


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
NELLORE | TUESDAY | 13 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 31.7°C

Min: 25.6°C

RH: 90%

Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: clear.

Max/Min temp. 31/25°C

COVID-19

COUNT

CASES

(+58,967)

71,73,069

DEATHS

(+765)

1,09,892

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+1,021)

TS: 2,13,084

(+3,000)

AP: 7,58,951

(+6)

1,228

(+32)

6,256

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

3,79,48,409

DEATHS

10,83,890

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana

Tithi: Adhika Ashwayuja Bahula Ekadasi till 2.29 pm

Star: Magha till 10.49 pm

Varjyam: 11.37 am to 1.06 pm; 6.04 am to 7.31 am (Wednesday)

Durmuhurtam: 8.32 am to 9.19 am; 10.48 pm to 11.37 pm

Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HIJRI CALENDAR

Safar ul Muzaffar 25, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

(SHAHI MASJID)

Fajar: 4.50 am

Zohar: 11.56 pm

Asar: 4.14 pm

Maghrib: 5.53 pm

Isha: 7.03 pm


SUNSET TODAY 5.51 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.01 AM

MOONRISE TOMORROW 2.21 AM

MOONSET TODAY 4.09 PM

COUNTER POINT



His body doubles are wearing masks and out campaigning!

IN BRIEF

Neet aspirants get 2nd chance in Oct

New Delhi:

The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the National Testing Agency to conduct second round of the NEET (UG) for the Covid-19 affected students and those in containment zones on October 14. A bench headed by Chief Justice S.A. Bobde passed the order after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta sought the top court's nod in the issue citing special circumstances due to the Coronavirus pandemic. "In view of circumstances, we grant permission to the NTA to conduct a second part of the NEET for the Covid affected students and those in containment zones on October 14, 2020," it said.

CAPTIVES | FREE

V. K. L. GAYATRI | DC

VISAKHAPATNAM/NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

After gap of one month, the family members of B. Danayya, B. Venkata Rao and B. Jogarao, slept well on Sunday night, after they got information that their bread-winners are coming back safely from Libya. Danayya, Venkata Rao and Joga Rao were kidnapped, along with four others, at Asshwerif, in Libya on September 14, while they were on their

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BJP's Phase-II picks in Bihar upper castes

WORLD | 5

China to test 9 mn in 5 days for Covid

SPORTS | 8

Los Angeles Lakers win NBA title

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Vol. 18 No. 98 Established 1938 | 16 pages | ₹6.00

Central govt staff offered LTC sop, festival advance

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO
NEW DELHI, OCT 12

The Centre on Monday announced a slew of booster shots for both government employees and states to prop up demand, in terms of consumer spending and capital expenditure. It said the demand boost is estimated to be a total of ₹73,000 crore and that it should be spent till March 31, 2021. The Centre expects the demand to go up by ₹1 lakh crore if the states join the exercise.

The two schemes — LTC Cash Voucher Scheme and Special Festival Advance Scheme — are expected to benefit Central government staff. Under the LTC Cash

CONSENSUS ELUDES GST COUNCIL AGAIN

New Delhi: The stalemate over compensating states for the shortfall in GST collections continued on Monday.

■ **Report on Page 7**

Voucher scheme, government employees can opt to receive cash amounts for leave encashment plus three times the ticket fare, to buy items which attract GST of 12 per cent or more on only digital transactions, and a GST invoice will have to be produced from the vendors.

Under the Special Festival Advance

scheme, the money will be given to employees as a prepaid RuPay card. The amount granted is ₹10,000 crore.

For the states, the Centre will offer interest-free 50-year loans to the tune of ₹12,000 crore. It will consist of three components. The first part is ₹2,500 crore for the Northeast (₹1,600 crore), and ₹9,000 crore for Uttarakhand and HP. The second part involves ₹7,500 crore for other states in proportion to their share in the Finance Commission's devolution. The last part is ₹2,000 crore for states that meet at least three out of four reforms mentioned under the Atmanirbhar fiscal deficit package.

In protest

A protest organised by the Thiruvananthapuram Forane and Archeparchy of Changnacherry in front of the accountant generals office in the city against the arrest of 83-year-old activist Stan Swami by the NIA in the Bhima Koregaon case, in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday.

— PTI

HC orders CBI probe on anti-judiciary posts online

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

The AP High Court has ordered a probe by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the defamatory posts on social media against the court and its judges.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Rakesh Kumar and Justice J. Umadevi issued the order during a virtual hearing held on Monday stating, "Without going into merits of the case or without recording any observations against either of the parties, we propose to entrust all the matters to an agency, namely, Central Bureau of Investigation, which is fairly fit, having wider scope for investigation as agreed by all parties."

The High Court further observed: "Persons occupying high posts are indulging in waging war against the judicial system, oblivious of the fact that even their entity exists since there is a democratic system in our country.

In a democratic state, if such war is initiated against the judicial system by persons holding high positions, it will certainly create unnecessary doubt in the mind of citizen against the judicial system, which may cripple the entire system."

The court asked the CBI to register more FIRs and bring the investigation to its logical end. The court further wanted the CBI to examine whether or not such attacks on judiciary were made as a result of larger conspiracy. It

opined that if that was the case, the agency is required to take appropriate action against such culprits, irrespective of the post and position they hold.

The High Court directed the CBI to take steps so that all defamatory posts available on social media are struck down and such users are blocked in accordance with the law.

The court asked the AP government to ensure full cooperation and provide all logistical support to the CBI.

The court directed the CBI to submit its report in a sealed cover to the court within eight weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of the order. It posted the next hearing of the case to December 14.

■ **Page 2: Court counsel found leaders spared**

Heavy rains batter AP, 2 die in Visakhapatnam

IMD warns of more rains in coastal areas over 24 hrs

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 12

Heavy rains caused by a deep depression in the Bay of Bengal battered north coastal Andhra, the coastal districts and parts of Telangana state on Monday.

The deep depression has moved in a west-northwest direction at a speed of about three kilometres per hour in the last six hours.

The system now lies 250 km southeast of Visakhapatnam, 320 km east-southeast of Kakinada and 360 km east-southeast from Narsapur.

It will continue to move in the west-northwest direction and make landfall south of Kakinada in the early hours of Tuesday.

People in Visakhapatnam recalled the Supercyclone Hudhud, which ravaged the city on this day in 2014. A pregnant woman and her two-year-old son died when boulders crashed on their house in Gajuwaka, Visakhapatnam city. Low-lying areas in many parts of the city were inundated making it difficult for commuters to reach homes.

Reports from Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said there could be

Women join hands as they cross the waterlogged junction on the national highway near Tatichetlapalem in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— P. NARASIMHA MURTHY

more rains and stormy winds in the cities of coastal AP during the next 24 hours, including East and West Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam and Kakinada.

During the last 24 hours, Bhimili received the highest rainfall of 17.5 cms followed by Visakhapatnam city 15.42 cms, Visakhapatnam rural 14.05

cms, Kakinada 13.95 cms, Peddapuram 13.02 cms and Amakapalle 10.06 cms.

The system will weaken to depression and low pressure and move to Maharashtra while Telangana state is likely to get heavy rains, the reports said.

Minister for agriculture and in-charge for State NDRF, K. Kannababu, held a review meeting with offi-

cials here in the presence of minister Muttamsetti Srinivas and senior officials.

Local cautionary signal number three was hoisted at Kalingapatnam, Bheemunipatnam, Visakhapatnam, Gangavaram, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, Nizampatnam, Krishnapatnam and Vadarevu ports.

3 teachers booked as 13 students join militant ranks

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 12

Three teachers of a private school in Jammu and Kashmir's southern Shopian district have been booked under stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) after the discovery that 13 of its students joined militants' ranks over a period of time.

One of them is Sajjad Bhat, an accused in the February 2019 bombing of a convoy of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in neighbouring Pulwama in which 40 jawans were killed and eight others wounded.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range), Vijay Kumar, told reporters here that during the investigation by it and other security and law enforcing agencies it was found that 13 of the alumni of Siraj-ul-Uloom schools situated in Shopian's Imam Sahib area and affiliated with Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), had joined various militant outfits. The three teachers who have been detained under the PSA are Abdul Ahad Bhat, Rouf Bhat and Mohammad Yusuf Wani, he said.

However, the sources said that the school is run by a local trust called Siraj-ul-Uloom Educational Trust which incidentally

is, at present, being headed by a JI member Muhammad Yusuf Mantu.

A JI official claimed that the school has nothing to do with the organisation or its subsidiary Falah-e-Aam Trust which runs a chain of schools across J&K.

Under the PSA, introduced in J&K in 1978 initially to deal with timber smuggling but later used by successive governments often against their political opponents, a person can be detained for a period of six months to two years without the authorities seeking a formal trial.

The Centre had in February 2019 through a notification declared JI, Jammu and Kashmir as "unlawful association" for five years under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Also, the rightwing party's almost entire leadership and hundreds of members were arrested and subsequently many of them booked under the PSA. The police sources said that the students enrolled at the school were mainly from Kulgam, Pulwama and Anantnag districts of Kashmir Valley which with Shopian have been the hotbed of insurgency over a period of time and witnessed spurt in recruitment of local youths by various militant outfits

after the killing of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen's internet savvy commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani in July 2016.

The sources said that the schools had outstation students from Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Telangana, but their number dropped to almost nil after the Centre stripped J&K of its special status and split it up into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

IG Kumar said, "The school's name is Siraj-ul-Uloom, Imam Sahib. It is not that this school has not been under observation. We have already booked three teachers of the school under the PSA."

He added that five to six other teachers of the school were under surveillance of the police under Section 107 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and that the police are taking action against individuals and "if need arises, we will take action against the school as well."

The Section 107 of the CrPC deals with any likely breach of peace or public tranquility.

The other alumni of the school who, according to the police, joined militants' ranks included Zubair Nengroo, a commander of the proscribed Al-Badr outfit killed in a clash with security forces in August.

LeT's Pak commander, aide killed in encounter

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 12

A Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) commander from Pakistan and his local associate were gunned down by the security forces in a fire fight that broke out early Monday in Srinagar's Barzulla area.

A private house where the duo had been holed up following the security forces launched a cordon-and-search operation in the area was destroyed as it caught fire in the latter's

final assault. J&K's Director General of Police Dilbag Singh claimed at a hurriedly called press conference that the slain Pakistan militant commander Saifullah was involved in a series of attacks on security forces including the ambushes that took place in and outside Srinagar past fortnight, leaving several security forces personnel dead and injured.

The other militant killed in the encounter has been identified as Irshad Ahmed

Dar alias Abu Usama, a resident of southern Pulwama district, "who was active since May 2019 and involved in several civilian killings and attacks on the J&K police and central security forces."

The police chief said that, so far, this year the security forces have conducted 75 counter-insurgency operations across J&K during which as many as 180 militants including several top commanders of various outfits were killed.

BORDER ROW CREATED ON MISSION MODE, SAYS RAJNATH

DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

After Pakistan, China is also creating a dispute at the border with India as if it was part of a "mission", defence minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday, as Indian and Chinese troops remain locked in a standoff in eastern Ladakh for over five months.

The defence minister, speaking at an online event after inaugurating 44 bridges, said India is not only facing the situations along the frontiers resolutely, but it is also bringing in major development including in border areas. "You are well aware of the conditions created along our northern and eastern borders. First it was Pakistan, and now also by China, as if a border dispute is being created under a mission. We have a border of about 7,000 km with these countries where the tension continues," Singh said.

The defence minister on Monday virtually inaugurated 44 major permanent bridges in the border areas including 10 strategic bridges in J&K and eight in Ladakh. These bridges constructed by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) are spread in seven states and Union Territories including Himachal Pradesh (2), Punjab (4), Uttarakhand (8), Arunachal Pradesh (8) and Sikkim (4). These bridges are of strategic importance and provide connectivity to remote areas. The BRO is also working to complete 45 more bridges in Ladakh in next two years.

These are part of Modi government's effort to speed up infrastructure development in border areas for rapid movement of forces and faster supply of ammunition to forward areas. A majority of these bridges are expected to significantly improve movement of troops in areas along the border with China.

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SHORT TAKES

WELDERS CALLED FAMILY IN SEPTEMBER

FROM PAGE 1

The three workers had called up their family members on September 13 and informed that they were coming back shortly. After that, there was no communication from them till the families were told on September 17 that they had been kidnapped.

The families were glued to their phones for information and relatives, police, officials, and politicians visited their houses daily to pacify them.

B. Sudhakar, Venkata Rao's father, said, "Really, it is a re-birth for my son. Thanks to the government for their timely response. For the last month, we have had hardly any sleep and were constantly looking for information.

Danayya and Venkata Rao are relatives, said Jogarao's father, Gandhi.

Thanks to the police, MPs and ministers who regularly monitored with the government and also visited our families, he added.

ENSURE PIPED WATER IN SCHOOLS: GUV

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan directed officials to expedite supply of piped water to schools and anganwadi centres under Jal Jeevan Mission in the state.

The Governor reviewed the implementation of the 100 days campaign under Jal Jeevan Mission with Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney and other senior officials through a video link on Monday.

He stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the Mission in all the States and Union Territories on October 2 to ensure piped water to schools and AWCs so that children stay healthy.

He explained that 'Har Ghar Jal' was intended to provide safe and adequate potable water through taps in every household as children were vulnerable to water-borne diseases like typhoid, dysentery, diarrhea and cholera. He said that consumption of potable water would help avoid such health problems.

NO ONE IS ABOVE LAW: CHIEF WHIP SRIKANTH REDDY

NAGESWARA RAO BALLED I
DC
KADAPA, OCT. 12

Government Chief Whip Gadikota Srikanth Reddy on Monday stated that the government, administration and judiciary must be treated impartially and none was above the other.

Speaking to the media in Rayachoti, he said a recent development was being blown out of proportion while no part of the system can work unilaterally and against the interests of the people. He said that no one was above law and justice should prevail irrespective of the stature of the individual.

He said a man who served as Advocate General was found guilty and the CID filed a case against him. The son of a Chief Justice was accused of violating the law, he said.

He wanted to know if it was right to issue a gag order when things point at criminal manipulations.

He said people should have the power to question when the Prime Minister or a Chief Minister commit mistakes. Why should someone fear when there is talk of inquiry, he asked.

FARMERS TOLD NOT TO GROW TOBACCO

VADREU SRINIVAS | DC
ELURU, OCT. 12

Housing minister, Cherukuvada Srranganatha Raju, said that the farmers should be weaned away from tobacco crop cultivation and encouraged to raise alternative crops.

Participating in the agriculture advisory board meeting held here on Monday, Raju said that there was no demand for tobacco world-wide as governments were not encouraging tobacco products in view of people's health and India is also discouraging the crop.

Indian tobacco is decreasing and over-dependence of tobacco as a commercial crop is not advisable, said Mr Raju.

Cargo-handling ops halted in Kakinada

All reservoirs and lakes were full to the brim and fields were inundated with rainwaters

VADREU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, OCT. 12

Incessant rains due to the depression in the Bay of Bengal disrupted normal life on Monday in East and West Godavari districts and cargo-handling operations were halted in both the deep water as well as the anchorage port on the Kakinada coast.

Twenty ships in the two ports were stranded. The authorities closed the Kakinada-Uppada beach road to traffic, taking the precautionary step as the sea was rough and the Indian Meteorological Department had predicted that the depression will cross the Kakinada-Yanam coast in the early hours of Tuesday with a wind speed of 55-75 kmph.

All reservoirs and lakes were full to the brim and fields were inundated with rainwaters. Fields under Yeleru ayacut have been inundated for almost one month due to floods and depression. The heavy rains on Sunday and Monday ruined the remaining crops.

The authorities shifted 270 families, including 70 families from hope island and 200 families in Phule colony in Kakinada to safer places and they have been provided shelter in a high school in the city. Two shops in a municipal shopping complex at Peddapuram collapsed due to heavy rains.

East Godavari recorded 5,006.8 mm rainfall with an average of 78.2 mm and Kakinada Urban recorded highest rainfall with 182.6 mm. Roads were flooded, disrupting traffic. People were forced to stay indoors.

According to sources, non-Basmati rice and broken rice, exported to East African countries, were being loaded into eight ships. The heavy rain halted the handling operations and the steel barges were brought back and anchored at the jetties. At the deep water port, cargo like granite, fertiliser, sugar, liquids were being

unloaded but these were also stopped, said an official of the Kakinada Sea Port Limited. Reservoirs like Yeleru, Pampa, Maddigadda, Subbareddy and others are flowing at full levels and officials discharged surplus waters downstream. At the Dowleswaram barrage, officials discharged 1,63,488 cusecs of surplus water and say that it may



Motorists have a tough-time to move on the road as a huge branch of a tree fell due to depression over the Bay of Bengal in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— K. MURALIKRISHNA

WOMAN WASHED AWAY IN RIVULET

Kadapa: Rajeshwari, a woman from Dappelpalli village in Lakkireddypalli mandal of Kadapa district, got washed away in a rivulet that she was crossing on Sunday evening. There have been heavy rains since past two days in the district because of

which all rivulets are in flood. Villagers and relatives of Rajeshwari searched for her but could not find her anywhere. Her body was found floating in an irrigation tank near the village on Monday morning. Police have filed a case.

be increased to 2.5 lakh on Tuesday and Wednesday due to heavy rains upstream.

Joint collector G. Lakshmisha reviewed the situation and instructed officials to be available to the people and take up assistance work in their respective areas, if necessary. He said that special steps were being taken in coastal villages and if the

roads are damaged, they should be replaced on a war footing.

Cyclone shelters have been set up in the Konaseema area and NDRF and SDRF teams are available in emergencies. Lakshmisha said that a call centre was set up in the collectorate at Kakinada to work round the clock. He requested people to be alert on the heavy rains and take precautionary steps.

Agriculture minister, Kurasala Kannababu, visited the inundated fields at Vakada and Vemulavada villages in Karapa mandal and enquired about the situation with the farmers. He said that thousands of acres of crops were inundated due to the rains in the state and crop loss would be estimated.

11 CONTROL ROOMS SET UP IN PRAKASAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, OCT. 12

In view of the rain warning in coastal Andhra Pradesh, revenue officials advised fisherfolk to avoid venturing into the sea in Prakasam district.

Control rooms have been established at 11 coastal mandals and rehabilitation centres are being readied to deal with any eventuality.

Revenue divisional officer of Ongole, Prabhakar Reddy, said they have set up a control room at the RDO office.

Farmers complete 300 days stir

DC CORRESPONDENTS
VIJAYAWADA/KAKINADA/
KADAPA, OCT. 12

FROM PAGE 1

Earlier, the High Court said that though Advocate-General S. Sriram had agreed to entrust the investigation to other investigating agency, he had raised serious objections on submission of certain documents by the court's counsel N. Ashwani Kumar pertaining to statements made by the Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram, Deputy CM K. Narayana Swamy and MP V. Vijaya Sai Reddy on the ground that they were not arrayed as parties in the writ petition nor those facts were corroborated.

Ashwini Kumar, in his petition submitted earlier, mentioned that the CID was taking a different stand in cases related to attack on the High Court and its judges. He said that in case of any offensive posts against the government, CID was registering FIRs and arresting the accused immediately.

He stated that in case of posts against the High Court, the CID added only a few persons as accused in FIRs, while trying to shield or save accused persons who are influential.

COURT COUNSEL FOUND LEADERS SPARED

FROM PAGE 1

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BUGGANA SEEKS EARLY RELEASE OF IGST ARREARS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

Minister for finance Buggana Rajendranath appealed to the Centre to release arrears of Integrated Goods and Service Tax at an early date.

The minister took part in the 42nd GST Council meet held virtually from New Delhi chaired by the Union minister for finance Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday.



TD leader and MLC Nara Lokesh addresses the farmers at Mandadam in Guntur district on Monday.

— TEJO ROY ELETIC

youth, who were relentlessly continuing their protest seeking Amaravati to be the capital city for AP despite being implicated in police cases, arrests and humiliation.

He turned critical of the Chief Minister Y.S. JaganMohan Reddy for reneging on his word to support Amaravati as the capital city for AP and alleged that the CM was trying to take revenge against the former CM and his father N. Chandrababu Naidu by relocating it.

Referring to the allegations of insider trading

and attribution of caste in development of Amaravati, he said that the YSR Congress government had failed to prove its charges and slammed the government for failing to take up developmental works in the state.

He found fault with the CM for failing to pay a visit to Amaravati even as 92 farmers had sacrificed their lives for the capital city. He reiterated that they were committed for Amaravati to be the capital city for AP for comprehensive development of the state.

In Rajahmundry, mem-

bers of Amaravati Parirakshana Samiti joint action committee staged a protest at Kotipalli Bus Stand Centre. Rajahmundry rural MLA Buchaiah Choudhary called upon the CM to give up his three capitals as a large number of people were staging protests against relocation of the capital city from Amaravati for the last 300 days and demanded justice to them.

In Kakinada, political JAC member Gadula Saibaba flayed the state government for attributing caste to the ongoing aviation by the people at Amaravati.

In Kadapa, local TD leaders staged a protest at Sub Collector's office. They submitted a representation to the Sub Collector, seeking continuation of Amaravati as AP's capital city. Several leaders including Govardhan Reddy, Pothuganti Peeraya, Janardhan and Yatagiri Ram Prasad laid stress on the part of the state government to develop Amaravati as the capital.

Boulders crash into house, 2 die

K.M.P. PATNAIK I DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 12

Boulders crashed into a small asbestos house on the foothills in Gajuwaka instantly killing a pregnant woman and her three-year-old son.

The boulders slipped due to heavy rain caused by the depression in the Bay of Bengal. The incident took place on Sunday night when the family was asleep. Two more persons of the same family sustained injuries.

The deceased were identified as Ramalakshmi, said to be in an advanced state of pregnancy and her son, Gnaneswar.

The police, with the support of fire service personnel and local people, retrieved the bodies from the spot and shifted them to the government hospital morgue for post-mortem. The injured persons were taken to a nearby private hospital for treatment. Heavy rains have been lashing parts of Vizag city since Sunday.

In December 2015, four people belonging to two families were crushed to death when a huge boulder broke off from the hill abutting their house at Sanjeevaiah Nagar Colony of the Thatichetlapalem area in Vizag City following heavy rain.

Land shrinks in CK Dinne mandal

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA I DC
KADAPA, OCT. 12

A 20-metre deep ditch was formed due to the heavy rains at a farm near Bhirkakhan village in Chintakommandine (CK Dinne) mandal of Kadapa district on Monday.

Trenches have been formed in the area several times in the past.

Farmers who went to their fields on Monday morning noticed the huge pit that was filled with water. There were continuous rains for the past two days and the land was soaking wet.

On August 25, 2019, there was a 100-foot pit formed at Ippapenta village in CK Dinne mandal. Mining and geology department officials and scientists had inspected the spot and said there were huge



deposits of limestone reserves.

The limestone layer undergoes a chemical reaction when rain falls in the area. When acidic rain falls limestone reacts to the acid forming precipitations, they said. Due to certain factors, voids can be formed. It is unavoidable and farmers and nearby villagers were advised to be cautious.

CM holds review meet on power

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN I
DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy directed officials to ensure quality and uninterrupted nine-hour power supply to farmers during daytime to help them raise crops in the state.

He held a review meeting on free power supply to farmers with the minister for energy Balineni Srinivasa Reddy and senior officials here on Monday. He laid stress on bringing awareness among farmers that they would not be charged even after fixing electric metres to their pump sets.

Explaining about the benefits of fixing metres to agriculture pump sets, remittance of power bill amounts directly into the bank accounts of farmers, who in turn, would pay to Discoms, he felt the need to highlight such issues for the benefit to farmers and people. He

● The CM laid stress on bringing awareness among farmers that they would not be charged even after fixing metres

also called for dispelling apprehensions about free power supply.

He directed officials to maintain ISI standards for power transformers, electric metres, motors and capacitors and asked them to approach Central agency Energy Efficiency Services Limited.

Meanwhile, the officials informed that they had informed farmers that they would not face any financial burden for fixing of electric metres to their pump sets and said that they have trained 14,353 linemen.

The officials said that they had prepared bid documents for installation of 10,000 MP solar power plants and assured that once the judicial preview was over, they would call for tenders.

PARTY | TIME

Russian women hosting VIP parties is quite common these days, says Raghu

MP confirms woman served him champagne

AVINASH P.
SUBRAMANYAM | DC
TIRUPATI, OCT. 12

YSR Congress rebel MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju once again courted a controversy when a photo, shot at a private party, showing a Russian lady pouring champagne in his mouth, went viral on social media.

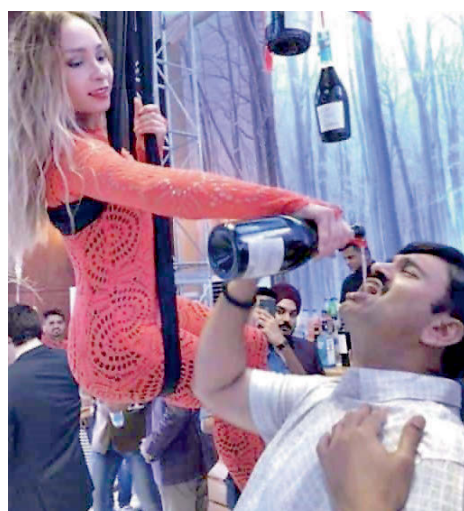
The Narasapuram MP gave a clarification on this while addressing media-persons in New Delhi on Monday. He confirmed that it was him in the picture and the photograph was taken about two or three years back at a private party either in Kolkata or Hyderabad.

Mr Raju said, "An MP from the Telugu states hosted a party for his son.

I graced the party along with several other politicians. The picture was taken when everyone was in a partying mood. Many politicians drank champagne served by the Russian," he added.

Maintaining that there is nothing wrong in the picture as Russian women hosting VIP parties is quite common these days, he clarified that champagne is not alcohol and he did not drink any cheap liquor sold by the YSRC government.

"I have forwarded this photo to more than 500 people in the past. I think Subba Reddy or some other critic of mine could have circulated the picture now to malign my name. What's the big deal in it? I did nothing wrong," he



A file photo of Russian woman pouring champagne in the mouth of the MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju gone viral on social media.

and had seen abusive posts on social media against him. "YSRC supporters having profile pictures of

minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and MP Avinash Reddy have been sharing the photo with abusive comments against me. I have saved those profiles and contact numbers of people, who may be 'devotees' of YSRC leaders, and filed a police complaint against them," he added.

Alleging that there is no law and order in AP, he said that he had filed a police complaint, hoping that police will take strict action against those who posted abusive comments against him. He also said that he will approach the Delhi police, as the incidents happened when he was in the national capital and they will take stern action against those who abused him on WhatsApp and

social media. When *Deccan Chronicle* contacted a couple of YSRC MPs for their reaction to the photo, they refused to comment. The photo, however, garnered trolls and reactions by netizens across AP.

People took to the micro-blogging site and shared it with funny captions. A user wrote in Telugu on MPs recent Facebook post: "Sir, miru Delhi nunchi vechepudu oka full bottle thisukuni randi", which means "Sir, bring a full bottle when you are coming from Delhi".

Another user also dared the MP to resign for his post and re-contest from his constituency. The user also exuded confidence that he would defeat Ramakrishna Raju.

IN BRIEF

More facilities at Nagaravanam

Nellore: Food parks and wash-rooms are being planned at the wildlife parks in Nellore district including the Nagara Vanam (City Forest) project coming up near Nellore. A Yoga centre and Children's play area also being established at the Nagara Vanam. Divisional Forest Officer, Nellore, Shanmukha Kumar has explained about their plans to the district Collector KVN Chakradhar Babu during the latter's visit to Nagara Vanam located in the outskirts of the City in Podalakur Road on Monday. After inspecting the facilities in the office in Nagara Vanam, the Collector said the place is going to be a boon for the people of the city to unwind during week-ends and holidays. He said they would develop the area as a tourist attraction.

1 dies as lorry hits car

Nellore: In a ghastly road accident, one person killed on the spot and three others injured critically when their Bolero car hit a lorry from behind while overtaking a truck on the national highway near Manubolu during the early hours of Monday. The deceased has been identified as Satyanarayana Reddy, 40, and the injured as Gopi, Anil Kumar and Yella Reddy of Narasaraopeta in Guntur district. The mishap took place when they were returning to Narasaraopeta from Chennai. Manubolu SI Suryaprakash Reddy and Gudur rural Circle Inspector P. Srinivasa Reddy rushed to the spot. They shifted the injured to the government hospital in Nellore.

2 nabbed, 7 red sanders logs seized

Tirupati: Two smugglers were nabbed and seven red sander logs were seized in a pre-dawn operation by the task force in the Chitticherla beat of the Bakarapeta forests, located 15 km away from the Bakarapeta town in Chittoor district, on Monday. The arrested smugglers were identified as Perumal Kasi (35) and Chella Perumal (29), both hailing from Jamuna Muthur under Tiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu state, said the task force DSP Mr Venkataiah. Disclosing the details to media persons, the DSP said, acting on a tip-off task force team led by RSI Lingadhar and Vasu started a combing operation from Devarakonda to Bakarapeta forest limits on Sunday evening. The teams have encountered eight smugglers carrying the logs near Chitticherla forest beat by late Sunday. "When the team advanced to nab the smugglers, they fled deep into the forest, leaving behind the logs. The team, however, managed to nab two smugglers, who during the interrogation disclosed that a person named Raj Kumar had deputed them into the forest six days ago to smuggle red sanders logs," the DSP added.

Sirimanu fete: Tree cutting ritual starts

Visakhapatnam: The first ritual of the Sri Pyditalli Ammavari, the presiding deity of Vizianagaram, Sirimonotsavam was performed to the identified 30 ft tree in Balarampuram village in Jami mandal on Monday. Sirimonotsavam is one of the biggest festivals in the north coastal region. The temple priests would select a big tree in the district every year and after performing special prayers, the tree would be cut and a 30 ft wood log would be made as Sirimanu. This year, the tree identified in Balarampuram village in Jami mandal. Temple priest Bantupalli Venkata Rao along with the other performed special rituals. Later, he directed some of the villagers to cut the tree. After cutting the tree, it was shifted to Vizianagaram and would be made as Sirimanu for the three-day festival to be held from October 27.

Offender held, ₹1L property seized

Nellore: The Komarolu police in Prakasam district recovered property worth ₹1.03 lakhs worth from an accused involved in four property offences under the limits of various police stations in Prakasam district. According to Sub Division Police Officer of Markapur, G. Nageswar Reddy, Komorolu SI V. Samba Sivaiah picked up the accused identified as Bijjigalla Lingamaiah, 29, from Dream Restaurant in Komarolu on Monday for questioning as part of an operation to verify the bonafides of strangers. The accused belongs to G. Jammuladinne village in Allagadda mandal of Kurnool district.

No Corona to protest

Students, under the aegis of SFI, stage protest against the government demanding abolishing the degree examination in the wake of the pandemic, outside the AU Registrar Office in Visakhapatnam on Monday.

— P. NARASIMHA MURTHY

Covid-19: AP records 3,224 cases in 24 hours

Over 1,24,171 samples were tested for 1 mn population

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

Andhra Pradesh recorded a steep fall in the fresh Covid-19 positive cases on Monday. Over 3,224 Covid cases were registered against the average cases of over 5,000 per day in the last few days.

The state health authorities released Covid-19 bulletin here this morning stating that out of 61,112 samples tested, 3,224 individuals tested positive taking the tally to 7,58,951 and 32 deaths increasing the toll to 6,256 in the last 24 hours.

The state tested 66,30,728 samples so far and of them, 7,08,712 patients have been discharged after recovery while 43,983 are still

active cases with the virus.

Among the fresh Coronavirus cases, East Godavari has registered 547 followed by 489 in West Godavari, 379 in Guntur, 293 in Chittoor, 270 in Prakasam, 209 in Anantapur, 191 in Vizianagaram, 190 in Kadapa, 166 in Nellore, 136 in Kurnool, 135 in Visakhapatnam, 133 in Srikakulam and 86 in Krishna.

With regard to the cumulative cases, East Godavari continues to lead with the highest number of 1,06,590 followed by 75,489 in West Godavari, 70,615 in Chittoor, 61,156 in Anantapur, 60,221 in Guntur, 58,241 in Kurnool, 56,844 in Nellore, 54,658 in Prakasam, 52,651 in

Visakhapatnam, 48,209 in Kadapa, 41,381 in Srikakulam, 37,515 in Vizianagaram, 32,036 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

The rate of recovery of the Covid-19 patients has also been good in East Godavari with 98,608 followed by 69,351 in West Godavari, 64,060 in Chittoor, 58,861 in Anantapur, 56,378 in Kurnool, 54,924 in Nellore, 54,902 in Guntur, 50,377 in Prakasam, 49,654 in Visakhapatnam, 44,531 in Kadapa, 39,861 in Srikakulam, 35,377 in Vizianagaram, 28,933 in Krishna, 2,461 from other states and 434 from other countries.

With regard to the deaths registered in the last 24 hours, Krishna

and Prakasam have registered five deaths each followed by four each in Guntur and Kadapa, three each in Anantapur and East Godavari, two each in Chittoor and West Godavari and one each in Kurnool, Nellore, Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam.

Chittoor has registered the highest number of cumulative deaths of Covid-19 patients at 707 followed by 571 in East Godavari, 564 in Guntur, 536 in Prakasam, 527 in Anantapur, 498 in Krishna, 478 in Kurnool, 474 each in Visakhapatnam and West Godavari, 472 in Nellore, 400 in Kadapa, 331 in Srikakulam, and 224 in Vizianagaram. Over 5,504 patients were discharged.

Two minor girls sexually assaulted by two youths

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 12

Two youngsters lured two minor girls with a motorcycle ride and sexually assaulted them in an isolated industrial shed under Duvvada police station limits in Visakhapatnam. The girls went home and narrated their ordeal to their parents.

This incident took place on Saturday night but came to light on Monday morning when the girls, along with their parents, lodged a complaint against the accused at Duvvada police station.

The police said that a man, 24, befriended a 14-year-old girl in the same locality and, following a plan, his friend of the same age became friendly with the girl's friend.

On Saturday afternoon, the two youngsters took the two girls on two motorcycles to the beach where they spent some time. Later, they took them to an isolated industrial shed where the duo allegedly sexually assaulted the two girls.

Based on the complaints from the victims, circle inspector of Duvvada police station, K. Lakshmi, registered a

case against the duo and transferred the case to the Disha police station for further investigation.

The police shifted the girls to King George hospital for medical tests and launched a manhunt for the accused.

A few days ago, a pastor was arrested on the charges of attempted rape of a 16-year-old girl at Gajuwaka in Vizag city.

Political leaders and activists of various women's organisations on Monday demanded stringent action against those involved in crimes against women and minors.

Currency racket busted: 8 arrested

VADREVV SRINIVAS | DC KAKINADA, OCT. 12

East Godavari Police arrested eight persons in two separate incidents for circulating fake currency notes in Tallarevu and Ambajipet mandals on Monday and seized ₹91,74,500 fake currency notes from them. Superintendent of Police

Adnan Nayeem Asmi told reporters that Korangi police arrested Dangeti Srinivasa Rao, 52, Dangeti Venkata Brahmajee, 26, of Georgepet, Dommleti Dasaradha Ramudu of Pottigondhi village in Tallarevu mandal, Undru Chinamavullu of Pottigondhi village and Puliyat Ramkumar of Sirgindalapadu of

Ramachandrapuram mandal and seized ₹88,74,500 fake currency notes from their victim.

There were 4,211 ₹2,000 notes and 905 ₹500 notes besides which were a CPU, monitor and a colour printer and a Panchaloha idol of Nagadevatha.

He said that Srinivasa Rao made fake currency, kept them in the middle of

Arrangements peak for Tirumala Brahmotsavams

AVINASH P. SUBRAMANYAM | DC TIRUPATI, OCT. 12

With just three days left for mega Navaratri brahmotsavams at the world-renowned hill temple of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala, arrangements being made have reached their peak level.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is making all efforts to ensure that devotees visiting the hill town during brahmotsavams have darshan of the Lord without any hassles, while strictly adhering to Covid-19 protocol. The newly appointed TTD executive officer K. S. Jawahar Reddy, additional executive officer A.V. Dharma Reddy, and chief vigilance and security officer Gopinath Jatti are continuously reviewing the ongoing arrangements at Tirumala.

Unlike the annual brahmotsavams last month, which were conducted in Ekantham (solitude) due to Covid-19 restrictions, TTD has decided to take out the procession in the four mada streets during vahana sevams. However, only a limited number of

pilgrims with darshan tickets will be allowed in the galleries.

As these Brahmotsavams will be over nine days, there will be rigorous thermal screening. Foot-operated sanitisers have been kept in place at all galleries around the mada streets. TTD has decided to deploy only a limited number of security personnel and Srivari Seva volunteers, as there will be limited number of Bhajans and cultural programmes before vahana sevams. The number of pilgrims will also be less.

While the Annapradasam wing is making necessary arrangements for continuously serving food to visiting devotees, the temple potu is building enough stock of laddus for distribution to devotees during the nine-day event.

Navaratri brahmotsavams will start with Ankurarpanam on Thursday between 7 pm and 8 pm. Morning Vahana Sevams will be from 8 am to 10 am while the evening sevams will be between 7 pm and 9 pm, including the Garuda Seva on October 20. Bangaru Tiruchi Utsavam will be on October 16 from 9 am to 11 am, followed by

Pedda Sesha Vahanam between 7 pm and 9 pm.

On Day II, October 17, Chinna Sesha Vahanam programme will be in the morning and Hamsa Vahanam in the evening, followed by Simha Vahana and Muthyapu Pandiri Vahanam on October 18, Kalpavruksha Vahanam and Sarvabhoopala Vahanam on October 19.

The most important day of the brahmotsavams, October 20, will have Mohini Avataram and auspicious Garuda Vahana Seva from 7 pm. Hanumantha Vahana, Pushpaka Vimanam and Gaja Vahanam will be on October 21, Surya Prabha and Chandra Prabha Vahanams on October 22, and Swarna Rathotsavam and Aswa Vahanam on October 23. The brahmotsavams will conclude on October 24 with Pallaki and Tiruchi Utsavam from 3 am to 5 am, Snapana Tirumanjanam and Chakra Snanam between 6 am and 9 am and Bangaru Tiruchi Utsavam in the evening.

Arrangements are also made being for floral and photo exhibitions at Kalyana Vedika.

18.57L KG VEGGIES GIVEN TO BALAJI SHRINE

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, OCT. 12

TTD Additional EO Mr A.V. Dharma Reddy informed that about 18.57 lakh kilos of vegetables had been donated at free of cost to TTD by the vegetable donors in the year 2019-20, while this year due to COVID-19 restrictions only 1.65 lakh kilos of vegetables were donated till September.

Speaking during a meeting held with vegetable donors at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Monday, the Additional EO said that the vegetable donors have been rendering incredible service to the devotees of Lord Venkateswara by donating varieties of vegetables for the preparation of Annapradasam since 2004.

"This year due to the COVID-19 restrictions, only 1.65 lakh kilos of vegetables were donated until September. The donors, however, have agreed to provide a variety of vegetables during the Navaratri brahmotsavams slated to take place between October 16 to 24. The devotees coming for brahmotsavams will get quality and delicious Annapradasam every day," he added.

DyEO of Anna Prasad Nagaraja, Catering Officer G.L.N. Shastri, AEO Lokanatham, vegetable donors from the states of AP, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka were also present.

TD may not to contest against Balli family

PATHRI RAJASEKHAR | DC NELLORE, OCT. 12

All eyes are on the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat, which has fallen vacant because of the sudden demise of the sitting YSRC member Balli Durga Prasad.

Though TD is projecting that they are gearing up for the by-election, the party may not enter the fray if the seat is given to any family member of Durga Prasad, reliable sources in the party told this newspaper.

However, TD would extend its support to the nominee of BJP if the saffron party decides to field a candidate for the segment, the sources said, pointing out that the TD bigwigs wish to be in the good books of the BJP top brass.

Durga Prasad was earlier a four-time TD MLA from Gudur. On being denied a ticket, he jumped over to YSRC on whose ticket he won the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat defeating former union minister Panabaka Lakshmi in the 2019 general elections.

Incidentally, she will be in the fray if TD decides to

contest going by the recent announcement of TD boss N Chandrababu Naidu. Further senior leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy told party men to prepare for the Tirupati Lok Sabha by-election.

During Sunday's meeting with party in-charge for the seat, Narasimulu Yadav and convener Ugra Narasimha Reddy, Chandramohan Reddy instructed in-charges of all the Assembly segments to strengthen the party base from the grass-root level.

Speaking to this newspaper, he said that they are gearing up for the by-election as per the directions of the party high command.

Meanwhile, sources close to Balli Durga Prasad family said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has promised the ticket to the family and left the choice of selecting a candidate to Durga Prasad's widow, Saralamma. She has to choose between sons Kalyan and Karthik or daughter Haritha.

A YSRC leader said that the family is likely to nominate Kalyan, an engineering graduate.

Seaward artillery practice to be held at Suryalanka

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 12

Seaward artillery practices over Suryalanka area to be held from November 23 to December 4, 2020.

The state government issued GO MS No. 97 dated 15-09-2020, according permission to carry out operational training of SAGW units of Indian Air Force Station, Suryalanka in Bapatla mandal in Guntur

■ The practice sessions will be held from November 23 to December 4, 2020

■ The areas extending up to 100 km from firing points are unsafe

district from 06.00 hrs to 22.00 hrs. The areas extending up to 100 kms from the firing points are unsafe.

The Union ministry of defence (Navy Wing) is taking up training programme.

YSRC delegation to answer TD men

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, OCT. 12

Reacting to charges levelled by TD senior leader Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy over irregularities in the purchase of paddy at Sarvepalli segment, YSRC Congress leaders of the segment submitted details of paddy procured from the farmers at Sarvepalli to TDP's Nellore parliament constituency in-charge S.K. Abdul Aziz on Monday.

YSRC Sarvepalli legislator Kakani Govardhan Reddy has deputed the YSRC leaders to the TDP office to hand over the details.

The delegation told Mr Aziz to advise his party men to avoid baseless allega-

tions against ruling party leaders. Welcoming the initiative, Aziz told them to refrain from personal attacks. He suggested them to submit paddy purchase details of the entire district given the huge loss to the farmers because of exploitation by middlemen and rice millers. He also advised the YSRC men to stop personal criticism and maintain decorum.

Kakani Govardhan Reddy dared his arch-rival Chandramohan Reddy to prove his allegations over corruption in paddy procurement. He said they had submitted the details of paddy procurement in his Sarvepalli segment to CPM, CPI, BJP, Congress and TD.

SHORT TAKES

BJD NAMES CANDIDATES FOR BYPOLLS

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 12

Odisha's ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Monday declared its candidates for the forthcoming by-elections to Balasore Sadar and Tirtol assembly seats.

Bijay Sankar Das, son of former BJD MLA Bishnu Das, will contest from Tirtol, while Swarup Kumar Das was declared as the party's nominee for Balasore Sadar.

On Sunday, the BJP had declared its candidates for the two constituencies.

Manas Dutta, son of deceased BJP MLA Madan Mohan Dutta will contest from Balasore Sadar while Rajkishore Behera was declared as party candidate for Tirtol.

Congress is yet to announce their candidates. However, party MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati dropped hints that the party would announce its candidates within a day or two.

The by-polls to both the seats have been necessitated by the demise of sitting BJP MLA Madan Mohan Dutta (Balasore) and sitting BJD legislator Bishnu Das (Tirtol). Polls will take place on November 3 and results will be announced November 10.

BUXAR WOMAN GANG-RAPED, MINOR SON KILLED

Buxar, Oct. 12: Seven persons allegedly raped a 30-year-old woman after killing her five-year-old son in a village in Bihar's Buxar district, police said on Monday.

One person has been arrested in connection with the incident, while search is on to nab the others, they said.

On Saturday, the accused took the woman to a jungle when she had come to Chaigain village to deposit money at a bank along with her son, raped her and killed the child, her father said in the FIR lodged with Murar Police Station.

The men then threw the woman and her son in a canal after tying them with a rope, according to the police complaint.

The two were taken to Chaigain Primary Health Centre, where doctors declared the child brought-dead and referred the woman to Sadar Hospital, police said, adding, the body of the minor has been sent for post-mortem examination.

The woman's medical examination report is awaited and her statement will be recorded in the court of the judicial magistrate on Monday, a police officer said.

Dumraon Sub-Divisional Police Officer K.K. Singh said a person named Munni Ram has been arrested and the other accused will be apprehended soon.

HATHRAS VICTIM'S KIN APPEAR BEFORE HC

Lucknow, Oct. 12: Family members of the 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after allegedly being raped by four upper caste men in Hathras appeared before the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, which fixed November 2 as the next date of hearing.

They were heard by the Bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and Rajan Roy on Monday.

The UP Additional Chief Secretary, DGP; and the ADG (Law and Order) also deposed before the court, along with the Hathras DM and SP.

The DM told the court that the decision to cremate the body in the night was taken due to the law and order considerations and there was no pressure from the state authorities.

Additional Advocate General V.K. Shahi, who represented the state authorities in the court, said the next date of hearing has been fixed for November 2.

The woman's father, mother and three brothers were brought to the court amid tight security from Hathras earlier in the day.

The court had summoned the Additional Chief Secretary, Home; the Director General of Police; ADG, Law and Order; and the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police of Hathras to furnish the status report of investigation into the case.

The woman was allegedly raped by four upper caste men on September 14.

Power outage rocks Mumbai



A doctor treats a child with the help of a torch in Sion Hospital in Mumbai on Monday. A rare citywide power outage paralysed Mumbai, halting local train services, trapping people in lifts and disrupting work from home adopted by millions during the ongoing pandemic. Power restoration efforts began on war footing and pocket-wise resumption in supply was started around 12 noon onwards, nearly two hours after the outage.

— RAJESH JADHAV

Half of BJP picks for Bihar's 2nd phase are upper caste

BJP seeks to maintain sway over upper castes while wooing OBCs, Dalits

Patna, Oct. 12: A strategy of keeping its upper caste support base intact while making inroads in the sizeable OBC and Dalit vote bank meets the eye upon perusal of the BJP's list of 46 candidates for the second phase of assembly elections in Bihar.

Altogether 94 seats go to polls in the phase, for which voting will take place on November 3.

The BJP had got more than half of these under the seat-sharing arrangement with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U).

The saffron party's list of candidates for the second round of voting was released on Sunday.

Nearly half of the BJP's 46 candidates for the second phase of voting belong to the upper castes Rajputs, Bhumihars, Brahmins, Kayasthas and Vaishyas which constitute the core base of the saffron party in the state.

The party has also given tickets to eight Yadavs, seeking to make a dent into the opposition RJD's unquestionable sway over the most sizeable OBC group in the state.

The JD(U), which has announced its candidates for all the 115 seats it will be contesting, has also fielded a substantial number of Yadavs.

Yadavs form nearly 15 per cent of the electorate in the state and the NDA parties are trying to cash in absence of Prasad from the poll scene to wean away the core support base of the RJD.

The RJD supreme is in jail after conviction in four cases of multi-crore fodder scam.

Candidates from other OBC groups also figure in the BJP's list while seven

52,000 VOTERS OPT FOR POSTAL BALLOT IN PH 1

New Delhi, Oct. 12: More than 52,000 voters, who are either senior citizens above 80 years of age or are people with disabilities, have opted for postal ballot in the first phase of Bihar elections to be held on October 28.

Booth Level Officers (BLO) in 71 constituencies spread across 16 districts of the state had approached over four lakh voters of the two categories.

Dalits will be seeking votes for the party in as many reserved constituencies.

Out of the 46 seats in the second phase, the BJP has set aside five from its quota for the Vikassheel Insaan Party, headed by former Bollywood set designer Mukesh Sahni who left the Opposition camp and joined the NDA nearly a week ago.

The VIP has been allocated total 11 seats for all three phases of the polls by the saffron party from its share of 121 seats in the NDA.

Bihar has a 243-member assembly.

Rest 122 seats in the NDA camp have gone to the JD(U) out of which it has provided seven to Hindustani Awam Morcha of the former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi.

The BJP had won 20 out of the seats going to polls in the second phase.

Its sitting members in four of these Sugauli, Chanpatiya, Siwan and Amnour have been

deprived of tickets this time.

While Sugauli has gone to JD(U), the BJP has placed its trust in new faces in the remaining three.

Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey's reported lobbying for his son Arijit Shashwat seems to have paid no dividend in Bhagalpur where the party has placed its trust in district unit chief Rahul Pandey.

Another candidate, who has risen from the ranks and made it to the list is Nikhil Anand, one of the most prominent spokesmen in the state unit who will be challenging RJD strongman Bhai Virendra in Maner.

Former MP Om Prakash Yadav who had won Siwan for the party in 2014 but was denied tickets last year as the seat went to the JD(U), has been fielded from the assembly segment of the same name.

In neighboring Daraunda, the party has pacified rebel Karanjeet Singh, who quit and won the seat as an Independent in by-poll necessitated by Kavita Singhs election to the Lok Sabha from Siwan. Karanjeet Singh will now seek to retain the seat as the BJP's official nominee.

Two state ministers in the list Nand Kishore Yadav and Rana Randhir will be seeking re-election from Patna City and Madhubani respectively.

The party has come out with names of its candidates for a total of 75 seats which go to polls in the first two phases. Unsurprisingly, not a single Muslim has been given the party ticket though ally JD(U) has fielded nearly a dozen.

— PTI

Cong leader hits out at Chouhan's humble background

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 12

The campaigning for the November 3 by-elections in 28 assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh has reached a new low with a senior Congress leader trying to belittle chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan citing his humble family background.

State unit president of farmers' wing of Congress Dinesh Gurjar said Mr Chouhan was no match to former chief minister Kamal Nath while drawing a comparison of their financial backgrounds.

"Mr Chouhan hails from a family of 'nange, bhooke', loosely translated in English as extremely poor, while Mr Nath was the second biggest industrialist in India", the Congress leader said while addressing an election meeting in Ashok Nagar late on Sunday.

The ruling BJP has seized the opportunity to portray it as a battle between 'rich vs poor' in the assembly by-polls to target Mr Nath, who is leading Congress in the crucial by-elections.

"Yes, I come from a poor family. That's why I understand the pangs of hunger. That's why my focus has

always been to uplift the poor and the farmers. I have transferred ₹1000 to the bank accounts of each farmer as soon as I assumed office. I have undertaken many welfare measures for the poor and the farmer after I assumed power in March", he said while addressing a poll meeting in Guna in the state on Monday.

He also attacked Mr Nath saying that the latter never visited villages and was hardly aware of conditions of the poor in villages.

"Congress is projecting Mr Nath as an industrialist. But, I challenge Mr Nath if he has ever visited villages to know how agriculture operations are being undertaken by the farmers, or what kind of problems the poor and the farmers are facing", he said.

"A man from a poor family like me can only understand the people's plight and work for their development. An industrialist like Mr Nath is hardly aware of their problems", he observed.

Senior BJP leader Jyotiraditya scindia, who quit Congress following his differences with Mr Nath in March this year, joined the issue daring Mr Nath to reveal how he became rich and industrialist.

Kerala opens up tourism sector in a phased manner

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT. 12

The Kerala government has opened up tourism sector partially by allowing tourists in hill destinations, adventure tourism spots and backwaters from Monday.

The Covid-19 safety norms will be adhered to strictly at these tourist destinations.

The tourist centres will be opened up in two phases complying with the safety protocols, said tourism minister Mr Kadkampally Surendran.

While houseboats and tourist boats have been allowed in backwaters and lakes, the beaches will be opened for tourists only after November 1 in the second phase.

The decision to open tourism sector has been taken in view of the huge crisis being faced by the sector and the people who are dependent on it, due to the lockdown.

While many other states had opened up tourism sector earlier, the government in Kerala was cautious as it did not want to trigger a spike in the Covid cases, especially in the densely populated areas.

Therefore, the government decided to open up the sector in a phased manner.

Since the union home ministry in its Unlock 4 order has not mentioned tourism in the prohibited category, the sector can be opened with adequate measures. The government's decision has brought some relief to the people engaged in tourism sector.

The government had earlier announced that those coming to Kerala from outside the state for business purposes, would be exempted from 7 days mandatory quarantine. The same norm is going to be applied to the tourists as well. They can come to the state on a short visit for a week.

All tourists coming from outside should register with the state government's Jagratha portal. If the tourists don't return after seven days, they will be subjected to Covid-19 test and they will have to bear the expenses for the same.

Those who are interested to stay for more than seven days should either come with a Covid negative certificate or on reaching Kerala, undergo a Covid test. If the tourists don't comply with the norm, they will have to undergo seven days quarantine.

The government said tourists with any suspected Covid symptoms should not travel to Kerala. All tourists while in Kerala, will have to wear masks, use sanitizers and maintain a distance of 2 meters from others.

In the event of tourists developing Covid-19 symptoms during their trip, they should immediately get in touch with the government helpline Disha and seek assistance of health professionals.

Those with symptoms will have to go into isolation.

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INDIA RECORDS CASES BELOW 70,000, DEATHS LESS THAN 900

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

With 66,732 fresh cases, India on Monday registered a total of 71.21 lakh cases of coronavirus while its death toll climbed to 1,09,150 with 816 new fatalities in the last 24 hours.

However, despite significantly high number of fresh cases being detected, the virus spread seems to have slowed down a bit in India though the coming festive season will make it clear if India has crossed the "peak".

The gap between India and the United States of America in terms of overall cases is narrowing down and on Monday it has further come down to 8.70 lakh.

Union health ministry officials said that the trend of steady decline in active cases is continuing and the active caseload is now only 12.10% of the total positive cases, which is 8.62 lakh.

"For the fourth day after the active cases dropped below the 9 lakh mark after a month, the decline continues unabated," officials said.

India is also reporting a high number of recoveries and the total recovered cases are close to 61.50 lakhs.

The difference between active cases and recovered cases stands at 52.88 lakh as on date. In the last 24 hours, 71,559 patients have recovered and discharged compared to 66,732 new cases admitted. The national Recovery Rate now stands at 86.36%.

The government has issued details of the norms, guidelines and restrictions to be followed in tourist centres.

The hotels, restaurants and other facilities in the tourist centers will comply with all safety norms.

They will keep infrared forehead thermometer, soap for washing hands and sanitizers.

All the pathways, railings, other facilities will be sprayed with disinfectants form time to time. The names and addresses of people arriving at the tourist centres will have to be registered. Tourism deputy directors and DTPC secretaries have been entrusted with the task of ensuring all Covid safety norms are strictly complied at the tourist centres.

All hotel bookings, tickets to tourist spots should be booked through online system. The government has asked the Ayurveda tourist centres to strictly following the Covid safety norms.

The tourism minister hoped that tourists from outside the state and abroad will not hesitate to traveling to Kerala in view of the strict safety protocols in place.

SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE STILL CRITICAL

Kolkata, Oct. 12: Legendary Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee is still in a "high risk zone" though his parameters are stable, doctors attending to the thespian said on Monday.

The 85-year-old Dadasaheb Phalke awardee has fever and continues to be in a "drowsy, confusional state", which is a matter of concern, they said. Chatterjee might have to undergo an MRI later on Monday, doctors at the private hospital, where he is being treated for Covid-19, said.

"He is stable, had good sleep last night, but is still in a high risk zone. His oxygen saturation level has improved," a doctor said.

— PTI

IN BRIEF

Lanka suspends expatriates rescue

Colombo: Sri Lankan officials say they have suspended bringing back expatriates stranded overseas due to the Coronavirus because the country's quarantine facilities are full. Army Commander Shavendra Silva, who heads the task force to control the pandemic, says Sri Lanka's quarantine facilities have filled up amid a steep rise in Covid-19 patients in the past week. Sri Lanka had earlier announced that it successfully contained the spread of the virus, and no local clusters were reported for two months.

Death penalty for rape in B'desh

Dhaka: Bangladesh's Cabinet on Monday approved an increase in the maximum punishment in rape cases to death from life imprisonment after a series of recent sexual assaults triggered protests on streets and in social media.

Cabinet spokesman Khandaker Anwarul Islam said President Abdul Hamid is likely to issue an ordinance amending the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act because Parliament is not in session. Details of the amendment were not immediately available, but Islam said the Cabinet agreed to a proposal that trials in rape cases be completed in a speedy manner. Under the current law, the maximum punishment in rape cases is life imprisonment, except for cases in which the victim dies, when capital punishment is allowed.

Protesters raze statues in Portland

Portland: Protesters overturned statues of former Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln in Portland, Oregon, in a declaration of "rage" toward Columbus Day. Protest organisers on Sunday night dubbed the event "Indigenous Peoples Day of Rage," in response to Monday's federal holiday named after 15th-century Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, a polarising figure who Native American advocates have said spurred centuries of genocide against indigenous populations in the Americas. The group threw chains around Roosevelt's statue, officially titled "Theodore Roosevelt, Rough Rider."

Poland defuses WW bomb, shifts 750

Warsaw: Hundreds of people in northwest Poland have been evacuated for a few days to allow Navy sappers to neutralise a British World War II giant Tallboy bomb resting under a waterway leading to the port of Szczecin. The 5.4 tonne bomb was found in Sept. 2019 during work to deepen the waterway. It's located on the southern edge of a popular Baltic Sea resort of Swinoujscie, that, like Szczecin, was a busy Nazi Germany military port during the war. In a defusing project that began on Monday and is expected to last for five days, experts will be seeking to neutralise the Tallboy underwater by causing its explosives to burn out in a controlled way.

CLOTH MASKS NEED DAILY WASH TO CUT VIRUS RISK

Melbourne, Oct. 12: Cloth masks may reduce the transmission of viruses such as SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, only if they are washed daily at high temperatures, according to a study.

"Both cloth masks and surgical masks should be considered 'contaminated' after use," said Professor Raina MacIntyre, from the University of New South Wales in Australia. "Unlike surgical masks, which are disposed of after use, cloth masks are re-used. While it can be tempting to use the same mask for multiple days in a row, or to give it a quick hand-wash or wipe-over, our research suggests that this increases the risk of contamination," MacIntyre said.

The researchers analysed data from a randomised controlled trial (RCT) they published in 2015. The latest study, published in the journal BMJ Open, is still the only RCT ever conducted on the efficacy of cloth masks in preventing viral infections, they said. The researchers did a deep dive into the 2011 data on whether the health workers in their study washed their masks daily, and if so, how they washed their masks. The team found that if cloth masks were washed in the hospital laundry, they were as effective as a surgical mask.

US Supreme Court confirmation hearing



White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows (left) looks on as Judge Amy Coney Barrett arrives to testify at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on her nomination to serve as an associate justice on the US Supreme Court on Capitol Hill in Washington on Monday. — AFP

Don's task: Resetting campaign that GOP fears is slipping away

Washington, Oct. 12: President Donald Trump is running out of time to recover from a series of self-inflicted setbacks that have rattled his base of support and triggered alarm among Republicans who fear the White House is on the verge of being lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

The one-two punch of Trump's Coronavirus diagnosis and his widely panned debate performance also has Republicans worried they could lose control of the Senate. With just over three weeks until Election Day, Senate races in some reliably red states, including South Carolina and Kansas, are competitive, aided by a surge in Democratic fundraising that has put both the Republican Party and Trump's own campaign at an unexpected financial disadvantage.

The president will aim for a reset this week, hoping an aggressive travel schedule and Judge Amy Coney Barrett's Supreme Court confirmation hearings will energise his most loyal supporters and shift attention away from a virus that has killed more than 214,000 Americans on his watch. Optimists in the president's inner circle point to his unique ability to command attention and to his 2016 campaign, which also seemed destined for defeat before a late shift. But that comeback was aided by outside forces

Trump begins the election trail again

Washington, Oct. 12: US President Donald Trump will launch a campaign marathon on Monday, holding rallies in three key swing states over the next few days as his White House race against surging rival Joe Biden enters its critical final weeks.

The Republican leader will hold a rally in Florida, followed by Pennsylvania and Iowa — states all crucial to clinching a victory on November 3. Trump will likely try to galvanise his electoral base by touting his nominee for Supreme Court justice, Amy Coney Barrett.

The Republican-controlled Senate will begin hearings for the 48-year-old judge, whose confirmation — of which there is little doubt — will shift the nation's highest court firmly to the right for generations.

Trump's doctors gave

him the all-clear Saturday to return to the campaign trail after he was ruled no longer a Coronavirus transmission risk, and on Sunday he said while calling in to a campaign event that he tested "totally negative." But he has yet to be declared virus-free, and his immunity claim is unproven.

"It looks like I'm immune for, I don't know, maybe a long time and maybe a short time, it could be a lifetime, nobody really knows, but I'm immune," Trump said. The word 'immunity' means something, having really a protective glow.

"So now you have a president who doesn't have to hide in a basement like his opponent," Trump added — in a jab at Democratic challenger Biden, who has taken a far more cautious approach to campaigning during the pandemic. —AFP

against an unpopular opponent.

This year's campaign, other Republicans worry, may instead resemble 1980 or 2008: a close race until, at the end, it decidedly wasn't. "It's not good for my side," said veteran

GOP pollster Whit Ayres. "Pretty obviously, in many ways down-ballot Republicans are in the boat with Donald Trump. That's good for Republicans in deep-red states, but more problematic for those in swing states." —AP

EU weighs in on action against Russia for poisoning Navalny

Brussels, Oct. 12: European Union foreign ministers were weighing on Monday whether to impose sanctions on Russian officials and organisations blamed for the poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny with a Soviet-era nerve agent.

The ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, are considering a proposal from France and Germany to freeze the assets of those suspected of involvement and ban them from travelling in Europe under sanctions to combat the use and spread of chemical weapons.

Navalny, an anti-corruption investigator and major political opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, fell ill on August 20 during a domestic flight in Russia. He was flown to Germany for treatment two days later and is still recovering there.

Last week, tests conducted at labs designated by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons confirmed that Navalny was the victim of a Novichok nerve agent. German Foreign Minister

Heiko Maas said on Monday that given the OPCW's findings, it is now "objectively clear that this is a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention, one that cannot remain without consequences."

In a statement on Friday, France and Germany said that despite repeated calls Russia has provided "no credible explanation" for what happened and that "there is no other plausible explanation for Navalny's poisoning than a Russian involvement and responsibility." —AP

IRAQI MILITIAS OFFER TRUCE FOR U.S. PULLOUT

Baghdad, Oct. 12: Iraqi militias backed by Iran have agreed to temporarily halt attacks targeting the American presence in Iraq, on the condition that US-led coalition troops withdraw from the country in line with a parliamentary resolution, three militia officials have said.

The militia officials said after a roadside bomb targeted a convoy that was transporting equipment for the US-led coalition, damaging one vehicle, an Iraqi army statement said. The attack on a highway south of Baghdad prompted questions over whether such a truce could hold across all militia factions.

Roadside bombs and in particular rocket attacks targeting the US Embassy in Baghdad — located inside the heavily fortified Green Zone — have become a frequent occurrence and have strained ties between Washington and Baghdad. The militia factions offered a truce and will refrain from targeting the US in Iraq, including the embassy, on the condition that all American-led forces withdraw within an "acceptable timeframe," said Mohammed Mohie, a spokesman for the powerful Iran-backed Kataib Hezbollah. —AP

China to test 9mn for Covid in 5 days

Quingdao city begins nucleic acid test campaign

Beijing, Oct. 12: China's Qingdao city has launched a citywide nucleic acid test campaign that will cover its nine million residents over the next five days, amid apprehensions of a second wave after the coastal city reported 12 Covid-19 cases. The cases were connected to Qingdao Chest Hospital which is a designated medical institution for the Covid-19 patients from overseas.

In May, China tested 11 million people in Wuhan — the epicentre of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Qingdao health authority has said that a citywide testing program has been launched. The five districts — home to about six million people — will be fully covered in the next three days. The whole city will be tested within five days, covering roughly nine million people, state-run *Global Times* reported.

So far, all medical staff, new hospitalised patients and nurses in hospitals at Qingdao have been given nucleic acid tests, with all 114,862 results coming back negative. As of Saturday, the total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases on the Chinese mainland had reached 85,557, including the 218

● **ONE OF** the ways they sped up the process was to use batch- or pool-testing.

● **IN THIS** process, a batch of between five and 10 samples was tested. Only if a sample tested positive would the team go back to carry out individual tests to see who was

patients still being treated.

Altogether 80,705 patients have recovered, according to China's National Health Commission's report released on Monday. It said 4,634 people have died to Coronavirus on the mainland.

They also mobilised teams to test disabled people, the elderly and those vulnerable in their own homes.

One of the ways they sped up the process was to use batch- or pool-testing.

In this process, a batch of between five and 10 samples was tested. Only if a sample tested positive would the team go back to carry out individual tests to see who was positive within the batch.

Videos circulating online showed residents

lining up late on Sunday to get tested, said the *Global Times*, adding that some of these test points were open from 07:00 to 23:00.

The new cases come a week after China's Golden Week holiday — which saw millions travel across the country.

A *Global Times* report quoting the Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism said the coastal city had received 4.47 million passenger trips over this period.

The nearby city of Jinan, in the same province as Qingdao, called for anyone who had visited the city since 23 September to get tested, according to a report by *The Paper*.

Earlier last month, Qingdao announced that two port workers who handled imported seafood had tested positive. They were not known to have infected anyone else.

Daily Coronavirus infections have fallen drastically in China, and for the most part the country appears to have recovered from the worst.

China currently has 91,305 virus cases and the death toll stands at 4,746, according to WHO data.

— Agencies

Imran's top aide resigns, facing graft charges

Islamabad, Oct. 12: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's Special Assistant on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen. (ret'd.) Asim Saleem Bajwa resigned on Monday, amid allegations that he used his offices to help family set up several off-shore businesses.

"I requested the honourable prime minister to relinquish me from the additional portfolio of SAPM on Info & broadcasting. He very kindly approved my request," Bajwa, the former Pakistan Army spokesman who also served as Commander of the Southern Command, tweeted.

However, he would continue working as chairman of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority. The development comes more than a month after Bajwa submitted his resignation to Prime Minister Khan following a report on a website that alleged that he had used his offices in setting up off-shore businesses of his wife, sons and brothers. However, Khan rejected his resignation at the time and asked him to continue working as his special assistant.

The report alleged that Bajwa's younger brothers opened their first Papa John's pizza restaurant in 2002, the year he started working as a Lieutenant Colonel on the General Pervez Musharraf's staff. It claimed that his brother Nadeem Bajwa, 53, who started as a delivery driver for the pizza restaurant franchise, another three brothers, his wife Farrukh Zeba and

FATF'S REGIONAL GROUP KEEPS PAKISTAN ON FOLLOW-UP LIST

Islamabad, Oct. 12: Noting that Pakistan's measures against money laundering and terror financing "is not yet sufficient to justify a re-rating", a regional affiliate of the Financial Action Task Force on Monday retained the country on its 'Enhanced follow-up' list, according to a media report.

The development came only a few weeks ahead of the meeting of the FATF — the Paris-based global money laundering and terror financing watchdog — to decide on Pakistan's grey list status.

The first Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) underlined that the country's progress on the 40 FATF recommendations on the effectiveness of anti-money laundering and combating financing terror (AML/CFT) system largely remained unchanged — non-compliant on four counts, partially compliant on 25 counts and largely compliant on nine recommendations. — PTI

three sons now own a business empire which set up 99 companies in four countries, including a pizza franchise with 133 restaurants worth an estimated \$39.9 million.

— PTI

TOP HONOURS

U.S. Economists worked towards improving the theory of how auctions work

Milgrom, Wilson bag Nobel Prize in Economics

Stockholm, Oct. 12: Two American economists won the Nobel Prize on Monday for improving the theory of how auctions work and inventing new and better auction formats that are now woven into many parts of the economy.

The discoveries of Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson "have benefited sellers, buyers and taxpayers around the world," the Nobel Committee said, noting that the auction formats developed by the winners have been used to sell radio frequencies, fishing quotas and airport landing slots.

Both economists are based at Stanford University in California, and Milgrom said he received news of their win "in a strange way." "I got a knock at my door from Bob Wilson," he said. "He was my Ph.D. advisor, and he lives right across the street from me." Milgrom said students, friends and colleagues had long suggested he and Wilson might be due for the prize. "It's really sweet actually," he said. "It's nice to have their respect but their affection as well." The winners were announced in Stockholm by Goran



Robert B. Wilson

Hansson, secretary-general of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, rounding off a week of Nobel Prizes. Technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic



Paul R. Milgrom

Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, the award was established in 1969 and is now widely considered one of the Nobel prizes.

The committee said Wilson's work showed "why

rational bidders tend to place bids below their own best estimate of the common value," that is, "the value which is uncertain beforehand but, in the end, is the same for everyone." "Bidders are worried about the winner's curse — that is, about paying too much and losing out," the committee said.

Wilson, 83, described his former student as "sort of the genius behind all of this auction work," noting that they first worked together on auctions in the 1970s. "We're really motivated to use theory in a very practi-

cal way to improve various economic processes," Wilson said. Milgrom, 72, developed a more general theory of auctions that takes into account what is known as the "private value" of what's being sold that can vary greatly from bidder to bidder. Speaking to reporters in Stockholm by phone after learning of his win, Wilson struggled to think of an auction he himself had participated in. But then added: "My wife points out to me that we bought ski boots on eBay. I guess that was an auction." — AP

DECCAN Chronicle

13 OCTOBER 2020

Judiciary must keep itself above suspicion

The move by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to write a letter to Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde, with a “sense of pain and anguish” at the “politicisation of institutions”, monitored by N. Chandrababu Naidu, “through honourable sitting judges of Supreme Court”, is unprecedented in India’s history. True, there have been confrontations between politics and the judiciary, between Parliament and other legislative bodies over the division of powers. There were times that the judiciary was accused of “judicial overreach” and “legislating in disguise” in the course of interpreting legislation and executive orders. The relationship between judiciary and political pillars of the legislature and executive is complex, but there is little doubt, even factoring in the impeachment powers of Parliament, that the judiciary is independent and supreme in interpretation of the Constitution and legal matters.

Equally important, as much as the powers of judiciary are supreme, the dignity, honour and majesty of the courts are sacrosanct too. Indian history records that whenever Indian politics was set to compromise with the values of democracy or unhesitant to trample on the rights of citizens or let down the foundational values of our republic, it was the judiciary that time and again has saved our nation. The Indian judiciary is not just one of the four pillars of the modern Indian nation or democracy — it has also been the exemplar of the highest standards, ethical conduct and has served as a role model for the other three. Like Caesar’s wife, it stands even above suspicion or a shade of doubt, and must continue to do so.

The political rivalry between YSRC chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and his arch-rival Telugu Desam chief N. Chandrababu Naidu is irrelevant here; it is best decided every five years in the people’s court. But when a chief minister, or even an ordinary citizen, raises issues, casts aspersions or makes allegations against a sitting Supreme Court judge, the onus shifts to the nation’s highest court and the CJI to ensure that every citizen of this country is assured that there is no need to worry about the serious allegations by ensuring transparency, fearless introspection and ensuring fairness.

One cannot completely dismiss the views of Mr Reddy’s rivals that this could be an arm-twisting tactic at a time when serious cases of financial wrongdoing are pending in the courts, including a matter on fast-tracking such hearings, in which, if found guilty and sentenced, the young CM could face disqualification from holding office and contesting elections for a considerable time.

The court will have to undertake this testing ordeal of not getting arm-twisted into weakening its resolve to rid India of political corruption but also simultaneously stand above any shred of doubt that no one in the judiciary, much less so, someone in the highest court, is possibly guilty of allegations of extra-constitutional judicial intervention at the behest of any political leader. Given its track record and the Indian people’s overriding trust and unshakable faith in the courts, one expects this is exactly what the CJI would ensure happens. Hail the judiciary!

Indefatigable Nadal

The Spaniard Rafael Nadal’s 13th triumph in the French Open is an incredible achievement. The unforgiving clay courts of Roland Garros present a challenge that can also drain the fit and tuned-to-the-minute athletes. Roger Federer acknowledged this as “one of the greatest achievements in sport” after his great rival equalled his record of 20 Grand Slam titles on Sunday. A naturally gifted champion like Federer has only one French Open in his 20 Grand Slams. A persevering Nadal adapting his baseline game to Wimbledon grass and the hard courts of the Australian and US Open championships and conquering each of them consistently enough is a saga in itself.

Not fortunate to be gifted with the dulcet touch and graceful athleticism, Nada makes up for it by his willingness to chase down each point like a man possessed. There is a terrier-like determination to him on a tennis court that makes him a role model for fellow sportsmen who struggle to withstand the vicissitudes of form and, more importantly, fitness. Nadal has had his share of injuries, surgeries and endless queries in random drug tests, besides his self-doubts, in a remarkable journey of endurance in which the ability to stay motivated for years after raking in millions of dollars also counts.

In crushing Novak Djokovic, the third gladiator of modern tennis, Nadal not only emphasises that he is the king of the rectangle of clay. In this virtual monopoly of Grand Slams, broken only by Thiem’s victory at the US Open, the three greats are signalling they are in no hurry to make way for a generational change in men’s tennis. On the other hand, with Serena Williams not winning a Grand Slam since becoming a mother, the field is wide open on the distaff side. Young Iga Swiatek, the first ever Pole to win a Grand Slam, brings with her a powerful forehand and angled ground-strokes that makes her appear to be the one poised to emulate the likes of Nadal in exhibiting a metronomic thoroughness in tennis conquests.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani



Tackle Xi in Myanmar; don’t forget Rohingyas



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

India’s foreign secretary and Chief of Army Staff may not have recently paid a joint visit to Naypyidaw, the capital of the country formerly known as Burma, if so much did not hang on the outcome of the November 8 elections. What probably influenced both Mr Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Gen. M.M. Naravane most was the spectre of “Paukphaw”, the China-Myanmar friendship that President Xi Jinping had underscored during his state visit in January.

Although India and Myanmar are distant neighbours at present, they comprised one administrative unit from 1885 to 1937. They might have been politically one now if Jawaharlal Nehru had accepted U Nu’s 1947 proposal for a “United Nations of South Asia”. The fears, hatreds and resentments that make these elections so different from the 2015 polls when Myanmar soared on the cusp of hope may signify major changes in the road ahead.

The electoral outcome is bound to leave a heavy imprint not only on Myanmar’s place on the chequerboard of Asia’s power politics but on the social and demographic character of a country that seems incapable of accepting that it must rise above tribal and religious loyalties to claim the status of a nation. It’s not just a question of more than 37 million voters choosing their parliamentary and sub-national assembly representatives or of the all-powerful military appointing its tame legislators. Empowering the people is what matters. Under Myanmar’s 2008 constitution, the Tatmadaw — Myanmar’s all-powerful military — chooses the vice-president and the home, defence and border affairs ministers, and controls 25 per cent of all parliamen-

tary seats.

The future of 1.3 million Rohingyas whom the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, calls “the world’s fastest-developing refugee emergency ... a humanitarian nightmare”, will have to be decided. So will the future of Aung San Suu Kyi, still elegantly winsome at 75, whose National League for Democracy infused the future with optimism in 2015. Today, she seems rather like a faded rose, having lost much of her shine as the global pin-up girl of Asian democracy and must justify her glory as Nobel Peace Prize laureate. For all that she is styled State Counsellor, Ms Suu Kyi seems to dance to the Tatmadaw’s tune on the Rohingyas.

Like the rest of the world, the Naypyidaw regime must also come to grips with a fast-spiralling Covid-19 crisis that may keep voters away from the polls. With nearly 24,000 infections, a meteoric rise from the 887 that were recorded on September 1, Myanmar has suddenly surged from only marginally infected to being Southeast Asia’s fourth-worst hit country.

The speculation is that pressed on so many fronts, Myanmar might feel that the future would be better protected if China’s rising influence were to be checked. That might explain reports of New Delhi’s offer of a \$6-billion petroleum refinery project and the talks

The electoral outcome is bound to leave a heavy imprint not only on Myanmar’s place on the chequerboard of Asia’s power politics but on the social and demographic character of the country.

India’s national interest can never be divorced from the humanitarian cause of the Rohingya, especially not by a government that claims to go beyond ‘Look East’ to ‘Act East’

to boost connectivity, power and energy projects, as well as joint efforts to tackle the pandemic. Worthy as these initiatives may be, one cannot but wonder why they are not components of a permanent programme binding two such physically close neighbours.

When India did take an interest in Myanmar after years of neglect, it was to deny the Naga or Mizo rebels sanctuary or prevent China and Pakistan from gaining strategic advantages. These legitimate objectives were small in themselves and appeared to reduce foreign affairs to immediate petty gains, with little inkling of the broad sweep of history. Myanmar’s expulsion of Indian labourers, clerks, doctors, teachers and lawyers prompted little reaction because the victims seemed to be culturally, socially and financially remote from the mandarins of South Block.

Rightly or wrongly, it was whispered at one time that a pragmatic approach was discouraged by India’s ethnic Myanmarese first lady. That was nearly two decades ago. A subsequently more sympathetic attitude was attributed to Ms Suu Kyi’s personal contacts in New Delhi during the years her mother was Myanmar’s ambassador and she a student at the city’s Lady Shri Ram College. Inevitably, the suffering Rohingyas are now seen as Muslim jihadists rather than victims of racism.

Myanmar’s 2014 census listed Rohingyas as illegal Bengali immigrants. Most were stripped of citizenship in 1982. They are denied education,

employment and the right to move about freely. This legal subjugation is nothing compared to the terrible atrocities of repeated military crackdowns, particularly in 2017-2018, when entire villages were burned down, men were murdered and women subject to gangrape.

Predictably, perhaps, some Rohingya groups responded with militancy. But the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation demands the right to “self-determination within Myanmar”, while the Rohingya-led National Democratic Party for Human Rights supported the 1988 democracy movement. It returned four members to Parliament in 1990 when the Tatmadaw cheated the victorious NLD of its right to form the government.

The former Army strongman, Shwe Mann, is now projecting his Union Betterment Party as the middle ground between the NLD and the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party, while the tycoon and legislator Thet Thet Khine, who left the NLD to launch the People’s Pioneer Party, focuses mainly on the economy. Meanwhile, the NLD’s promise of imported cars has invited ridicule. Unhappily, none of the 16 major parties in the fray is campaigning to enfranchise the marginalised ethnic groups like the persecuted Rohingya.

They needn’t be India’s priority either. The political challenge of “Paukphaw” — including China-backed projects like the \$4 billion Myitsone Dam, the Belt and Road Initiative, the economic corridor stretching from China’s Yunnan province to Rakhine state, and the \$15 billion Yatai New City Project at Shwe Kokko on the Myanmar-Thai border — matters far more. However, India’s national interest can never be divorced from the humanitarian cause of the Rohingya, especially not by a government that claims to go beyond “Look East” to “Act East”.

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

LAW & ORDER

The recent increase in crimes, especially in North India is due to unavailability of police in crime prone areas and their excess deployment for protection of ruling political bigwigs (*CBI takes over Hathras probe, DC, Oct. 12*). If the police protection is withdrawn, then one can imagine the plight of politicians.

N.S. Sharma
Visakhapatnam

LETTER TO CJI

The Telugu Desam’s reaction to the letter written by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister to CJI was on expected lines. They have conveniently skipped the main issues raised in the letter. Stopping investigation on an FIR, gagging the media from publishing the contents of the FIR are some of the atrocious decisions taken recently by AP HC. The Supreme Court too found fault with HC on this. TD is always harping on Jagan as the prime accused in several charge sheets pending trial in a CBI court. During 2014-19, when the TD was in power, nothing was finalised against Jagan and there is no answer from the TD or BJP on it.

Govardhana Myneedu
Vijayawada

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Two get letters of intent to make baby cars

NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

Letters of intent are understood to have been issued by the Ministry of Industrial Development to Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi’s son, and Mr. Madan Mohan Rao of Madras for the manufacture of small cars in the private sector.

The issue of licences to the two parties for the manufacture of baby cars would be considered by the Ministry of Industrial Development after they submit detailed project reports which would have to be scrutinised by the Directorate-General of the Technical Development, Ministry of Industrial Development.

Mr. Gandhi has already assembled a small car out of locally made components which was tested by the Directorate-General of Technical Development. His proposal envisages an initial production of 2,000 cars, per annum to be progressively increased to an annual turnout of 20,000 units.

Aakar Patel



If you do not admit there’s a crisis, you can’t solve it

If I do not acknowledge that I have a problem, then I cannot solve it. If the problem is a minor one, this is less consequential and does not affect me beyond a point. It is only an irritant that I can continue to ignore.

But if the problem is a major one, and if the problem affects not just me but many people around me, then ignoring it must have a sound reason. Ignoring it must in some way be more important than addressing it.

The sale of cars in India has not grown for the past five years. The number of cars bought by Indians in 2015-16 was 27 lakh units. The number of cars bought in 2019-20 was 27 lakh units. India’s middle class is either not growing or not spending.

The government says that stagnating car sales is not a problem because young people prefer to use Uber and Ola cabs. The United States sold two crore cars last year. Uber and Ola (and its various

equivalents) do not seem to affect any other nation.

The sale of two-wheelers in India has not grown for the past four years. Altogether 1.7 crore units were sold in 2016-17, and 1.7 crore units were sold in 2019-20. This is the vehicle of the lower middle class, the size and consumption of which has not grown for four years. What theory the government has for this we do not know as it has not been acknowledged that there is no growth.

Commercial vehicles have not shown any growth for the past four years. Sales were seven lakh units in 2016-17 and seven lakh units in 2019-20. This includes vehicles like trucks, heavy lorries, tankers and small tempos that carry products either to the manufacturers or to the market. The real meaning of four years of zero growth in this market can simply be imagined.

Real estate has shown no growth over the last four years. Indians

bought ₹2 lakh crores worth of real estate in 2016. They bought ₹2 lakh crores worth of real estate in 2019. India’s exports have not grown for six years. The country exports the same quantity that it did when Dr Manmohan Singh was Prime Minister. India was exporting about \$300 billion a year when the UPA-2 left office. It exported about \$300 billion in 2019-20. Why is this the case? We do not know because the government does not speak about it. When imports into India fell more than exports out of India, the government celebrated the moment as a singular achievement.

Employment has not only not grown in the past six years, it has actually gone down. A report produced by the government showed it to be at over six per cent in 2018, more than at any other time in history. Why are Indians losing employment? We do not know. The government has dismissed the issue and said that pakora sellers

and Uber drivers were replacing traditional employees.

It is true that Covid-19 has affected India’s economy deeply and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. We are unlikely to get back to the GDP figure that we achieved in January this year for another three years. This means that by the time Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s second term ends in May 2024, we will still only be economically where we were in January this year. The problem is that where we were in January this year was not a good space. All the numbers that have been referred to above are before the Covid-19 pandemic’s outbreak.

The stagnation in our economy had happened before the lockdown and has nothing to do with our current crisis. If and when we are able to overcome the Covid-19 related problem with our economy, we will go back only to the earlier problem.

India’s GDP growth declined every quarter for 10 quarters before

Covid. Why? We do not know. It could be one reason, and it could be many reasons. But if we do not acknowledge the issue at all, we will never solve it. You can only think about, discuss and then implement corrective measures if you acknowledge that corrective measures are needed. If you carry on like nothing has happened, then deep problems cannot be fixed by themselves and they won’t go away. The government went from saying that India was the one bright spot in the world’s economy and the fastest growing economy in the world, to not saying anything about the economy at all.

The problem is a major one, and it affects not just the Prime Minister but hundreds of millions of people across the country. Ignoring it must have a sound reason. Ignoring it must in some way be more important than addressing it.

Aakar Patel is a senior journalist and columnist

quick BITES

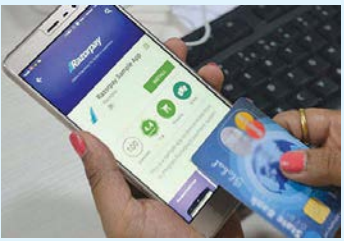
INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,593.80	0.21
Nifty 50	11,930.95	0.14
S&P 500*	3,538.30	1.76
Dollar (₹)	73.27	0.16
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.47	0.91
Euro (₹)	86.53	0.29
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	52,073.240	0.46
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	41.53	-1.32
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.899	-0.041
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.779	0.00

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Govt extends tenure of 3 EDs of Canara, IOB

The government has extended the tenure of three executive directors of Canara Bank and Indian Overseas Bank by two years. Canara Bank said the tenure of EDs Debashish Mukherjee and Matam Venkata Rao has been extended for two years, or until further orders, whichever is earlier. IOB said the government has extended the term of Ajay Kumar Srivastava as executive director for a period of two years.

Razorpay joins the league of unicorns in India



Payments solution provider Razorpay Razorpay said it has gained the 'unicorn' status after having raised \$100 million funding from GIC, Sequoia Capital and existing investors. Witnessing a 300 per cent growth in its business during the past six months, Razorpay said it has raised a Series-D fundraising of \$100 million, giving the company more than \$1 billion in valuation. This round was co-led by GIC and Sequoia.

Credai seeks fiscal sops for realty sector

Realtors' apex body Credai said the industry is going through much pain due to the pandemic and urged the government to take fiscal measures for improving the liquidity position of cash-starved developers. The industry body, which represents more than 20,000 builders from across India, has sought financial support in the form of interest waiver and extension of the moratorium period till March 2021 for the sector.

Hiring activities up 24% in Sept: Naukri JobSpeak

With life returning to normalcy gradually, hiring activities grew 24 per cent in September as compared to the previous month, mostly driven by pharmaceuticals and education sectors. At 1,755 job postings, there was an improvement of 24 per cent in hiring activities last month compared to August with 1,413 listings, according to the Naukri JobSpeak Index for September 2020.



Meeting ends without a decision Consensus eludes GST Council again

New Delhi, Oct. 12: The stalemate over compensating states for the shortfall in GST collections continued on Monday with a meeting of the GST Council ending without reaching any consensus.

The panel, which is the highest decision-making body on indirect taxes, for the second time in a week failed to reach a consensus on the Centre's proposal of states borrowing against future GST collections to make up for the shortfall.

This was the third meeting in a row that discussed compensation shortfall without a decision.

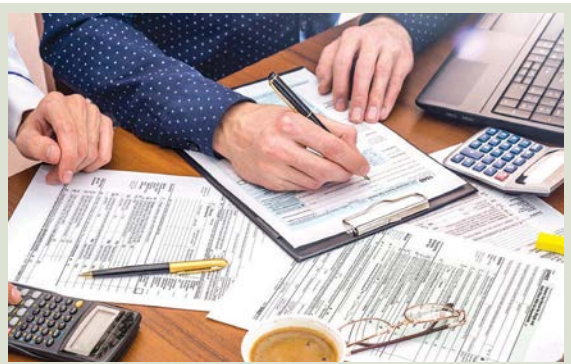
Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who heads the Council, said the Centre cannot borrow and pay states for the shortfall as it would lead to rise in bond yields, resulting in rise in borrowing costs for the government and the private sector.

However, this would not be the case if states borrowed against future GST receipts, she said, adding 21 states had agreed to borrow as suggested by the Centre.

However, other states insisted on a decision to be taken by consensus, she said.

"We were not able to arrive at a consensus," Sitharaman said.

In its previous meeting last week, the council had decided to extend the surcharge on taxes on luxury goods such as cars and tobacco products beyond June 2022 but failed to reach a consensus on



STALEMATE CONTINUES

FM said the Centre cannot borrow and pay states for the shortfall as it would lead to rise in bond yields

However, this would not be the case if states borrowed against future GST receipts, she said

Dissenting states insisted on consensus decision

ways to compensate states for loss of tax revenue.

The projected total compensation shortfall in the current fiscal stands at Rs 2.35 lakh crore.

The Centre had in August given two options to the states—to borrow either Rs 97,000 crore from a special window facilitated by the RBI or Rs 2.35 lakh crore from the market. It had also proposed extending the compensation cess levied on luxury, demerit and sin goods beyond 2022 to repay the borrowing.

Following a demand by some states, the amount of Rs 97,000 crore was increased to Rs 1.10 lakh crore.

As many as 21 states -- which are BJP-ruled or

have supported it on various issues— have opted to borrow Rs 1.10 lakh crore to meet the compensation shortfall.

The Centre has released Rs 20,000 crore to the states towards compensation shortfall so far in the current fiscal.

Under the GST structure, taxes are levied under 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent slabs.

On top of the highest tax slab, a cess is levied on luxury, sin and demerit goods, and the proceeds from the same are used to compensate states for any revenue loss. But due to a slowdown in the economy, collections have fallen short of the money needed for compensating states.

Travel industry unhappy with redirection of LTC money

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 12

Naturally, the travel industry is unhappy with the Centre's decision to redirect the leave travel concession (LTC) allowance of government employees to purchase of consumer goods.

After the prolonged lockdown, the travel and tourism industry was expecting the festive season to boost travel demand, as people usually use the opportunity to travel to their home state.

After almost eight months of nil to very limited tourism activity, festive season was one of the few demand drivers that the travel and hospitality industry was looking forward to and the industry was hoping for more tax-based stimulus in the hands of all citizens to travel when spent against GST-rated travel agents, hotels tour operators, tourist transporters and restaurants, said the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (Faith).

"Redirecting the LTC money of government employees to buy consumer goods would dry up those funds for the travel sector. Additionally, it would also send a vote of no-confidence to the tourism travel and hospitality industry, which was looking to get back on its feet after 'Unlock'," said Faith.

Additionally, since tax-free LTC is a four-year block scheme, it will also cut away funds for future travel demand sources for the next year when the LTC block ends in 2021. The tourism ministry was



But consumer durables are in a sweet spot

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 12

The government's leave travel concession (LTC) scheme meant to induce demand has put consumer durables and electronics in a sweet spot.

The government has put forward a few riders for those availing the LTC scheme. The employee, who wants tax-free LTC, will have to buy goods or services worth three times the fare and one-time the leave encashment.

Further, the goods and services bought under the scheme should be carrying a GST of 12 per cent and above. This will weed out all the basic amenities that have a GST of less than 12 per cent and the focus will be on dis-

cretionary items like computers, consumer durables, smartphones, home appliances, furniture and home furnishings.

"Both in terms of price point and GST, consumer durables are in a sweet spot. People who have been deferring purchase of consumer durables, electronics, mobile phones and household electronics will have a reason to buy," said Naval Seth of Emkay Global Financial Services. Even those who had not made any festive season purchase plans will find a reason to upgrade consumer appliances with the scheme.

According to Kamal Nandi, president, Consumer Electronics and Appliances

Manufacturers Association (Ceama) and business head and EVP, Godrej Appliances, the measure will augur well for the consumer durables segment in the upcoming festive season.

"Traditionally, the Indian customer makes many of his/her big-ticket purchases, such as appliances, during the festive season. Due to the current pandemic, consumers have appreciated the value appliances add to their lives as they are looking for comfort and convenience at home with the adoption of 'work from home' format and for the overall health, hygiene & safety of their family from the coronavirus," he said.

Consumer durables have been seeing a good month-on-month recovery in sales in the past couple of months. "The category has not yet made growth over the same month last year. But we expect a positive growth during the festive season," said Seth.

planning to make 2021 the year for domestic tourism. The industry wants LTC funds to be restored and

income tax benefits be offered to citizens travelling within the country, paying up to Rs 1.5 lakh to

GST-registered travel agents, hotels tour operators, tourist transporters and restaurants.

IIP contracts 8% in Aug; inflation spurts

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, OCT. 12

Despite the gradual relaxation of lockdown restrictions, the industrial output contracted by 8 per cent in August, mostly due to minimal output from the manufacturing, mining and power generation sectors. While at the same time, consumer inflation in the September month increased to 7.34 per cent from 6.69 per cent in the previous month on account of rising food prices, according to government data released on Monday.

The Index of Industrial Production, or IIP, had contracted by 1.4 per cent in August 2019. The index had contracted 10.4 per cent in July 2020, which was better than 15.7 per cent contraction in June this year.

"It may not be appropriate to compare the IIP in the post-pandemic months with the IIP for months preceding the Covid-19 pandemic," the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said.

"The manufacturing sector production registered a decline of 8.6 per cent, while the output of mining and power segments fell 9.8 per cent and 1.8 per cent, respectively," it said, adding that with the gradual relaxation of restrictions, there has been a relative improvement in the economic activities by varying degrees as well as in data reporting.

The consumer price also went up to an unsatisfactory level, marking the highest level recorded in eight months, and it is also above the Reserve Bank's target range of 2-6 per cent. "The consumer inflation in September increased to 7.34 per cent from 6.69 per cent in the previous month on account of rising food prices. Food inflation in September rose to 10.68 per cent compared to 9.05 per cent in August," the release said.

Despite the central bank's effort to contain inflation by keeping rates low, unabated high prices have hurt the economy.

Sahara says over ₹3,200 cr paid to co-operative society members

New Delhi, Oct. 12: The Sahara Group on Monday said it has paid Rs 3,226 crore to more than 10 lakh members of its four associated co-operative credit societies in the last 75 days, including some payments against requests from people who had complained about delayed payouts.

The group said there has been some delay in payments, primarily due to an embargo imposed for last eight years by the Supreme Court, while about Rs 22,000 crore of its funds, including interest amount, are deposited in the Sahara-Sebi account, which was created to refund bondholders of two group firms.

In a statement, Sahara said Sebi has been able to repay only Rs 106.1 crore to the investors in these eight years despite repeated attempts, which the group said only affirms its view that there are no claimants left as most bondholders were already repaid before it was asked by the regulator to deposit the money. —PTI

Rao to man regulation department at RBI

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, OCT. 12

The Reserve Bank of India on Monday rejigged the portfolios of deputy governors following the appointment of M. Rajeshwar Rao as the new deputy governor. Rao was appointed following the retirement of his predecessor N.S. Vishwanathan and has been given the charge of department of regulation, enforcement, inspection, legal department and risk monitoring.

Vishwanathan's vacancy was filled after a delay of six months. Rajeshwar Rao is a seasoned central banker.

Last week, the appointments committee of the Cabinet cleared the name of Rao for the post of RBI deputy governor. With this, the RBI now has four deputy governors. The other three are B.P. Kanungo, M.K. Jain and M.D. Patra.

According to the central bank's website, Kanungo will handle ten portfolios. These include coordination, currency management, external investments and operations,

department of government and bank accounts, information technology, payments and settlements, foreign exchange, internal debt management and right to information and secretary's department.

Jain will be in charge of eight portfolios, including central security, corporate strategy and budget department, consumer education and protection department, supervision, financial inclusion and human resources.

Patra will handle the monetary policy department, department of economic and policy research, deposit insurance and credit guarantee, department of statistics, financial markets and international department and financial stability unit.

The RBI needs four deputy governors: two from within the ranks, a commercial banker and an economist to head the monetary policy department.

Prior to taking over as the ED, Rao was chief general manager, financial markets operations department.

HERO LAUNCHES GLAMOUR BLAZE AT ₹72,000



MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 12

Hero MotoCorp, India's biggest motorcycle maker, on Monday introduced a new special edition of the popular Glamour bike called the Glamour Blaze priced at Rs 72,200 at Delhi showroom to boost sales ahead of the festive season.

Powered by a BS 6-compliant 125cc engine, the bike is looking at making a mark in an extremely popular segment which also sees stiff competition between competing products.

The 125 cc engine comes with XSenes Programmed Fuel Injection and offers 10.7 bhp and torque of 10.6 Nm. It also gets an idle start-stop system - called i3S by Hero.

Mahindra Alfa 3-wheeler now BS6-compliant

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, OCT. 12

Mahindra & Mahindra on Monday launched the BS6 compliant variants of Alfa, its flagship 3-wheeler brand in Asia's third biggest economy. Mahindra Alfa comes with a few cosmetic changes and enhanced performance.

The Alfa three-wheeler is available in both passenger starting at Rs 2.67 lakh and cargo variants at Rs 2.59 lakh at Mumbai showroom.



SHORT TAKES



Para shuttler Manasi Joshi poses with the Barbie model.

Barbie model after role model Manasi

New Delhi: Indian para athletes have been making the headlines lately. Weeks after an unprecedented nine Para athletes were honoured with the National Sports Awards 2020, para shuttler Manasi Joshi has now made every Indian proud becoming the first ever Para athlete to have featured in TIME magazine as Next Generation Leader. She is also the first Indian para-athlete to have a Barbie doll modelled to her likeness announced on the occasion of the International Day of Girl Child. Joshi joined the likes of Australian Paralympic medalist wheelchair para athlete Madison De Rozario and Para Swimming champion Sumeyye Boyaci among many others, in celebration of extraordinary women who inspire girls around the world to be anything they dream to be. The only other Indian to have received this laurel is gymnast Dipa Karmakar in 2019. Extremely delighted with Manasi's latest recognitions, Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) President Deepa Malik said these honours will give a great boost to the Indian Paralympic Movement.

Football captain Carlton no more

New Delhi: Former India football captain and mid-fielder Carlton Chapman, who formed a deadly trio at the club level with Bhaichung Bhutia and IM Vijayan in the 1990s, died on Monday following a heart attack in Bengaluru. He was 49. Chapman was hospitalised on Sunday night at a hospital in Bengaluru and passed away early this morning. A creative midfielder, Chapman played for India between 1995 and 2001 and the country won the 1997 SAFF Cup under his captaincy. At the club level, he had two successful spells with East Bengal and one with now defunct JCT Mills. A product of the Tata Football Academy in early 1990s, Chapman joined East Bengal in 1993 and scored a hat-trick in his team's 6-2 win against Iraq club Al Zawra in a first round match at the Asian Cup Winners Cup that year. — PTI

Akbar elected FMSCI president

New Delhi: Former racer Akbar Ebrahim was on Monday unanimously elected for a second term as the president of India's motorsports governing body, FMSCI. The elections were held via video-conference amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Ebrahim had his first stint as FMSCI chief from 2016-2018 following which he was replaced by P. Prithviraj. "It is without doubt, going to be a very challenging and tough year given the unprecedented pandemic situation the whole world is facing. I am sure that the FMSCI will collectively rise to the occasion and manage the situation to the best of its ability," Ebrahim said in a statement. Farooq Ahmed was unanimously elected as the vice-president. The FMSCI boasts of more than 50 affiliates across all corners of the country and there are more than 1200 registered athletes. — PTI

Live on TV

CRICKET
IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Chennai Super Kings from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD
BADMINTON
Denmark Open: Matches from 12.30 pm on Star Sports 2 HD, 3
TENNIS
St Petersburg Open: Matches from 3.30 pm on Sony Six, HD
FOOTBALL
UEFA Nations League: Azerbaijan vs Cyprus from 9.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD; Ukraine vs Spain from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1, HD; Germany vs Switzerland from 12.15 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

BANG ON TARGET

AB de Villiers goes great guns as RCB crush KKR

Sharjah, Oct. 12: AB de Villiers hit a power-packed 73 to help Royal Challengers Bangalore outplay Kolkata Knight Riders by 82 runs in the Indian Premier League on Monday.

The South African great smashed six sixes in his 33-ball blitz and put on an unbeaten century partnership with skipper Virat Kohli, who scored 33, as Bangalore posted 194 for 2 in 20 overs.

Proteas quick Chris Morris and spinner Washington Sundar claimed two wickets each to keep down Kolkata to 112 for 9 in 20 overs.

But the evening belonged to the 36-year-old De Villiers who scored his third IPL half-century of the season to go past 3,000 runs in the Twenty20 tournament.

"Genius. Find me another word for @ABdeVilliers17. This one will do for now! Genius," veteran commentator Harsha Bhogle wrote on Twitter.

Opener Aaron Finch (47 from 37 balls) looked sluggish in the middle and struggled to find boundaries before being castled by Prasidh Krishna.

With boundaries drying up, De Villiers unleashed his array of shots against a disciplined Nagarkoti, smashing him for consecutive sixes, over midwicket, one of which hit a running car. — PTI



AB de Villiers of Royal Challengers Bangalore plays a shot on way to his half-century during an IPL match against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Monday.

— BCCI

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Aaron Finch b Prasidh 47, D. Padikkal b Russell 32, Virat Kohli not out 33, AB de Villiers not out 73. **Extras:** (LB-2, W-6, NB-1) 9. **Total: (for two wickets in 20 overs) 194.** **FOW:** 1-67, 2-94.

Bowling: Pat Cummins 4-0-38-0, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-42-1, Andre Russell 4-0-51-1, Varun Chakravarthy 4-0-25-0, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 4-0-36-0.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Tom Banton b Saini 8, Shubman Gill run out 34, Nitish Rana b Washington Sundar 9, Eoin Morgan c Udana

b Washington Sundar 8, D. Karthik b Chahal 1, A. Russell c M. Siraj b Udana 16, R. Tripathi c Morris b M. Siraj 16, Pat Cummins c Padikkal b Chris Morris 1, K. Nagarkoti b Chris Morris 4, Chakravarthy not out 7, Prasidh Krishna not out 2. **Extras:** (LB-3, W-3) 6. **Total: (for 9 wickets in 20 Overs) 112.** **FOW:** 1-23, 2-51, 3-55, 4-62, 5-64, 6-85, 7-89, 8-99, 9-108.

Bowling: Chris Morris 4-0-17-2, Navdeep Saini 3-0-17-1, Mohammad Siraj 3-0-24-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-20-2, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-12-1, Isuru Udana 2-0-19-1.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	7	5	2	0	10	+1.327
Delhi Capitals	7	5	2	0	10	+1.038
Royal Challengers Bangalore	7	5	2	0	10	-0.116
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	4	3	0	8	-0.577
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	3	4	0	6	+0.153
Rajasthan Royals	7	3	4	0	6	-0.872
Chennai Super Kings	7	2	5	0	4	-0.588
Kings XI Punjab	7	1	6	0	2	-0.381

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

Teen nabbed for threatening Ziva

Ahmedabad, Oct. 12: A 16-year-old boy was nabbed on Sunday from Mundra in Gujarat for allegedly issuing threats against cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni's minor daughter, police said.

"The class 12 student from Nanna Kapaya village was detained for questioning in connection with a disgusting threat message that was posted on the Instagram account of Dhoni's wife Sakshi Dhoni a few days back," Kutch (West) superintendent of police Saurabh Singh told reporters.

The teenager "confessed" to have posted the threatening message on the Instagram account after the IPL 2020 match between KKR and CSK cricket teams, police said. Ranchi police had shared information regarding the boy with Kutch (West) police and asked them to con-

firm if he was the one who had posted the threat message, Singh said.

"We detained him for questioning after Ranchi police informed us that the accused hails from Mundra in Kutch district.

"We have confirmed that the boy is the same who had posted the message. He will be handed over to Ranchi police as the FIR was lodged in that city," the SP said, adding that a team of Ranchi Police is likely to reach Kutch tomorrow to take custody of the teenager.

Dhoni is captaining the CSK cricket team in the ongoing Indian Premier League. The nature of the threat had caused a huge outrage on social media, with several cricketers, politicians and celebrities expressing disgust and demanding action. — PTI

ISHANT OUT OF IPL WITH RIB CAGE INJURY

Dubai, Oct. 12: Veteran pacer Ishant Sharma has been ruled out of the Indian Premier League with a rib-cage injury, his team Delhi Capitals said on Monday.

The 32-year-old Test specialist had played only one of the seven games that the Capitals have played so far, finishing his four overs wicketless for 26 runs against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Abu Dhabi. "Fast bowler Ishant Sharma experienced an acute episode of left rib cage pain while bowling at a team training session on October 7, 2020 in Dubai.

"Subsequent investigations revealed that he sustained a left internal oblique muscle tear. This injury will unfortunately rule him out of the remainder of the IPL," Capitals said. Ishant has played 97 Tests, 80 ODIs and 14 T20Is for India and is set to spearhead the ace attack during Test matches in Australia. — PTI

Depleted Dhoni side face SRH

Dubai, Oct. 12: Time is fast running out for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led Chennai Super Kings, a team which desperately needs its batting to click when it takes on Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Tuesday in a battle to keep its IPL hopes alive.

CSK with five defeats in seven games are currently at the penultimate position in the eight-team standings halfway into the tournament. While Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis have had decent outings so far, CSK need a stronger show from its faltering middle order to.

SRH, on the other hand, are a only a tad better-placed than CSK at the fifth spot with three wins from seven games.

But the five-wicket defeat to RR on Sunday would be hurting the Hyderabad outfit badly.

Batting has not been SRH's concern at all as the likes of Jonny Bairstow, skipper David Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

- Matches: 13
- Chennai: 9
- Hyderabad: 4

MEETING IN 2019

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Chennai Super Kings by 6 wickets at Hyderabad
- Chennai Super Kings beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by 6 wickets at Chennai

MEETING IN CURRENT EDITION

- Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Chennai Super Kings by 7 runs at Dubai

FOR THE RECORD

- Faf du Plessis is the highest run-getter for Chennai Super Kings in the current edition. The South African batsman scored 307 runs at a strike rate of 147.59 in seven innings of as many matches.

— S. PERVEZ QAISAR

Williamson are all among runs and have the ability to shoulder the responsibility on their own. But it is the bowling unit which let Hyderabad down on Sunday. — PTI

ICC SETS DEADLINE FOR NOMINATION OF ITS CHAIRMAN

Dubai, Oct. 12: The ICC on Monday set October 18 as the deadline for its Board of Directors to propose candidates for the chairman's post to succeed Shashank Manohar, ending a nearly three-month-long impasse on the nomination process.

"The process, which is being overseen by the Independent Chairman of the ICC Audit Committee, has commenced and the first stage is for the nominations of potential candidates to be made by current Board Directors by 18 October 2020," ICC stated in a release.

The candidate would require two thirds of the 17 ICC Board member votes, which roughly comes to 11 or 12. — PTI

NBA | CHAMPIONSHIP

Lakers crack the whip to win title

Orlando, Oct. 12: Kobe Bryant's spirit could be felt by the Los Angeles Lakers as they finished a run to the NBA title on Sunday, nine months after Bryant's death in a helicopter crash.

The Lakers completed a championship run dedicated to the late LA legend by defeating Miami 106-93 to capture the NBA Finals four games to two in a quarantine bubble at Orlando, Florida.

"Kobe, I know he's looking down on us super proud. We miss him, and this is definitely for him," Lakers star forward Anthony Davis said.

"I think Kobe and Gianna have guided this team the entire year," Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka said.

"Kobe's voice is always in my head, always, every day, every minute... for us to be able to win this championship doesn't take away the sting of the loss, but what it does is it helps us add to their legacy.

Bryant's widow, Vanessa Bryant, posted a congratulations message on Instagram, saying: "Wish Kobe and Gigi were here to see this."

The Lakers captured their first NBA title since 2010, when Bryant led them to the last of his five career crowns.

"There would be times in my hotel room here — when you're in a bubble for 100 days, it's tough — there would be times in the middle of the night, I would hear his voice: 'Stay the course. Finish the task,'" said Pelinka.

Kobe, I know he's looking down on us super proud. We miss him, and this is definitely for him.

— ANTHONY DAVIS after winning the NBA title

"He said, 'I'll give you two, three years, you'll fix this. You'll get the Lakers back on top.'"

Pelinka looked to the heavens and said, "I guess you were right, man. You gave me the energy to do it."

Outside the Lakers' home arena, the Staples Center in Los Angeles, fans took to the streets chanting, "Kobe, Kobe," despite being urged to celebrate at home due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

JAMES SAVOURS MVP TITLE

The sight of LeBron James hoisting an NBA championship trophy as Most Valuable Player of the title series was no surprise — but the path he took to a fourth career crown was anything but usual.

"I can't sit here and say one is more challenging than the other or one is more difficult than the other," James said after capturing his fourth NBA title with a third team, and his fourth Finals MVP award.

He posted a triple-double of 28 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists in the title-clinching 106-93 victory over the Miami Heat in Game Six. — AFP



LeBron James (centre) of the Los Angeles Lakers is jubilant as he holds his MVP and the NBA Championship trophy after winning the NBA title at AdventHealth Arena at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on Sunday. — AFP

No direct entry for badminton Finals

New Delhi, Oct. 12: India ace P. V. Sindhu will not get a direct entry in the rescheduled World Tour Final as the Badminton World Federation (BWF) has decided against handing automatic invitations to current world champions in the season-ending tournament.

According to the BWF rules, world champions have always enjoyed a direct qualification to the prestigious World Tour Finals but with the Covid-19 pandemic disrupting the international calendar, the world body has decided to do away with the criteria this year.

"Players will qualify for the HSBC BWF World Tour Finals 2020 in Bangkok (Thailand) according to the current regulations. The exception to that is current world champions will not get an automatic invitation (World Tour Regulations, Clause 8.2.3) and only

points earned from World Tour tournaments will be taken into account," BWF said.

"The remaining Grade 2 tournaments counting towards qualification are: DANISA Denmark Open 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 750), Asia Open I 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 1000), Asia Open II 2020 (HSBC BWF World Tour Super 1000)," the statement added.

Sindhu, who won the World Championship gold medal last year, had pulled out of the Denmark Open and will now have to perform at the Asia Legs to make it to the World Tour Finals. "We don't regret the decision to pull out of Denmark Open. Now that the BWF has laid down the criteria, Sindhu will try to do well in the Asia leg if there are no more post-nominations and qualify," Sindhu's father P. V. Ramana said. — PTI

Printed and Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Nellore: Survey No.527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chermudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82, Telefax: 0861-2348580 RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Kaushik Mitter