Media, the parent company of Colors, said on Twitter.

It added, "We hereby apologise if we have inadvertently hurt the feelings of the people of

Maharashtra due to the broadcast of the said comment in relation to Marathi language. We value the audience and the patronage of the Marathi speaking audience and respect all languages of India in the same manner."

The recent episode of *Big Boss 14* found itself in controversy when one of its contestants Jaan Kumar Sanu, the son of well-known singer Kumar Sanu, asked actor Nikki

Tamboli to not speak in Marathi with fellow contestant Rahul Vaidya saying "*mereko chid hoti hai* (it irks me)."

The comments evoked angry reactions from the MNS and the Shiv Sena, who threatened to stop the shooting of the show if Jaan did not apologise. Ameya Khopkar, who heads the MNS film workers union, challenged Jaan to make a career living in Mumbai after his comments.

The Shiv Sena demanded that *Bigg Boss* shooting permit be cancelled. Adesh Bandekar, head of the party's Chitrapat Sena tweeted, "Bigg Boss management and the person must immediately apologise to Maharashtra and Marathi people. The person should be immediately evicted from the show..."

Maharashtra Home minister Anil Deshmukh also said that an inquiry will be conducted in this matter.

SC allows lawyer to approach HC to seek funds from Centre

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, OCT. 28

The Supreme Court on Wednesday permitted a PIL petitioner to approach Madras high court for seeking direction to the Centre to release funds to Tamil Nadu government for funding the local bodies in the State from 2016 till date.

Giving liberty to the PIL petitioner lawyer C.T.Jaya Sukin to approach Madras high court, a bench comprising Chief Justice

Sharad A. Bobde, Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramasubramanian dismissed the PIL as withdrawn.

"Petitioner who appeared in person seeks leave of this Court to withdraw the writ petition with liberty to approach the high court. The writ petition is dismissed as withdrawn with liberty as prayed for", the court said in its order.

The PIL petitioner lawyer Jaya Sukin told the court that on an average

Tamil Nadu annually gets ₹4000 crores from the Centre for funding developmental activities by the local bodies including gram panchayats, corporations, municipalities and town panchayats.

He said that the same has not been released since 2016 as elections to local bodies had not taken place.

All the developmental work, Jaya Sukin said has come to halt in the absences of Central funding.



A woman selects a clay idol of Goddess Lakshmi ahead of the Diwali festival in Kolkata on Wednesday. — PTI

■ 'Farming ingrained in my blood, gives me satisfaction', says Odisha leader

As House session adjourned, MLA back to farm

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO
NABARANGPUR, OCT. 10

After the recent adjournment of the Monsoon Session of the Odisha Legislative Assembly, Nityananda Gonda, the BJP MLA from the tribal heartland of Umerkote in Nabarangpur district, is back in his occupation — farming. He is spending all the time harvesting paddy from the farmlands

and carrying the crop on his head to his home.

What is quite interesting is that his wife works as his constant companion.

"The MLA Nityananda Gonda is seen keeping himself busy in his ancestral farmland for a week now, with a sickle in his hand. He works alongside other daily wagers to cut the ripe crop while his wife helps to tie those in bundles and mount in stacks," says Ramachan-



Odisha MLA Nityananda Gonda at his farm.

dra Behera, a local resident.

Mr Behera also informed

that the MLA and his wife treat the daily wagers as their family members and serve them tea and snacks in the morning and a complete meal in the launch," added Mr Behera.

The farmer's leader, as he prefers to call himself, shyly told this newspaper that he always loved farming as it gave them much satisfaction.

"I have got a passion for farming. In fact, I can't dissociate myself from this

activity as I feel it is deeply ingrained in my blood. Working in the farmland helps me to remain grounded. At the same time, it boosts the morale of my fellow farmers," says Mr Gonda, who otherwise is a lawyer by profession.

Despite taking a plunge into electoral politics, or taking up legal profession as a practicing lawyer for a livelihood, the lawmaker said farmers are the real nation builders.

Youth & farmers angry with Modi, Nitish, says Rahul

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 28

As first phase of polling began in Bihar on Wednesday, the Congress launched an all out attack on the JD(U)-BJP combine with former party president Rahul Gandhi saying there was anger among small shopkeepers, youth, farmers and labourers against Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the national level and chief minister Nitish Kumar in the state.

The Congress also attacked the state government over the Munger firing incident in which one person was killed, likening chief minister Nitish Kumar to General Dyer of Jallianwala infamy.

Mr Gandhi said it was sad that the Prime Minister's effigy was burnt in Punjab on the occasion of Dussehra.

"You didn't get to see it perhaps because Nitishji and Modiji control the media," he claimed.

In one of the many rallies he addressed in the state, the Wayanad MP said the people of Bihar gave 15 years to Nitish Kumar as chief minister and six years to Mr Modi as Prime Minister yet "Bihar is the poorest state".

Earlier in the morning,

This time for justice, employment, farmers-workers, your vote should be only for 'Mahagathabandhan'

— Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader



Mr Gandhi tweeted that the current elections in Bihar were about the states future and if the Grand Alliance of which the Congress is a part come to power, it will be a government of all castes and religions.

"This time for justice, employment, farmers-workers, your vote should be only for 'Mahagathabandhan' (grand alliance)," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

In Delhi, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi alleged that in Munger, the state police beat up devotees taking out Durga idols "cruelly and mercilessly".

One person was killed and over two dozen people, including security personnel, were injured in firing and stone-pelting during the immersion of Durga idols in Munger on Tuesday.

CBI wants FIR against Sushant's kin quashed

SAURABH JOSHI
MUMBAI, OCT. 28

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday expressed their objection to the FIR filed by Mumbai police against the sisters of deceased actor Sushant Singh Rajput adding that the same should be quashed. The case was filed by actor cum Rajput's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty, who is also prime accused in the suicide case being probed by the CBI. The tug of war continues between the CBI and the state government and Mumbai police. The Maharashtra government had recently revoked general consent for the central agency to take over a case from the state police for probing it without the state's nod.

The officials asserted that the case was bad in law and vitiated which is why the agency opposed it in the Bombay high court. The agency also told the court that the complaint was presumptive and speculative. The officials added that all angles involving the death of the actor were being probed by the CBI and hence Chakraborty should have informed them about the same. The CBI contended that a separate case was uncalled for.

"The case and its facts could already be the part of the case being probed by the CBI and other central agencies," CBI told the court.

The case was filed against Priyanka and Meetu Singh, sisters of Rajput. Rhea's complaint is based on the chat records, from a web-based application, between Rajput and one of his sisters.

6 BSP MLAs rebel in UP, hint they may leave Maya's party

Lucknow, Oct. 28: In a jolt to the BSP on Wednesday, four of the 10 MLAs who had proposed the name of the party's lone candidate in next month's Rajya Sabha polls withdrew support amid hints that they may switch sides.

The four MLAs were reportedly accompanied by two others when they met the returning officer, submitting in writing that their signatures on senior party leader Ramji Gautam's nomination

papers were forged.

One of the rebels admitted that she met SP president Akhilesh Yadav, while some others in the group of six, a third of BSP's total strength in the Assembly — expressed dissatisfaction over the way their own party treated them. They, however, did not specifically target BSP supremo Mayawati.

Without taking names, a BSP leader indirectly laid the blame for the dramatic development on the Samajwadi Party. — PTI

IN BRIEF

Examination at airport: Probe on

Dubai: Qatar apologised Wednesday after authorities forcibly examined female passengers from a Qatar Airways flight to Australia to try to identify who might have given birth to a newborn baby found abandoned at the airport earlier this month. Under pressure after Australia condemned the searches, Qatar's government said it had begun an investigation into the treatment of the women who were taking Qatar Airways Flight 908 to Sydney on Oct. 2. Qatar offered no immediate explanation of how officials decided to perform invasive vaginal examinations on the women. HR activists describe such examinations as equivalent to sexual assault.

Guru gets 120 years in jail

New York: Disgraced self-improvement guru Keith Raniere, whose NXIVM followers included millionaires and Hollywood actors, was sentenced to 120 years for turning some adherents into sex slaves branded with his initials and sexually abusing a 15-year-old. US District Judge Nicholas Garaufis on Tuesday called Raniere "ruthless and unyielding" in crimes that were "particularly egregious" because he targeted girls and young women in the sex-trafficking conspiracy that resulted in Raniere's conviction last year. He handed down the unusually stiff sentence in Brooklyn federal court after hearing 15 victims call for a long prison term to reflect the nightmares and anguish they'll confront the rest of their lives. As he announced the sentence, Garaufis noted that Raniere labelled some of the victims' claims lies. The judge told a woman who Raniere ordered to be kept in a room for two years when she was 18: "What happened to you is not your fault." He said that went for the other victims too. Raniere, who looked at victims, maintained his defiant tone.

Local address of expats in passport

Dubai: Indian expats in the UAE and elsewhere can now provide their local address abroad in their passports, an official at the Indian Consulate in Dubai has said. The Indian government has decided to allow its overseas citizens to add their local address in their country of residence mainly to aid those who do not have permanent or valid addresses in India, Siddhartha Kumar Barailly, consul, Passport and Attestation, at the Indian Consulate in Dubai told the *Gulf News*. "We understand that many people who have been staying for a long time in the UAE don't have a valid address in India. They may add their local UAE address in their passports," he said. Change in address cannot be made in existing passports, the official clarified. Indian passport holders have to apply for a new passport in which the change in address can be made. The facility can be availed by Indian expats living in both rented or self-owned accommodations, the report said. Those wishing to give their UAE address should provide certain documents as proof of residence.

HEATHROW NOT BUSIEST IN EUROPE

London, Oct. 28: London's Heathrow Airport says it has lost its place as Europe's busiest air hub to Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris after the Covid-19 pandemic grounded flights and Britain failed to approve passenger testing that could scale back quarantine requirements. Heathrow said Wednesday that it expects passenger numbers to fall more than previously forecast this year and rebound more slowly in 2021.

The airport now expects to serve 22.6 million passengers this year and 37.1 million in 2021, down from a June forecast of 29.2 million and 62.8 million. The forecast for this year represents at 72% drop from 2019. Commercial aviation plunged this year as governments implemented travel restrictions and passengers cancelled flights amid efforts to control the spread of Covid-19. "The UK's hub airport is no longer the busiest airport in Europe, competitors such as Charles de Gaulle have exceeded us in terms of passenger numbers," Heathrow said in a statement.



President Donald Trump pumps his fist as he walks off stage after speaking during a campaign rally at MotorSports Management Company, in West Salem, Wisconsin on Tuesday. — AP

Don slams media for Joe graft case censor

Trump alleges that Biden got \$3.5 million from Russia

Milwaukee (US), Oct. 28: US President Donald Trump has slammed the mainstream American media and big tech companies for blocking the alleged corruption charges against his opponent Democratic challenger Joe Biden. They have accused each other of serious corruption charges during the election campaigning, with the president alleging that Biden got \$3.5 million from Russia and it came through Russian President Vladimir Putin because he was very friendly with the former mayor of Moscow. Biden has denied the allegations.

Trump, before leaving for a campaign trail on Tuesday, told reporters at the White House that the mainstream media was not showing corruption against Biden. "Nobody has ever seen anything like we're witnessing right now. I think it's a very sad time and it'll go down as a very sad era for the media and certainly for big tech (companies)." "I think what is going on with all of those companies—I think they've hurt themselves

Choice of super recovery or Biden depression: Prez

Milwaukee (US), Oct. 28: US President Donald Trump has said that the 2020 presidential election is a choice between a "super" economic recovery led by his administration or a "Biden depression" as he targeted his Democratic challenger Joe Biden. With just seven days left for the most crucial American presidential election in recent memory, Trump intensified his campaign by having as many as three rallies on Tuesday, with one of them being in rain

very badly because they've been so restrictive... when they don't want to show corruption, like you have with Biden—that's totally corruption and everybody knows it—and they're trying to protect, because he can make them wealthier, whereas they

and freezing cold.

"Seven days from now, we are going to win this state and we are going for more incredible years in the White House," Trump said in identical speeches in three battleground states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Nebraska. "This election is a choice between a Trump super recovery or a Biden depression. That's what you are going to have with the raise of taxes, the biggest tax increase in our history. It's ridiculous. It's a choice between

understand me," Trump said. "They understand where I'm coming from. It's very unfair. Nobody has ever seen anything like it. It's not freedom of the press... it's the opposite. And, of course, the media is in the same bag," said the president.

when a Trump boom or a Biden lockdown. Let's lock it all down and by the way speaking of lockdowns, let's get your governor to open it up. Let's get them to open it up," Trump said.

Seeking his second four-year term, Trump is currently trailing in latest polls against Biden. However, Trump looked confident of his electoral victory on November 3, asserting that he is experiencing a wave-like situation across the country. — PTI

At a separate election rally in the battleground state of Wisconsin, his eldest son Donald Trump Jr alleged that the media and the big tech companies are now campaigning on behalf of Biden and the Democratic Party. — PTI

Tech giant CEOs grilled over bias

Washington, Oct. 28: The CEOs of Twitter, Facebook and Google are facing a grilling by Republican senators making unfounded allegations that the tech giants show anti-conservative bias. The Senate Commerce Committee has summoned Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Google's Sundar Pichai to testify for a hearing Wednesday.

The executives agreed to appear remotely after being threatened with subpoenas. With the presidential election looming, Republicans led by President Donald Trump have thrown a barrage of grievances at Big Tech's social media platforms, which they accuse without evidence of deliberately suppressing conservative, religious and anti-abortion views. The chorus of protest rose this month after Facebook and Twitter acted to limit dissemination of an unverified political story from the conservative-leaning *New York Post* about Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, an unprecedented action against a major media outlet.

The story, which was not confirmed by other publications, cited unverified emails from Biden's son Hunter that were reportedly disclosed by Trump allies. Beyond questioning the CEOs, senators are expected to examine proposals to revise long-held legal protections for online speech, an immunity that critics in both parties say enables the companies to abdicate

FOR TOO long, social media platforms have hidden behind Section 230 protections to censor content that deviates from their beliefs.

ROGER WICKER, Senate Commerce Committee chairman

their responsibility to impartially moderate content. The Justice Department has asked Congress to strip some of the bedrock protections that have generally shielded the tech companies from legal responsibility for what people post on their platforms. Trump signed an executive order challenging the protections from lawsuits under the 1996 telecommunications law. "For too long, social media platforms have hidden behind Section 230 protections to censor content that deviates from their beliefs," Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., the Commerce Committee chairman, said. In their opening statements, Dorsey, Zuckerberg and Pichai addressed the proposals for changes to so-called Section 230, a provision of a 1996 law that has served as the foundation for unfettered speech on the internet.

Zuckerberg said Congress "should update the law to make sure it's working as intended." "We don't think tech companies should be making so many decisions about these important issues alone," he said. — AP

CONFRONT ISLAMOPHOBIA, SAYS IMRAN

Islamabad, Oct. 28: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday wrote a letter to the leaders of the Muslim states, asking them to make collective efforts to confront growing trend of Islamophobia.

"The recent statements at the leadership level and incidents of desecration of the Holy Quran are a reflection of this increasing Islamophobia that is spreading in European countries where sizeable Muslim populations reside," according to the letter posted on Khan's official Twitter account.

The letter came in the wake of publication of caricatures on the Prophet in France and comments made by French President Emmanuel Macron, who defended such depictions as protected under the right to free speech. "We won't renounce the caricatures," Macron said last week. Khan urged the leaders of the Muslim countries to "collectively take the lead in breaking this cycle of hate and extremism, which nurtures violence and even death". The prime minister said that blasphemy against any prophet, including those of Christianity and Judaism, was not acceptable to the Muslims. On Monday, Pakistan summoned French Ambassador Marc Barety to lodge a "strong protest" against the publication of caricatures and President Macron's comments. — PTI

Border stand-off bilateral issue with India: China

Beijing, Oct. 28: China on Wednesday said its border standoff with India in eastern Ladakh is a bilateral issue, and asked the US to "stop" its Indo-Pacific strategy, terming it as an attempt to impose American hegemony in the region. The remarks by the Chinese Foreign Ministry came a day after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assured India that the US stands firmly with it to confront threats to its sovereignty.

Pompeo's remarks came after the third edition of the Indo-US dialogue in New Delhi during which the two sides deliberated prominently upon the Sino-India border row and situation in the Indo-Pacific region. Reacting to the US push for closer defence ties with India, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here on Wednesday that "the border affairs between China and India are matters between the two countries". "Now the situation across the border is generally stable and the two sides are in resolving relevant issues through consultations and negotiations," he said, in apparent reference to the military and diplomatic level talks between India and China to resolve the standoff. In a blunt criticism of China, Pompeo cited the killing of 20 Indian Army personnel in the Galwan Valley in eastern

■ CHINESE FOREIGN Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin sharply criticised the US' Indo-Pacific concept, saying "the Indo-Pacific strategy proposed by the US is preaching outdated Cold War mentality and preaching confrontation and geopolitical game.

Ladakh in a clash with the Chinese military and said the US stands firmly with India in confronting threats to its sovereignty.

"Our leaders and our citizens see with increasing clarity that the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) is no friend to democracy, the rule of law transparency... I am glad to say that the US and India are taking steps to strengthen our cooperation against all manner of threats and not just those posed by the Chinese communist party," Pompeo said.

Wang sharply criticised the US' Indo-Pacific concept, saying "the Indo-Pacific strategy proposed by the US is preaching outdated Cold War mentality and preaching confrontation and geopolitical game. It is aimed to uphold the hegemony of the US. This runs counter to the common interest for the region and we urge the US to stop this". — PTI

US' Lanka vision different: Pompeo

Colombo, Oct. 28: America's vision on Sri Lanka is "very different" from that of "predator" China, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said here on Tuesday as he met the leadership here and reaffirmed US' commitment to the island nation's sovereignty and security. Addressing a joint press conference with his Sri Lankan counterpart Dinesh Gunawardena after bilateral talks, the top US diplomat said that the US and Sri Lanka shared a democratic vision.

"Indeed, a strong sovereign Sri Lanka is a positive partner on the world

■ THE US will open an embassy in Maldives, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on Wednesday as he held extensive talks with leadership of the strategically located island nation in the Indian Ocean.

stage. It can be a beacon for a free Indo-Pacific. "The Chinese Communist Party is a predator. The US comes in a different way, we come as a friend," Pompeo said in response to a question. — PTI

TURKEY FLAYS CHARLIE HEBDO ERDOGAN TOON

Ankara, Oct. 28: Turkish officials on Wednesday rallied against French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo over its cover-page cartoon mocking Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and accused it of sowing "the seeds of hatred and animosity".

The cartoon could further heighten tensions between Turkey and France, which erupted over French President Emmanuel Macron's firm stance against Islamism following the beheading of a teacher who showed his class caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad for a free speech class. The Prophet cartoons upset many in the Muslim world. But it was Erdogan who led the charge against France and questioned Macron's mental state.

France then recalled its ambassador to Turkey for consultations, a first in French-Turkish diplomatic relations. "We strongly condemn the publication concerning our president of the French magazine, which has no respect to faith, the sacred and values," Erdogan's spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, wrote on Twitter. Kalin said: "The aim of these publications, that are devoid of morality and decency, is to sow seeds of hatred and animosity. To turn freedom of expression into hostility towards religion and belief can only be the product of a sick mentality."

"I condemn this incorrigible French rag's immoral publication concerning our president," Turkish VP Fuat Oktay wrote on Twitter. — AP

Expert: 1st vaccines imperfect

GERMANY, FRANCE GEAR UP FOR NEW LOCKDOWNS AS VIRUS SURGES

Berlin, Oct. 28: Germany and France were bracing for new lockdowns Wednesday, as governments sought to stop the fast-rising tide of Coronavirus cases that are beginning to fill European hospitals.

French markets opened lower on expectations that President Emmanuel Macron will announce tough measures during a televi-

sed evening address to the nation.

Doctors in France are calling on the government to impose a new nationwide lockdown, noting that more than half of the country's intensive care units are now occupied by Covid-19 patients and medical staff are under increasing strains. — AP

UN: OVER 2 MN VIRUS CASES IN JUST ONE WEEK

London, Oct. 28: The World Health Organisation said countries globally reported more than 2 million confirmed Coronavirus cases last week—the shortest time ever for such an exponential increase since the pandemic began.

In a weekly analysis of Covid-19, WHO said for the second consecutive week, the European region accounted for the biggest proportion of new cases, with more than 1.3 million reported cases or about 46% of the worldwide total. The UN health agency said deaths were also on the rise in Europe, with about a 35% spike since the previous week. — AP

that there are no guarantees that a successful vaccine will be found at all.

"No vaccine in the history of medicine has been as eagerly anticipated as that to protect against severe acute respiratory syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2 or Covid-19). — PTI

long," Bingham writes in an article for the medical journal *The Lancet* this week.

Highlighting that the United Kingdom is at the "forefront" of a huge international effort to develop clinically safe and effective vaccines, she also struck a note of caution

GIANT | SIZE 20-foot wingspan birds evolved after extinction of dinosaurs

Fossil of 50-mn-year-old bird identified

Los Angeles, Oct. 28: Scientists have identified the fossil of a giant bird that lived about 50 million years ago, with wingspans of up to 21 feet that would dwarf today's largest bird, the wandering albatross.

The fossils recovered from Antarctica in the 1980s represent the oldest giant members of an extinct group of birds that patrolled the southern oceans. By comparison, today's largest bird, the wandering albatross has a wingspan of 11 and-a-half-foot. Called pelagornithids,

the birds filled a niche much like that of today's albatrosses and travelled widely over Earth's oceans for at least 60 million years. Though a much smaller pelagornithid fossil dates from 62 million years ago, one of the newly described fossils—a 50 million-year-old portion of a bird's foot—shows that the larger pelagornithids arose just after life rebounded from the mass extinction 65 million years ago, when the relatives of birds, the dinosaurs, went extinct. A second pelagornithid

fossil, part of a jaw bone, dates from about 40 million years ago, according to the study published in the journal *Scientific Reports*. "Our fossil discovery, with its estimate of a 5-to-6-metre wingspan—nearly 20 feet—shows that birds evolved to a truly gigantic size relatively quickly after the extinction of the dinosaurs and ruled over the oceans for millions of years," said Peter Kloess, a graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley in the US.

The last known pelagornithid is from 2.5 million years ago, a time of changing climate as Earth cooled, and the ice ages began, they said. Pelagornithids are known as "bony-toothed" birds because of the bony projections, or struts, on their jaws that resemble sharp-pointed teeth, though they are not true teeth, like those of humans and other mammals. The bony protrusions were covered by a horny material, keratin, which is like our fingernails, the researchers said.

Called pseudoteeth, the struts helped the birds snag squid and fish from the sea as they soared for perhaps weeks at a time over much of Earth's oceans, they said. Large flying animals have periodically appeared on Earth, starting with the pterosaurs that flapped their leathery wings during the dinosaur era and reached wingspans of 33 feet, according to the researchers. The pelagornithids came along to claim the wingspan record in the Cenozoic, after the mass extinction. — PTI

DECCAN Chronicle

29 OCTOBER 2020

Why India must not put all eggs in the US basket

The third edition of the India-US dialogue in the “2+2” format — the annual event at which the foreign ministers and defence of the two countries take stock of the international security affairs — which was held in New Delhi last Tuesday had the obvious context of the Chinese aggression in Ladakh, and this enabled both sides to orchestrate extreme camaraderie.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh, in his opening remarks, spoke of China’s “reckless aggression”, perhaps implying that our northern neighbour’s military venture in eastern Ladakh was foredoomed. This is good for national morale, and apparently rests in no small measure on assurances of US support. As if to confirm this, US secretary of state Mike Pompeo, who likes to sound hawkish on China, noted in the joint press conference after the meeting that the US would do everything in support of India’s “sovereignty”.

This sounds a shade condescending, and may suggest to some that in the US reckoning India may not be altogether prepared to defend its borders entirely on its own. However, the current Indian leadership will just have to pocket the superciliousness. It has just finished signing — also on Tuesday — the Basic Cooperation and Exchange Agreement (Beca), the last of the four “foundational agreements” on which the US insists when it enters into a deep partnership with a country involving close defence relationship. The external affairs minister, S. Jaishankar, pithily summed up the discussions when he informed the media that the conversations had a strong “political military” content.

An assertion of such a nature is unlikely to be tested in the severest of conditions any time soon in the event that the China’s “People’s Liberation Army” (threatening currently to ‘liberate’ Ladakh without solicitation) changes its mind in view of the growing international hostility it may sense to its militaristic designs over a large swathe of continental and maritime territory. But India will do well not to overlook history, although contexts may change from era to era. In 1962, Prime Minister Nehru had specifically sought “air support” from the Kennedy administration to ward off Chinese aggression in our northeast, but this was denied although Washington did extend support in other ways.

When President Donald Trump paid an official visit in February this year, India and the US had escalated their relationship to that of Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, the closest India can think of getting to “strategic ally” (of the Nato variety) in the age of multi-polarity, and in the just ended “2+2” conversation, it was decided, according to the joint statement that was issued, to expand this framework in order “to realise the full potential” of the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. Perhaps it is a foregone conclusion that greater purchase of American military platforms and equipments will ensue and greater clarity lent to the “shared vision” of India and the US for the Indo-Pacific which was first introduced into the India-US relationship during the visit of President Barack Obama in PM Narendra Modi’s first term.

World must follow Macron

It has been a watershed moment in the over two-decade-old clash of civilisations of which the intelligentsia world over has now sat up and taken note. When a teenager beheaded a teacher about two weeks back for showing the provocative *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons to his students only as the best example of freedom of expression, all of France rallied for the country’s famous principle of *laïcité* (secularism) and celebrated culture of discourse wherein any opinion whatsoever is open to scrutiny and vigorous, non-violent debate. But what made the show of support different was the fact that during its course for the first time a head of state openly called upon immigrants rather than the existing population to integrate with French multiculturalism.

This newspaper unequivocally stands behind President Emmanuel Macron to uphold the democratic values of freedom of expression, an activity at the heart of knowledge, freedom of conscience, human dignity and equality between men and women. It also applauds Mr Macron’s plan weeks before to draft a law to fight “Islamist separatism” which will counter the favouring of personal laws over France’s republican values that adversely affect women’s rights. So far, these have been compromised by putative liberals and in the very name of multiculturalism. And that is ironical, as human rights are a universal declaration (Paris, 1948).

Mr Macron’s drawing of distinction between “French Islam” and other forms is also significant in the light of his country’s intensifying brushes with Islamism culminating in the Nice attack of 2016 killing 87. Close on the heels of that attack, families were beaten up in Toulon by Muslim youth purportedly offended at the sight of women cycling on a holiday wearing shorts. It was the inevitable fallout of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism as a reaction to insecurities caused by globalisation, a phenomenon first identified by Dutch sociologist-politician Pim Fortuyn in 1997. Fortuyn was assassinated in 2002.

As a politician himself, Mr Macron should know best how to keep his distance from far right forces. These forces have been trying to hijack this essentially humanitarian cause right since after the agnostic left first brought it to public domain. Nevertheless, it is imperative upon other nations in the world to confront this ever-growing global malaise and see through the power play of leaders like Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan whose aim it is to challenge Saudi Arabia’s leadership of the Sunni world and his supporters, Imran Khan among them. Few indeed spare a thought for the worst sufferers — women in regressive societies who risk torture and opprobrium for routine freedoms but lack a political voice.

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Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Dhesi, Khattar’s favourite, gets a second innings

Politicians are sometimes loath to let a favourite babu go off into retirement. They find ways to bring them back into the administration. In 2017, Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh had appointed retired chief secretary Suresh Kumar as his chief principal secretary, even though the state had a regular principal secretary, another IAS officer, because Mr Kumar enjoyed his full trust.

Now taking a cue from the neighbouring state, Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar has sprung a similar surprise on his administration, and one which is likely to alter power equations in the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO). He has appointed retired IAS officer D.S. Dhesi as the chief principal secretary in the CMO.

According to sources, Mr Dhesi

was Haryana’s chief secretary for four years and retired last year. He was then appointed chairman of the Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission (HERC), which he has now left to join his new assignment. Though his duties have not been spelt out, it is quite likely that Mr Dhesi will become another power centre in the CMO, with all important files meant for Mr Khattar being routed through him.

THE ‘SPECTRUM SECRETARY’ Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba will head a panel of secretaries to streamline the spectrum allocation process. The other members of the panel are home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla, defence secretary Ajay Kumar, telecom secretary Anshu Prakash, I&B secretary Amit Khare and secretary,

department of space, K. Sivan. Those in the know say that the committee’s ambit may eventually be widened to also include spectrum pricing issues, always contentious, as we have seen in the past.

According to sources, the high-powered panel will examine the possibility of drawing up an annual calendar for auction of the spectrum that will give telecom companies a clear road map of the quantum as well as the frequency of spectrum being offered for commercial use. It will also sort out the various spectrum-related issues between ministries — as seen in the composition of the panel.

This may meet a long-standing demand of telecom companies who have been asking the government to clear the air for auctioning spec-

trum, which will help them plan and allocate resources efficiently, optimise their networks and roll out new technologies.

TOO BUSY TO CLEAN AIR

It is that time of the year, Covid or not, when the air quality in north India deteriorates rapidly. Stubble burning by farmers in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi is a major contributor to this. Every year several steps are announced, media raises a big stink, but nothing much has happened.

This year, stubble burning has begun already and urgent steps would be required to prevent Delhi from turning into a gas chamber. The Supreme Court has now taken a serious note of the failure of these states to stop stubble burning which poses a serious threat to pub-

lic health in the region. It directed the respective chief ministers of these states to remain present when the court takes up the matter of combating air pollution at the next hearing. Hopefully, some meaningful action will emerge from the apex court’s intervention.

Meanwhile, the state administration in Punjab and Haryana especially are busy dealing with angry farmers agitating against the Centre’s controversial farm bills, the chief secretaries have their hands full already. This year could see a repeat of our previous trysts with polluted air at the onset of winter with babus issuing the usual warnings and threats to fine farmers who are burning stubble.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@Twitter.com](#). Let’s multiply the effect.

Subhani



As US embrace deepens, watch for pitfalls ahead

K.C. Singh

The foreign and defence ministers of India and the United States met, in the “2+2” format, in New Delhi on October 26-27. They first engaged their counterparts and then met in the 2+2 format, progressively favoured by many countries as national security, defence and diplomacy are in today’s complex and interconnected world quite seamless.

Significantly, they were meeting just a week before Americans go to the polls to elect the President, one-third of the Senate and a new Congress on November 3, and against the backdrop of the six-month old India-China military standoff in Ladakh. In a choreographed press interaction, with only two journalists on either side allowed one question each, external affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar unconvincedly explained the event as normally due. Perhaps both sides had unrelated compulsions for the scheduling. Unlike recent US presidential elections, many traditionally pro-Republican states are now swing states, including Texas and Georgia. The former was last won by a Democratic candidate (Jimmy Carter) in 1976. In both states, non-white immigrants are tilting the demographic balance towards Democrats. Joe Biden is, in the last week of electioneering, swinging through them sensing change. Thus, was the meeting really sought to allow the projection of Mr Trump as pro-India and resurrect the “Howdy Modi” Houston rally’s euphoria for the diaspora vote?

India, on the other hand, would have weighed the advantage of signing the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (Beca) now. If Mr Biden were to win, he would only assume office in January. A new secretary of state may not have India on his to-do list till

well into 2021. With the India-China confrontation now likely to linger, India needs to optimise the use of American equipment like Apache helicopters, or new armed drones, if acquired, or other US transport and reconnaissance platforms already deployed. India’s access to the US geo-spatial network will have a multiplier effect on the targeting accuracy and lethality of these weapons, thus influencing the Chinese tactical calculus.

The joint statement expectedly details myriad themes such as the India-US relationship being raised to a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership during the February 2020 visit of President Donald Trump. But the scope has been limited by the context. Covid-19 and its handling gets prominence as the Democrats are using it in the presidential election. Also related is the new Indo-Pacific alliance sought to be built around resilient supply chains. Trade, on the other hand, finds cursory mention in the statement despite it being Mr Trump’s principal preoccupation before the pandemic. The impending election has focused minds on the immediately relevant ideas. US secretary of state Mike Pompeo, in his remarks, recalled the New Age Vision finalised during his earlier visit. With a flourish, he announced that India and US stood against “all manner of threats”, not just from China. It is the language normally used among treaty allies. The US, he added, would stand with India to “protect its sovereignty and integrity”. His hyperbole hardly reflects the views of his government, as Mr Trump is by instinct an isolationist. Was he auditioning for a presidential run in 2024?

Two other important themes, although mentioned in the joint statement, are left undressed. One, Mr Trump’s tightened immi-

gration controls, in the mistaken belief that it would help ameliorate job losses due to Covid-19 lockdowns. Two, the traditional flow of Indian students to US universities. Again, there is a misguided move to cancel student visas if university courses have gone online. This has left many students stranded, both unable to repay borrowed money or complete their education and seek employment. The joint statement simply skips over these problems while restating past formulations on students as a people-to-people bridge.

The focus is basically on defence cooperation and sales as that plays well back home, particularly during an election. There is an interesting decision to exchange liaison officers, with an Indian officer to be embedded at Navcent, Bahrain, which is the naval element of the US Central Command. Similarly, a US officer will be received by India’s Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR). The Quad is lauded, as too India’s invitation to the Australian Navy to join Japan, the US and India in the Malabar naval exercises.

Some of the benefits of the growing strategic clinch with the United States have been recounted above. What can be the pitfalls? Firstly, while the overall trajectory of India-US relations would not materially alter under a Joe Biden administration, some elements may. Mr Biden’s priority will be to rebuild US alliances, particularly with Nato, shore up the US economy and try reducing Trumpian unpredictability. He may cautiously attempt to reengage China. Mr Pompeo’s belligerence

may be replaced by a more nuanced containment strategy for China. A Biden administration may also bring greater focus on human rights, civil society protection and freedom of speech and media. All that may require a fresh rebalancing among the major powers, including in Asia.

Second, the *Wall Street Journal* correspondent’s query is important as he sought to know the status of India’s defence relationship with Russia after the signing of Beca now and the other three foundational agreements that were signed earlier. The defence minister parried it in Hindi, but the message was that India was unlikely to change its policy of buying weapons from multiple sources. But is this sustainable, with the closer integration of US communications, logistics and geo-spatial systems with Indian weapons systems?

India may acquire more US weapons systems to narrow the strategic gap with China during the coming months. M.K. Rasgotra, a former foreign secretary and doyen of Indian diplomacy, now in his late 90s like Henry Kissinger, recently wrote that the US needs to devise a concessional buy-lease programme for India to boost quickly its defence capability to deter China. Mr Trump has been too erratic and transactional to think that big. The next US President would inherit a destabilised West Asia, a fractious South Asia and a China-intimidated East Asia. He would require vision and leadership to peacefully contain China, curb the worst instincts of the Narendra Modi government and the BJP while helping India to rise and heal the fractures of the Islamic world? He can regain global leadership by reimagining a post-Covid world with new and flexible global alliances and reformed institutions of global governance. Covid-19 has created a historic inflexion point for change, which the brave and the wise must shape. Otherwise, rising revisionist powers like China will fill the vacuum.

The writer is a former secretary in the external affairs ministry. He tweets at @ambkcsingh.

LETTERS

MANUSMRITI ROW

Apropos *Khushbu* held ahead of protest against *Thiruma*, released (Oct.28). Tamil Nadu politics is so peculiar, the driblets and drab political outfits which are headed by lightweights do pick up trivial or silly things indulging in fracas only to be in the limelight! Otherwise Thirumavalavan of VCK thinking that his party is forgotten would not have quoted Manusmriti cried hoarse that it had denigrated. The women only to remind the electorate that his ‘freed che-etahs’ are still active, basking under the Sun! And the BJP emboldened with the parties-hopping yesteryear actress *Khushbu* since joined it, would not have entered the street show as a savior of weaker sex’s dignity, lambasted *Thiruma* alleging that he has insulted the womenfolk! The great *Manu* must be turning in his grave, aghast how both the parties which cling to the apron strings of either major ‘kazhagam’ brazenly used his ‘Smriti’ which is redundant today, playing such bizarre politics to gain political mileage! Unlimited opportunism?

A. Seshagiri Rao, Chennai

VCK LEADER Thol Thirumavalavan has quoted verbatim what is stated about women in Manusmriti and the BJP has twisted his statement to make it appear as if he has denigrated women. The party is only trying to get political mileage out of it. When DMK president Stalin tried to intercede, he, too, was branded anti-women. It is ironical that actor *Khushbu* whose bold stance on premarital sex was once denounced by the same elements is now on the side of these hypocrites and tricksters.

Tharcus S. Fernando, Chennai

GOOGLE UNDER SCANNER

THE GROWING influence of tech behemoths such as Google and Facebook on human lives across the globe is simply baffling. Citing the abuse of its market dominant position and its indulgence in anti competitive behaviour, the US Department of Justice had launched an anti-trust suit against tech major Google. As a gateway to the internet and a search advertising behemoth, Google maintained and continued to maintain its monopoly power. Whether the dominance of Google has stemmed from its exclusionary practices or not, what is obvious is that its dominance is mostly driven by network effects. As tech majors such as Google and Facebook shape how people live, think, consume, vote, read and work, concrete steps to holding them accountable while protecting competition is the need of the hour.

M. Jeyaram, Sholavandan

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,922.46	-1.48
Nifty 50	11,729.60	-1.34
S&P 500*	3,283.56	-3.16
Dollar (₹)	73.86	-0.18
Pound Sterling (₹)	96.08	-0.20
Euro (₹)	86.81	0.21
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,279.682	1.34
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	38.95	-2.25
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.859	0.012
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.761	-0.017

* As of 9:30 PM IST

HPE Covid Test Labs facilitate 1L patient visits



Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) today announced that its Covid-19 Test Labs and Outpatient Department (OPD) Centers have collectively facilitated over 100 thousand patient visits across India. These facilities provide additional authorised Covid-19 testing facilities and isolation beds, thereby assisting the government of India and state governments in their efforts to contain the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Gold loans double as Covid-hit people pledge family jewellery

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 28

Gold loan disbursements by NBFCs have more than doubled in September quarter over the previous quarter. They are expected to clock 15 to 18 per cent growth this year on increased demand and higher gold price.

Preliminary estimates indicate that gold loan disbursements, including repledge with NBFCs, have more than doubled sequentially in the second quarter of this fiscal, finds Crisil.

Growth was flat in the first quarter of this fiscal because of low disbursements in April and May due to the country-wide lock down. Manappuram Finance saw its gold loan portfolio growing by 2 to 3 per cent in April-May as customers have been availing gold loan using online products. Muthoot Finance too had seen a flattish growth during the



lock down.

With the Covid-19 pandemic-driven lockdowns being lifted slowly and economic activity clawing back, demand for gold loans has risen, especially from individuals meeting urgent personal requirements and from micro enterprises for working to restart businesses. Gold loans would be preferred also because non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and banks have tightened their underwriting norms for other loans, leading to cautious lending to micro and small enterprises, traders and the self-employed.

Crisil expects assets under management of NBFCs to grow 15-18 per cent this fiscal. Motilal Oswal too expects gold loan NBFCs to deliver 15 per cent CAGR over FY20-23.

“In the current scenario, we believe gold financiers would benefit as customers would look to raise cash by leveraging their gold holdings and increase in gold prices would give a modest impetus to growth.

Inability of customers to get personal loans due to lack of formal documentation, higher share of rural business and flexi-lending terms will support gold loan business,” finds Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

“Unlike other asset classes, gold loan has not faced major issues in collection and disbursement, or re-pledge of loans, barring in the stringent lock down phase in April and May,” said Krishnan Sitaraman, Senior Director, CRISIL Ratings.

In order to provide a smooth re-pledging process in times of pandemic, larger NBFCs are offering online renewal since the underlying collateral is already in their possession. Large gold-loan financiers have also consistently raised funds through bonds, under the targeted long-term repo operations and partial credit guarantee schemes at a competitive cost.

Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey, after launching industry body ISMA's portal 'http://meetha.org' said India is one of the world's largest consumers of sugar but per capita consumption has remained stagnant at 19 kg, much lower than the world's average per capita consumption of 23.50 kg.

The country's annual sugar consumption stood at 25-26 million tonnes, while production reached 27.5 million tonnes in the 2019-20 season ending September.

“There are a lot of myths going around about sugar and sugar consumption without scientific basis. This misinformation multiplies much faster than the truth multiplies,” the official said.

“Therefore, it is very important to come up with scientific information so that people can make very informed decisions,” Pandey said.

Food secretary Sudhanshu Pandey also said that there is also “misunderstanding” about Indian sugar abroad. — PTI

FOOD MINISTRY WORRIED OVER LESS IN-TAKE OF SWEETNER

New Delhi, Oct. 28: The government on Wednesday said there is a need to address “myths and misgivings” about sugar consumption in India, as the per capita consumption of the sweetener has remained stagnant for the last three years at 19 kilogram.

Rising Covid-19 cases globally specifically in Europe and the United States are worrying investors as strict lockdown could be imposed and the economy's recovery, which is still at a nascent stage could once again get hit, said analysts.

Among the global peers United Kingdom's FTSE 100 index fell to its lowest level in six months on Wednesday on investors' worries of more virus curbs and uncertainty over a coronavirus vaccine.

Volatility in the domestic market arose ahead of equity derivative contracts expiry on Thursday as the Sensex fell 778 points intra-day taking the index to day's low of 39,774.60 before the final close at 39,922.46.

Volatility index India VIX rose 4.88 per cent to 23.28. Keshav Lahoti, equity analyst, Angel Broking said, “We expect volatility to continue in the market on the eve of key events of

Covid rebound in US, Europe turns markets volatile

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, OCT. 28

Weak global cues led to a fresh round of selling in the Indian market as the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic in Europe and the United States, uncertainty over who would be the next US President worried investors.

Sensex fell 600 points or 1.48 per cent to close at 39,922.46 while Nifty-50 settled at 11,729.60 down 159.80 points or 1.34 per cent.

Rising Covid-19 cases globally specifically in Europe and the United States are worrying investors as strict lockdown could be imposed and the economy's recovery, which is still at a nascent stage could once again get hit, said analysts.

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the US election, ongoing result season and how coronavirus cases are being reported around the world.”

Broader market suffered lesser damages with BSE Mid-cap index down 0.93 per cent and BSE Small-cap index down by 0.76 per cent.

All sectoral indices on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) barring telecom and capital goods closed in the red led by the financials. BSE Bankex index closed 2.28 per down cent and Nifty Bank fell 2.17 per cent.

The top losers in the Sensex basket included IndusInd Bank(-3.45 per cent), HDFC(-3.44), ICICI Bank(-3.34), HDFC Bank(-2.27), Bajaj Finance(-2.41) and Tech Mahindra(-3.00 per cent).

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) turned net sellers by ₹1130.98 crore on Wednesday after aggressive buying on Tuesday of equities worth ₹3,590 crore.

GAMES

Surya power

Yadav turns on heat as Mumbai bust RCB

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 28: Mumbai Indians defeated Royal Challengers Bangalore by five wickets in an IPL game here on Wednesday to all but qualify for the play-offs.

Put in to bat, Royal Challengers Bangalore scored 164 for 6 in the allotted 20 overs.

In reply, MI chased down the target of 165 with five balls to spare. Suryakumar Yadav led the charge with an unbeaten 79 off 43 balls that included 10 fours and three sixes.

Earlier, young Devdutt Padikkal pummelled the Mumbai Indians attack into submission with a 45-ball 74 before Jasprit Bumrah stopped Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Put in to bat, Padikkal, who plundered 12 fours and a six, added 71 runs for the opening wicket with Josh Philippe (33).

However, the RCB then suffered a middle-order collapse as Mumbai roared back into the game with lead pacer Bumrah (3/14) doing the bulk of damage.

Padikkal began with a boundary over deep extra cover and then struck successive fours off Krunal Pandya, as RCB fetched 12 runs in the third over. The two openers continued playing their shots, the highlight being Philippe's six over Trent Boult's head in the fifth over.

Padikkal then went on the offensive against James Pattinson.



Suryakumar Yadav of Mumbai Indians plays a shot against Royal Challengers Bangalore during their IPL match at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Josh Philippe st de Kock b Chahar 33, Devdutt Padikkal c Boult b Bumrah 74, Virat Kohli c Tiwary b Bumrah 9, AB de Villiers c Chahar b Pollard 15, Shivam Dube c Yadav b Bumrah 2, Chris Morris c Pattinson b Boult 4, Gurkeerat Singh Mann not out 14, Washington Sundar not out 10. Extras (W-3) 3. Total (for 6 wickets in 20 overs) 164.

FoW: 1-71, 2-95, 3-131, 4-134, 5-134, 6-138.

Bowling: Trent Boult 4-0-40-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-1-14-3, Krunal Pandya 4-0-27-0, James Pattinson 3-0-35-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-43-1,

Kieron Pollard 1-0-5-1. **Mumbai Indians:** Q de Kock c Gurkeerat b Siraj 18, Ishan Kishan c Morris b Chahal 25, Suryakumar Yadav not out 79, S. Tiwary c Padikkal b Siraj 5, K. Pandya c Morris b Chahal 10, H. Pandya c Siraj b Morris 17, Pollard not out 4. Extras (LB-2, W-6) 8. Total (for 5 wickets in 19.1 overs) 166.

FoW: 1-37, 2-52, 3-72, 4-107, 5-158.

Bowling: Chris Morris 4-0-36-1, Dale Steyn 4-0-43-0, Washington Sundar 4-0-20-0, Mohammed Siraj 3.1-0-28-2, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-37-2.

IPL POINTS TABLE						
Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	12	8	4	0	16	+1.186
Royal Challengers Bangalore	12	7	5	0	14	+0.048
Delhi Capitals	12	7	5	0	14	+0.030
Kings XI Punjab	12	6	6	0	12	-0.049
Kolkata Knight Riders	12	6	6	0	12	-0.479
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	5	7	0	10	+0.396
Rajasthan Royals	12	5	7	0	10	-0.505
Chennai Super Kings	12	4	8	0	6	-0.602

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

Clear mind is my strength: Rashid

Dubai, Oct. 28: Sunrisers Hyderabad leg-spinner Rashid Khan says a clear mind is his biggest strength and he reaped the rewards for focussing on bowling more dot balls against DC in their IPL match here.

Going into Tuesday's do-or-die contest against DC, SRH registered a comfortable 88-run win to stay alive in the race for the play-offs. Rashid returned with incredible figures of 4-0-7-3 to make a significant contribution in Sunrisers' win.

“I just go with a clear mind, that's my biggest strength. I want to bowl a good line and length, no



Rashid Khan

matter the situation. You have to mix up and play with the batsman's mind, and see the weak zone and strong zone...So I keep those things in mind,” Rashid said.

The Afghan bowled 17 dot balls in his four-over quota.

— PTI

Ousted CSK look to halt Knights

Dubai, Oct. 28: Already out of play-offs reckoning, a relaxed CSK are ready to play party-poopers with an aim to foil KKR's desperate bid for a victory in an IPL game on Thursday.

KKR with 12 points from 12 games would like to win the next two encounters to ensure a smooth passage while CSK, currently at the bottom of the eight-team table, are only playing for pride.

A possibility remains that multiple teams will end up on either 16 or 14 points and a comprehensive victory at this stage of the tournament, will bring the super-or net run-rate into equation when the play-off spots are decided.

It won't get too easy for KKR against CSK, who handed an eight-wicket thrashing to RCB in their previous outing.

KKR's unsettled batting order is a point of concern for Eoin Morgan, who would hope that Dinesh Karthik produces his A game when it matters most. They need to be at the top of their game against the CSK batting unit that has been frustratingly inconsistent

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL:

- Matches: 21
- Chennai: 13
- Kolkata: 8

MEETING IN 2019

- Chennai Super Kings beat Kolkata Knight Riders by 7 wickets at Chennai
- Chennai Super Kings defeated Kolkata Knight Riders by 5 wickets at Kolkata

MEETING IN 2020

- Kolkata Knight Riders beat Chennai Super Kings by 10 runs at Abu Dhabi

FOR THE RECORD

- Rahul Tripathi scored 81 off 51 balls with eighth fours and three sixes against Chennai Super Kings in the first meeting at Dubai.
- Faf du Plessis with 401 runs in 12 innings of as many matches, is the fifth highest run-getter in this IPL.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

ANOTHER WARM-UP TIE FOR INDIA IN OZ

Melbourne, Oct. 28: The Indian cricket team will get an additional Day/Night warm-up game in Sydney as a tune-up to the series-opening Pink Ball Test against Australia in Adelaide from December 17, the host board announced on Wednesday. The tour will include a 14-day quarantine-cum-training period in Sydney starting November 12 for the Indians who will fly in after the IPL final on November 10. The Border-Gavaskar Trophy will begin with a day-night encounter at the Adelaide Oval on December 17.

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Editor: **KAUSHIK MITTER**

City trounce Marseille, Reds rock

Paris, Oct. 28: Holders Bayern Munich continued their perfect start to their Champions League title defence on Tuesday as Real Madrid had Casemiro's late goal to thank for scrambling a 2-2 draw away to Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Liverpool and Manchester City also made it six points out of a possible six in Europe this season, after Bayern needed a late Joshua Kimmich strike to claim a 2-1 win at Lokomotiv Moscow in Group 'A'.

Leon Goretzka put the Germans ahead early on in front of a limited crowd in the Russian capital, but Anton Miranchuk tucked in an equaliser for Lokomotiv in the second half — Miranchuk's twin brother Aleksei scored for Atalanta in the Champions League last



Mohamed Salah (right) of Liverpool in action against FC Midtjylland during their Champions League match at Anfield stadium in Liverpool on Tuesday. — AFP

week. But Bayern were not to be denied a record 13th straight win in the competition as Kimmich controlled a Javi Martinez pass and volleyed home low from outside the box 11 minutes from time.

Meanwhile, Pep Guardiola's City eased to a second straight win in Group C with Kevin De Bruyne setting up Ferran Torres for the early opener against Marseille after the hosts had carelessly ceded

possession. Ilkay Gundogan and Raheem Sterling added late goals to make it 3-0, leaving Marseille without a point. In another match Liverpool defeated Danish champions Midtjylland 2-0

at Anfield in Group D. Diogo Jota finished off a fine move to give Jurgen Klopp's team the lead early in the second half, before Mohamed Salah made sure of the points with a late penalty. — AFP

THE RESULTS			
Manchester City (Torres 18, Gundogan 76, Sterling 81)	3	Atletico Madrid (Marcos Llorente 29, Joao Felix 52, 85)	3
Marseille	0	Salzburg (Dominik Szoboszlai 40, Felipe 47-OG)	2
Liverpool (Jota 55, Salah 90+2-pen)	2	Bayern Munich (Leon Goretzka 13, Joshua Kimmich 79)	2
Midtjylland	0	Lokomotiv Moscow (Anton Miranchuk 70)	1
Real Madrid (Benzema 87, Casemiro 90+3)	2	Inter Milan	0
Borussia Moenchengladbach (Thuram 33, 58)	2	Shakhtar Donetsk	0