

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
VISAKHAPATNAM | SATURDAY | 17 OCTOBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 31.2°C
Min: 25.8°C
RH: 91%
Rainfall: 003.2mm

Forecast: Drizzle.
Max/Min temp.
31/25 °C

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija-Ashvina Suddha
Padyami till 9.10 pm
Star: Chitta till 11.52 am
Varjyam: 4.46 pm to 6.10 pm
Durmuhurtam: 6.13 am to 7.46 am
Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am
HIJRI CALENDAR
Safar ul Muzaffar 29, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.50 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 4.45 pm
Maghrib: 6.15 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.34 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.51 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 6.09 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 6.13 AM

COUNTER POINT



We will restore power once the rainwater recedes!

RBI eases credit flow to realty

Mumbai: In a bid to increase flow of credit to the real estate sector, the Reserve Bank on Friday rationalised the risk weightage to LTV (loan to value) ratio for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. As per a notification issued by the RBI, new housing loans will attract a risk weight of 35 per cent where LTV is less than 80 per cent and a risk weight of 50 per cent where LTV is more than 80 per cent but less than 90 per cent.

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IAF to get more Rafale jets



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Thailand PM rejects calls to resign



SPORTS | 6

Karthik steps down as KKR captain



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Vijayawada on the fast lane



Vehicles ply on the Kanakadurga flyover in Vijayawada after it was inaugurated online by Union minister Nitin Gadkari and Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Friday.

Kanaka Durga flyover opens, to ease traffic

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

The much awaited iconic Kanaka Durga flyover was jointly inaugurated by Union minister for road transport Nitin Gadkari and Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy virtually here on Friday. This marks the end of several postponements for various reasons. Giving further relief to traffic users another flyover at Benz Circle was also inaugurated on the occasion. The Chief Minister sought the Centre's help in taking up eight more projects, including the four-lane bypass road from Vizag to Bhogapuram airport. Gadkari asked him to

come to Delhi to sort out the proposals. After laying foundation stone for the new highway project, they dedicated it to the nation. Around 61 projects of 1,411 kms length are being constructed at a cost of ₹15,592 crore. While the 2.6 km long six lane Kanakadurga flyover was constructed at a cost of Rs 502 crore, the 2.3 km long Benz Circle flyover, started in 2016, has come up at Rs 80 crore. Speaking on the occasion, Jagan Mohan Reddy thanked the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Gadkari for supporting the State in developing the connecting highways and State infrastructure and increasing the pace from 12 km per

day in 2014 to 30 km per day, increasing the highway length to 6880 km from 2667 km. He also thanked them for taking up the work on 22 greenfield highways of which six pass through Andhra Pradesh over 375 kms. "As Visakhapatnam is being made the executive capital, there is a need to build an alternative road from Visakhapatnam to Bhogapuram airport. This can be taken over as coastal highway project by turning the Beach Road as a four-lane highway to Bhogapuram," the Chief Minister said and urged the Union Minister to consider it favourably along with seven other projects.

■ Page 2: Proposal to link key ports to boost growth

AP GIRL SECURES 6TH RANK; NEET RESULTS DELAYED

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC WITH BUREAU INPUTS VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Guthi Chaitanya Sindhu from Andhra Pradesh secured the sixth rank in NEET-UG, with 715 out of 720 marks. The results were announced after considerable delay on Friday. Another Telugu student, Karthik Reddy, made it to the top 10 ranks. From Telangana state, Snikitha Thummala secured the third rank. Another student from Telangana state, Anantha Parakrama B. Nookala, secured the 11th rank with 710 marks. A large number of students faced difficulty in accessing the results. Though the NTA announced that the results can be accessed on its website www.neetna.nic.in from 4 pm, the students could find out their results only after 8.30 pm. D. Ravi Kumar, a NEET applicant, said, "I started to visit the NTA website from 4 pm but I managed to access it at 9 pm. I was told that the website had crashed."

Meghana from Rajahmundry said, "I managed to access the website at 9.30 pm though I had been trying since 4 pm."

■ Page 2: State merit list on getting official results

Girls' marriage age to be reduced: PM

Government to decide on minimum age

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 16

Amid the alarming fact that India and China together contribute to 90 per cent of 1.2 million missing female births annually worldwide, mainly due to gender-biased sex selection, considered among the main reasons for the still prevalent child marriages in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that the government will fix the "right age" of marriage as soon as a high-level panel submits its report.

"Discussions are underway to decide the right age for marriage of our daughters. From across the country, daughters have written to me asking why the concerned committee has not given its decision yet. I assure you that as soon as the report comes, the government will act on it," Mr Modi said at an event to release a commemorative ₹75 coin to mark the 75th anniversary of India's long-standing ties with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN.

He also spoke of the steps taken for women's health and hygiene. "We are tak-

Modi to address 12 rallies for Bihar polls

Patna, Oct. 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address 12 rallies in Bihar where the three-phase Assembly election will begin on October 28. Addressing a press conference on Friday, senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis said the PM will address the first set of rallies in Sasaram, Gaya and

Bhagalpur on October 23. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and other leaders of the NDA constituent parties will attend the rallies to be addressed by Modi, he said. On October 28, Modi will address rallies in Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur and Patna, Fadnavis, the BJP's Bihar election in-charge, said. —PTI

ing appropriate actions for our daughters' well-being. Through Jal Jeevan Mission, work is going on to provide water to every household. We are providing sanitary pads for one rupee each," he said. The women and child development ministry had in June formed a task force under former politician Jaya Jaitly to examine matters related to the age of motherhood and lowering of maternal mortality rate (MMR). The 10-member panel was due to submit its report to the gov-

ernment by July 31, but as is evident by the PM's remarks, it is yet to do so. These alarming facts are part of the UN Population Fund's "State of the World Population Report 2020", that was released on June 30. Determining the age of marriage for women is all the more significant as due to the lockdown from March 24 to check the Covid pandemic, there were reports of several poor families marrying off minor children, mainly girls, due to lack of funds to teach them further.



LANCET: INDIANS LIVING LONGER, ADDED 10+ YEARS

New Delhi, Oct. 16: India has gained more than a decade of life expectancy since 1990, but there are wide inequities between states, according to a new study published in the journal *Lancet*. It assessed more than 286 causes of death and 369 diseases and injuries in more than 200 countries and territories across the world. The study noted that life expectancy in India has risen from 59.6 years in 1990 to 70.8 years in 2019, ranging from 77.3 years in Kerala to 66.9 years in Uttar Pradesh. However, the researchers, including Srinivas Goli from the Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar, said the increase in healthy life expectancy has not been as dramatic since "people are living more years with illness and disability." "The main improvement we see in almost every country is a decline in infectious diseases and more rise in chronic diseases," said study co-author Ali Mokdad from the University of Washington. "In India maternal mortality used to be very high, but now it is coming down. Cardiovascular diseases used to be number five, and now it is number one, and cancer rates are rising," Mokdad, Professor of Global Health at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, said. "The interaction of Covid with the continued global rise in chronic illness and related risk factors, including obesity, high blood sugar, and outdoor air pollution, over the past 30 years has created a perfect storm, fuelling Covid deaths," the scientists noted in a statement.



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OTHER STORIES

GOV CALLS FOR MAKING AP ROLE MODEL IN N.E.P.

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan called for making Andhra Pradesh a role model in implementation of National Education Policy 2020.

The Governor held a video conference with the vice-chancellors of 20 state universities from Raj Bhavan on Friday. He stated that the AP government was committed to implementing NEP in its true spirit and felt the need on the part of vice-chancellor to play a leading role to implement NEP 2020 by overcoming the challenges. He said that the NEP envisioned a robust and vibrant public education system in the country by putting an end to the fragmented functioning of the higher education system and also for the transformation of higher education institution into multidisciplinary universities.

Education minister Adimulapu Suresh stated that the implementation of NEP was expected to bring about structural, institutional and curricular reforms in the higher education system and added that several suggestions made by the AP government were incorporated in NEP by the Centre concerning governance and financial aspects.

TOURISM MINISTER ASKS CENTRE FOR SUPPORT

V.K.L.GAYATRI | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 16

Minister for tourism, M. Srinivasa Rao, urged the union government for more support for the development of the tourism sector in the state.

The government is very keen to promote and develop the sector using the unlimited natural resources across the state. The state has huge potential to develop temple and river-based tourism circuits, the minister informed to the centre.

The Union tourism minister, Prahlad Singh Patel, convened a video conference with the tourism ministers of various states on Friday.

While addressing them, Patel said that the tourism sector was badly affected due to the pandemic. However, after the relaxations, the state governments should implement Covid-19 precautionary measures and promote the industry further. While responding, Rao said that there is a huge potential in AP to develop the sector with 10 harbours and five international airports. The state has mythological temples and good rivers to develop tourism sector in the state further.

SC ADMITS PLEA SEEKING RESTRAINT ON JUDICIARY

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Supreme Court has admitted a petition seeking to lay down some restraints or checks on the judiciary on its adjudication process.

Advocate T. Koteswara Rao who practices in Telangana High Court filed a petition in the Supreme Court recently. Referring to instances of comments of Andhra Pradesh High Court reported in a section of media stating that the court asked the AP DGP to resign if he could not control the police force and the court commenting that when crores of rupees were being spent on painting party colours to gram panchayat buildings how the state government could stop payment of pensions to the senior citizens, the advocate said that such comments would shake the confidence of common man on the judiciary. He also said that such comments would also be having cascading effect on the morale of the police forces as their boss was punished without hearing him.

He said that it had become a routine practice for the members of the bench including tribunals to adjudicate the matters by conducting question and answer sessions where the counsels were supposed to answer questions without making any arguments.

The advocate opined that such tendencies were allowed to prevail, it might result in common man to lose confidence on judiciary and might even revolt against the system. He said that the present government was elected by the people of the state and added that he was taking up these issues to the notice of the court with bonafide intention.

Durga flyover puts an end to traffic chaos

The new flyover cleared the rush on the old main road

MD. ILYAS | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

The opening of the iconic Kanaka Durga flyover is expected to resolve traffic problems around Durga temple here.

The devotees have to go to the temple through ghat road and its entrance is situated on the Vijayawada-Hyderabad National Highway. A bane has been frequent traffic jams due to huge rush of devotees and vehicles, especially during festivals and on auspicious days.

The Durga flyover will help traffic towards Hyderabad and into Vijayawada bypass the main road. The Canal road, which goes to Durga temple and connects the Hyderabad highway, used to be busy with overflowing vehicular traffic.

Further, half of the city's population lives on the other side of Indrakeeladri hill in Bhavanipuram, Vidyadharapuram, Gollapudi, Housing Board colony and adjacent areas and they bear the brunt of frequent traffic jams. The Durga flyover will provide direct route to their destinations.

In an interesting incident, a woman devotee elated over the flyover inauguration, Enna Tirupatamma performed 'Sashtanga Namaskaram'. She said that she was an ardent devotee of Goddess Durga. Another devotee, A.V. Ramana said that the devotees have to take bath in Krishna river and cross Hyderabad Highway road to reach the ghat road to go to the temple. Now they can reach the ghat road without difficulties.

The beauty of floodwater gushing Krishna river, Prakasam Barrage and other areas of the city can be viewed from the Durga flyover, which is why many people rushed to the flyover and took selfie photos for posterity.

The general traffic on the Canal Road was diverted to the flyover after the flyover's inauguration and it cleared rush on the old main road.

● In an interesting incident, a woman devotee elated over the flyover inauguration, Enna Tirupatamma performed 'Sashtanga Namaskaram'. She said that she was an ardent devotee of Goddess Durga.

FM KEEN TO MAKE ORVAKAL AIRPORT FUNCTIONAL SOON

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL OCT. 16

Finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy has ordered the officials concerned to complete all pending works at Orvakal Airport in the next couple of weeks and make Orvakal airport functional soon.

The minister held a review meeting at Orvakal Airport on Friday evening. Later he addressed the media, and said Orvakal of Kurnool district is selected as a node to develop as an industrial sector under Hyderabad-Bangalore industrial corridor, stated the minister. It will develop as a model industrial zone and there is a chance to raise the industrial economy with the establishments of many industries, he added.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has mainly focused on developing the backward region particularly Kurnool to be a judicial capital and Nandyal to be a separate district.

The Orvakal is located in the middle of these two major towns.

● Orvakal is selected as a node to develop as an industrial sector under Hyderabad-Bangalore industrial corridor



Ministers M. Sankaranarayanan, Peddireddy Ramachandradev, Collector MD. Imtiaz, MLA's Jogi Ramesh, D. Nageswara Rao, Malladi Vishnu, R&B Principal Secretary M.T. Krishna Babu inauguration Kanaka Durga Flyover at Bhavani Puram in Vijayawada on Friday.

— DC

Centre to invest ₹15k cr on AP roads

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Minister for roads and buildings M. Sankaranarayanan said the central government has agreed in principle to invest ₹15,000 crore on roads in the state during the next five years.

The minister had formally cut the ribbon at the site of Kanaka Durga flyover after Union minister Nitin Gadkari from Nagpur and Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy from CM's Camp Office in Tadepalli had virtually inaugurated the flyover on Friday.

Mr Sankaranarayanan said with this, the Kanaka

Durga and Benz Circle flyovers have been dedicated to the nation, resolving the traffic woes of Vijayawada citizens forever.

He criticised the previous Telugu Desam government for dilly-dallying on completion of the Kanaka Durga flyover.

Later, people's representatives travelled on the flyover along with the minister. They included panchayat raj minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, Brahmin Welfare Corporation chairman and MLA Malladi Vishnu, and MLAs Jogi Ramesh, K. Rakshana Nidhi and Dulam Nageswara Rao.

Proposal to link key ports to boost growth

From page 1

Mr Nadkari said proposed connecting of important ports to highways to propel economic activity, sanction of bridge connecting additional funds linking Anantapur four-lane of national highway, connecting road to Nellore YSR Kadapa, Chittoor and Prakasam, and bypass road on the eastern side of Vijayawada connecting Machilipatnam port, without the State's share of funds.

Mr Nadkari said that the

issue could be sorted out at a meeting if the Chief Minister along with his officials to come to Delhi. He also assured that the Centre will develop best-in-class infrastructure in Andhra Pradesh paving way for socio-economic development.

Union Ministers V K Singh, G Kishan Reddy, Union Secretary (MoRTH) A Giridhar, state minister for Roads and Buildings M. Sankaranarayanan and Principal Secretary M.T. Krishna Babu were present.

SALIENT FEATURES OF DURGA FLYOVER

● The iconic Kanaka Durga flyover is the longest flyover in Andhra Pradesh with a length of 2.3 kilometres.

● It has a unique and complex design with a six-lane corridor supported by a single pillar.

● Only two flyovers, in Delhi and Mumbai, have come up on a single pillar.

● It is a flyover spanning the Krishna River and Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada built adjacent to Indrakeeladri hill on which ancient Kanaka Durga temple is situated.

● The total length of Durga flyover project is 5.29 kilometres with 2.9 kilometres being approach roads.

● The flyover crosses Krishna River, Prakasam Barrage and Buckingham canal and meets National Highway-65 near Pandit Nehru bus station.

Minister slams Naidu over his remark on flood mngt

D. SIVA RAMI REDDI | DC
KURNOOL OCT. 16

Minister for irrigation and district in-charge, Dr P. Anil Kumar, slammed N. Chandrababu Naidu for his unfounded comments on the state government over the failure of flood management due to rains in the recent past.

Countering Mr Naidu's claims, Mr Kumar said that there was a flood in 1998 during Naidu's regime due to which the Srisaillam power plant was submerged and operations were stopped for well over a year. Naidu failed utterly in flood management. He said Naidu's management could be seen clearly during Godavari pushkarams when 36 people lost their lives.

Claiming that CM Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's government does not hanker for publicity and was doing its job without any fanfare, Mr Kumar challenged Mr Naidu and his son to stop torrential rains if they had any capacity to do so in 'real time.'

Alluding to Naidu's presence in disasters like drought and floods, Mr Kumar said as Naidu shifted to Hyderabad city from Vijayawada, the Hyderabad city was devastated with floodwaters. This was due to his 'leg power,' he said.

Naidu's house at the Krishna river course on Karakatta in Vijayawada would submerge in waters as there is a heavy influx of flood from Srisaillam. He said is frustrated a man and had become senile and does not know what he was speaking. He said the government was open to constructive criticism but not unfounded attacks on it.

Along with finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Mr Kumar reviewed the flood situation in Tungabhadra pushkarams at the state guest house here on Friday. There is hardly one month's time to take up pushkaram-related works.

Regarding Prakasam barrage, he said it has a storage capacity of only 3 tmc and that is why water was being let out. He said Mr Naidu should first get out of the encroached house on Krishna river embankments instead of politicising the situation. He said officials were doing the best to mitigate the situation. Mr Naidu should take to constructive criticism instead of uttering falsehoods for political gain.

Meanwhile, government chief whip Gadikota Srikanth Reddy refuted allegations of TD chief N. Chandrababu Naidu that the state government was trying to inundate his 'illegal' residence on Karakatta at Undavalli.



TD national secretary N. Lokesh interacting with flood victim farmers in their damaged crop fields at Peddakonduru village of Mangalagiri mandal in Guntur district on Friday.

— DC

Lokesh demands relief for flood-hit

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Telugu Desam's national general secretary, Nara Lokesh, on Friday warned the YSR Congress government that it would pay a heavy price if it continued to ignore the woes and suffering of the farmers in view of huge losses they have suffered in heavy rains and floodwaters.

Visiting the flood and rain-hit crops in Mangalagiri, Tenali and Vemuru Assembly constituencies in Guntur district with TD leaders, Lokesh said that over 14 persons died in the floods in the past few days and farmers suffered ₹400 crore-worth crop losses but this government was not giving them any relief. He demanded that the government begin relief measures.

Objecting to the negligence of Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, in not visiting flood-affected areas, Lokesh said that it was only after Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, telephoned Jagan that he held a review on the rain mitigation efforts.

During his visit, Lokesh stepped into the knee-deep waters that submerged and damaged the crops in agricultural fields. He enquired from the farmers about their woes and the help they required to overcome the present crisis.

After speaking to farmers during his visit to Gundimeda, Chirravuru and Pedakonduru villages in Mangalagiri segment, Lokesh said that this government was trying to leave farmers in bare loin cloths and nothing else by being indifferent to their problems in this time of natural calamity. He lamented that severe losses were caused in 11 districts as over 8,000 houses were submerged and crops were damaged in about 2.5 lakh acres, in which farmers suffered a total loss of

'DISQUALIFICATION FEARS HAUNTING 'CORRUPT' JAGAN'

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Leader of Opposition in AP Legislative Council Yanamala Ramakrishnudu on Friday said that the threat of disqualification from elections was haunting Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, following speedy trials on his assets cases. He said that the Chief Minister was now in the grip of fear that his political career would reach a dead-end because some of his 31 cases were quite serious. He claimed that Jagan will face immediate six-year disqualification if he is convicted.

Mr Ramakrishnudu said that if a 10-year sentence would be slapped, then Jagan Mohan Reddy faces a 16-year disqualification. This was why he was making one mistake after another and he was going on indulging in unprecedented wrongdoings. He said that new tension gripped him on the consequences of his letter to the Chief Justice of India. He further claimed that all national associations of advocates have been attacking the mischievous attitude and hidden agenda of the Chief Minister.

₹400 crore. Paddy, black gram, groundnut, chilli and sugarcane crops were badly hit.

Visiting damaged fields in Attalurvaripalem, Pidaparthy and Pathabomavani Palem in Tenali segment and Chillumuru, Epuru and Kolluru Lockulu in Vemuru segment, Lokesh was accompanied by former ministers Alapati Rajendra Prasad and others.

State merit list on getting official results from Centre

From page 1

The Dr NTR University of Health Sciences authorities say that the NTA will submit the NEET UG results to the Union health ministry which in turn will communicate the same to the NTRUHS in AP. Once they get the official copy of the results with all India ranks pertaining to AP, they will prepare a state merit list and award ranks accordingly. There will be reservation for SC, ST, BC and women categories and also for sports, NCC, physically challenged and for Children of Armed Personnel.

Dr K. Sankar, registrar of Dr NTR University of Health Sciences, said, "It may take a week or so to announce state-wide ranks from the day of receipt of official list. As 15 per cent of seats will go to all India rank students, only 85 per cent will be available for local students in the state."

The university authorities reiterated their appeal to the state government to amend GO 111 pertaining to the department of higher education to issue a fresh GO fixing the process for conduct of counselling for admission into medical and dental colleges for first year MBBS course. They also appealed for issue of another GO fixing fee for both medical and dental courses for 2020-21.

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SPECIAL | GUESTS Birds will continue to arrive as usual unless they find disturbances in nature: Experts

No impact of rains on arrival of migratory birds

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Incessant rainfall under the influence of southwest monsoon seems to be having no major impact on arrival of several species of migratory birds spotted at several bird sanctuaries and water bodies in Andhra Pradesh.

According to an estimate, nearly six lakh migratory birds of 100 to 130 varieties from parts of Central Europe, Mongolia, Central, West and South Asia, Siberia, Tibet and others visit Pulicat and

Kolleru lakes, Avanigada and Hamsaladevi in Krishna delta, Telukunchi, Telineelapuram, Naupada in Srikakulam, Coringa sanctuary and Punyakhethram in East Godavari and others in the state.

Water birds like great crested grebes, great knots, the ruff, bar-headed geese, red-crested pochards, ospreys, sandpipers, pacific golden plovers, Eurasian wigeons, peregrine falcons, Asian open-bill storks, spot-billed pelicans, bar-headed geese, black-tailed godwits and several others start arriving from early October

and stay up to March or mid-April the next year before they return.

Chief conservator of forests (wildlife), Rahul Pandey said, "We have spotted openbill storks at Telukunchi and spot-billed pelicans at Telineelapuram bird sanctuaries in Srikakulam district recently. Migratory birds have arrived in AP. As the state has been witnessing a series of cyclonic storms like Titli, Hudhud and others during the monsoon season, these migratory birds have adapted themselves to survive except in worst case scenarios, like uprooting of trees with high velocity winds and devastation. We don't expect any major impact on the arrival of migratory birds to AP this season." However, bird experts say that as these migratory birds fly thousands of kilometres of distances to arrive to parts of South India, including AP, to avoid bad weather conditions and lack of feed. They can survive here with the availability of vegetation and water bodies as they get good feed. However, they say that if the birds find no vegetation, no trees to take shelter and flooding of water bodies, they will move to some other place. They say that as AP is witnessing a prolonged spell of rainfall at present and all water bodies are filled to the brim and there are no high velocity winds and devastation, the birds will continue to arrive and take shelter as usual unless they find major disturbances in nature. Decan Birders executive committee member, Bhamidipati Srikanth, said, "Though nature is supportive to migratory birds arriving and taking shelter in the winter, we are facing the

challenge of the destruction of their habitats in several parts in the state and fear that it may affect their numbers unless the issue is addressed." Nature lover, Dr. K. Mrutyunjaya Rao, said, "Several species of birds like the great knot, the bar-headed goose and others used to visit Coringa sanctuary and Punyakhethram but with encroachment and destruction of their habitats, their arrivals are dwindling year after year. There is a need to protect several endangered and threatened species of birds by protecting their habitats."

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The Power to Surprise

OTHER STORIES

SCR TO RUN SPECIAL TRAINS FOR DASARA

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

The South Central Railway to operate several daily/weekly festival special trains from October 17 covering various destinations while some trains pass through its jurisdiction.

According to a release from SCR on Friday, train No. 02514 from Guwahati - Secunderabad weekly special will depart Guwahati at 6.20 am on Thursdays and will arrive at Secunderabad at 4 am on Saturdays beginning from October 22 to November 26. In the return direction, train no. 02513 Secunde-rabad-Guwahati will depart Secunderabad at 7.20 am on Sundays and will arrive at Guwahati at 6 am on Tuesdays from October 25 to November 29.

Train No. 07319 Hubballi-Secunderabad daily special train will depart Hubballi at 8.50 pm and will arrive at Secunderabad at 11.45 am on the next day beginning from October 20 to November 30.

In the return direction, train no. 07320 Secunderabad-Hubballi will depart Secunderabad at 3.40 pm and will arrive at Hubballi at 7.35 am on the next day from Oct. 21 to Dec. 1.

As many as 14 special trains passing through SCR covering various destinations on both sides including Howrah-Puducherry (02867/02868), Howrah - Enakulam (02877/02878), Bhubaneswar-Tirupati (08479/08480), Bhubaneswar - Central Chennai (02839/02840), Bhubaneswar-Bengaluru (02845/02846), Bhubaneswar-Puducherry (02898/02897) and Bhubaneswar-Rameswaram (08496/08495) are to be operated from Oct. 18 onwards.



Earthmovers deployed to clear the sand around Bangladeshi Merchant Vessel MV MAA near Tenneti Park in Visakhapatnam on Friday.
— K. MURALIKRISHNA

Agency hired to salvage grounded Bangla vessel

All the 15 Bangladeshi crew are still on board

K.M.P. PATNAIK | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT. 16

The management of Bangladesh vessel MV MAA, which ran aground following snapping of anchors in the sea off Visakhapatnam coast following the deep depression in the Bay, has hired US-based MS Gill Marine to remove fuel oil from the vessel. It is reported that Gill Marine has obtained permission

grounded near Tenneti Park in the city.

Reports said on Friday the salvage operations could be initiated only after removal of oil from the vessel to avoid any risk of oil pollution to the beach. The vessel owner's Protection and Indemnity Club has appointed MS Gill Marine to remove fuel oil from the vessel. It is reported that Gill Marine has obtained permission

from various government authorities to take up the work. However, since there is no access road to the site of the grounded vessel, a temporary road is laid by the vendor to mobilise men and material. VPT has also mobilised its own oil spill response equipment with a dedicated team to the site to cater to any untoward oil pollution around the vessel. It may take two to three days to

transfer the oil from the grounded ship to shore. The vessel is having 41 tons of fuel oil and nine tons of diesel oil on board.

Sources in the shipping said the engine of the ship began malfunctioning soon after arrival at the anchorage. They expressed doubt that the vessel could be brought to normal condition.

All the 15 Bangladeshi crew are still on board.

Kolleru Lake jolted, farmers suffer losses

VADREU SRINIVAS | DC
KAKINADA, OCT. 16

Kolleru Lake and its adjoining areas have been jolted by the recent heavy rains with the fish wealth getting washed away and aqua ponds drastically damaged. Fish were netted by local fishermen on road side canals.

Many locals are dependent on Kolleru Lake and they are all

worried over significant losses.

According to a preliminary report, 2,800 hectares of fish ponds have been destroyed and 1,600 farmers incurred great losses.

"This is only a preliminary assessment report. The final report would be prepared within a week and the fisheries and animal husbandry minister

Sidiri Appala Raju would submit the preliminary

report to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy to help the farmers," said Deputy Chief Minister Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas (Nani) adding that farmers need not worry about their crop loss as the government would help them.

Appala Raju said that due to heavy rains for the past five days, agriculture and its affiliated sectors have been adversely

impacted and aqua and fish ponds have been destroyed.

He said that the aqua sector generates income for the government and also provides employment.

Abbayi Chowdary said that nearly 1,000 acres of aqua ponds have been damaged in Jalipudi, Sriparru and Chataparru villages.

Appalaraju visited Gudivaka lanka also.

CHANGE OF NAME

I.P. KUSUMA KUMARI spouse of Ex.No.2606067Y, Naik, Divakara Rao Purusubhukta resident of H.No.62, Peddaveedhi, Romadala - Village & Post, Pathapatnam Mandalam, Srikakulam - Dist. A.P., PIN - 532214 have changed my Name from **P.KUSUMA KUMARI to YERRUBOTHU KUSUMA KUMARI** vide Affidavit dated 15.10.2020 before Notary, Srikakulam 532001 (AP).

सार्वजनिक सूचना

पंडित गोविंद वल्लभ पंत पुरस्कार योजना 2020-21

पुलिस अनुसंधान एवं विकास ब्यूरो, गृह मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली, द्वारा पुलिस, कारागार एवं न्यायालयिक विज्ञान से संबंधित विषयों पर हिंदी में पुस्तक लेखन को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए चलाई जा रही पंडित गोविंद वल्लभ पंत पुरस्कार योजना के अंतिम दिनांक 31 मार्च, 2021 तक रचनाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं: मूल प्रकाशित पुस्तकों पर 5 पुरस्कार 30,000/- रुपये प्रति पुरस्कार (एक पुरस्कार महिलाओं के लिए आरक्षित), दो पुरस्कार अनूदित मुद्रित पुस्तकों के लिए 14,000/- रुपये प्रति पुरस्कार (एक पुरस्कार महिलाओं के लिए आरक्षित) तथा दो पुरस्कार 40,000/- रुपये प्रति पुरस्कार के हैं इसके लिए स्पर्धाएं आमंत्रित हैं जिसमें सामान्य वर्ग के लिए विषय "भारत की आर्थिक वृद्धि में प्रभावी कानून व्यवस्था और तकनीक का योगदान" तथा महिलाओं के लिए आरक्षित विषय "अपराध निवर्तन में प्रभावी अन्वेषण की भूमिका" है, इस विषय में न्यायालयिक विज्ञान और नई तकनीकों के प्रयोग को भी शामिल किया जाए। अधिक जानकारी के लिए कृपया संपादक हिंदी, पुलिस अनुसंधान एवं विकास ब्यूरो, गृह मंत्रालय, राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग-8, महिपालपुर, नई दिल्ली-110037 (मो.9873674281) से संपर्क करें। विस्तृत जानकारी ब्यूरो की वेबसाइट www.bprc.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

DAVP 19117/11/0003/2021

NAVARATRI UTSAVS TO LOW-KEY AFFAIRS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KAKINADA, OCT. 16

The nine-day Dasara festivities from October 17 to 26 will be a low-key affair this year in East and West Godavari districts due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Although, there will be no special poojas and theertha prasadam, temples are fully-decked up. Across Kakinada and Rajahmundry and other places in the districts, Devi Navaratri festivals are celebrated with devotional fervour.

Woman ends life with 2 kids

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIZIANAGARAM, OCT. 16

In a suicide pact, a 28-year-old woman committed suicide by jumping into a local pond along with her two daughters in Narapam village under Kothavalasa Mandal in Vizianagaram district on Friday. The deceased have been identified as N. Gowri, 28, and her daughters N. Sankeerthana, 6, and N. Hasini, 4. The locals said that the woman, along with her two daughters, went out on Thursday evening and did not return home. The trio was found dead in the local tank on Friday morning.

The police, with the support of the locals, retrieved the bodies from the tank and sent them to a government hospital for autopsy. The police are

● The locals said that the woman, along with her two daughters, went out on Thursday evening and did not return home. The trio was found dead in the local tank on Friday

suspecting that family disputes could be the reason for the woman to take the extreme step.

Gowri married one Srinivas Raju around eight years ago and later on had some disputes with him and her in-laws. The Kothavalasa Sub-Inspector N.P. Murthy registered a case and is trying to ascertain the exact reasons for the suicide.

The family members of Gowri alleged that Srinivas Raju and his parents were responsible for the death of their daughter and her two children.

NGT seeks report on encroachment of forest

NAGESWARA RAO
BALLEDA | DC
KADAPA, OCT. 16

National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed AP forest department to ensure that reserve forests in the state are free from encroachments and trespasses. It ordered officials to take all steps for preventing encroachments, so that wild animals could move freely in the region. In addition, the tribunal wanted formation of a high level committee to monitor reserve forest lands, protect them from land grabbers, and file periodic reports to NGT on the status of these forests.

The tribunal's order came following a complaint by TTD former chairman Putta Sudhakar

Yadav on encroachment of reserve forests. Sudhakar Yadav, who is Telugu Desam Mydukur area in-charge, filed an affidavit before the National Green Tribunal, Southern Zone, Chennai, stating that reserve forests have been encroached in survey numbers 506-B and 507 around Nandyalampeta village in Mydukur mandal of YSR Kadapa district. He charged that certain politicians backed by a particular political party had encroached 304 acres of land. Of this, 104 acres have even been fenced with barbed wire. Bore wells have been dug and pipelines laid on the land. Though complaints have been made to forest authorities, no action had been taken due to political pressure. Following the complaint,

AP records 3,967 Covid-19 cases

SAMPAT G. SAMRITAN | DC
VIJAYAWADA, OCT. 16

Andhra Pradesh has registered 3,967 new Covid-19 positive cases during the last 24 hours, raising the

overall tally to 7,75,470, apart from 25 deaths, taking the death toll to 6,382.

State health authorities released their Coronavirus bulletin here on Friday reporting that of the total

74,337 samples tested during the past 24 hours, 3,967 individuals have tested Covid-19 positive.

Out of a total number of 69,20,377 samples tested so far in the state.

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE NAVAL DOCKYARD, VISAKHAPATNAM (Telephone: 0891 2816350, 6366 Fax: 0891 2816688) E-TENDER NOTICE

QUOTING NO: RPYP/AMC/18-19/210(B)

- Digitally sealed tenders through E-Procurement are invited for **AMC for 04 in Nos. Welding Simulators of MFAB Department at ND(V)** for Three Years.
- The E-Tender documents can be downloaded from the web "www.defproc.gov.in." The demand draft of **Rs. 38,200/-** from a Nationalised Bank is also to be attached along with offline tender document towards payment of Earnest Money Deposit.
- For any Clarifications on Tendering of subject item, please send the mail to MYP-ENCNDV@NAVY.GOV.IN and any Clarifications on technical aspects please contact MFAB Department on Tel: **0891-2816421**
- Offline sealed tenders are required to be dropped in tender box marked as **"MYP"** kept at Vijayanagar Gate of Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam or be sent by Registered Post so as to reach this office by **07 Nov 2020 (1830 Hrs)**.

davp 10702/11/0050/2021

DGM (RP)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE NAVAL DOCKYARD, VISAKHAPATNAM (Telephone: 0891 2816350, 6366 Fax: 0891 2816688) E-TENDER NOTICE

QUOTING NO: RPYP/O&M/19-20/002

- Digitally sealed tenders through E-Procurement are invited for **Operation-cum-comprehensive Annual Maintenance for 03 in Nos. Mobile Load Banks (02 in Nos. 450KW & 01 in No. 1250 KW) for ELE Department** for a period of One Year.
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- Offline sealed tenders are required to be dropped in tender box marked as **"MYP"** kept at Vijayanagar Gate of Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam or be sent by Registered Post so as to reach this office by **07 Nov 2020 (1830 Hrs)**.

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SHORT TAKES

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CLEARS AIR ON
PENDING GST DUESAKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, OCT. 16

Union minister and senior BJP leader Dharmendra Pradhan on Friday cleared the air on the pending Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues of Odisha saying that the Centre had cleared the entire compensation amount for the financial year 2019-20 and a part of the dues for the for FY 2020-21 was also released.

“₹5,122 crore has been released as an entire GST compensation to the Odisha government for FY 2019-20. Similarly, of the ₹2,258 crore allocated for Odisha as GST compensation for the FY 2020-21, ₹1129 crore has been released,” the minister told reporters.

The minister's clarification came in the wake of the state government raising the issue of non-clearance of the compensation on different occasions and platforms, ostensibly for scoring a few political brownie points.

The ruling BJD and BJP, though have supported each other on the floor of Parliament on passing many crucial Bills, are arch political rivals in state politics.

The minister's clarification is seen as a tactical move to rob the BJD of the opportunity to raise the pending GST issue during the forthcoming by-polls in Tirtol and Balasore assembly constituencies and portray it as an act of apathy by the Centre.

The minister went on to add that Odisha was also permitted to borrow an additional ₹2,858 crore at 0.50 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product for meeting the short-fall arising out of GST implementation.

Pradhan stated that the Modi government had provided ₹22,267.66 crore to the Odisha government in the forms of grants, materials and assistance to effectively fight the adverse situations caused due to the Covid crisis.

The BJP is trying hard to retain the Balasore seat where its sitting MLA Madan Mohan Dutta died in July.

Festive spirit



A worker gives a finishing touch to a display mask of Chhau dancers at a community puja pandal ahead of the Durga Puja festival in Kolkata on Friday.

— PTI

Assam SP arrested
in police job scam

Sanjit Krishna is the brother of Assam chief secretary

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, OCT. 16

In a major breakthrough in the Assam Police job recruitment scam, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) busted the entire racket by arresting serving IPS officer Kumar Sanjit Krishna who also happens to be the brother of Assam chief secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna.

Pointing out that Sanjit Krishna was kingpin of recruitment scam as he was responsible for leaking question paper of the Sub-Inspector recruitment exams, security sources said that the CID sleuths have also succeed-

ed in recovering more than ₹5.70 crore cash from the accused involved in selling the leaked question papers to aspirants.

Informing that Sanjit Krishna hatched the conspiracy to leak the question paper with a former DIG P.K. Dutta, security sources said that with his arrest one part of the investigation into the scam is complete.

Indicating that some more arrests were possible among those who were involved in selling the question papers, sources said that police have already re-created the crime scene from where question papers were leaked and circulated on

the WhatsApp, a day before the state-level SI recruitment test on September 20.

Sanjit Krishna, who was holding the post of SP (Karimganj), was transferred as SP of Foreigner Regional Registration Office, Barpeta, on Sunday after his name surfaced in the scam. Subsequently, he was summoned by the CID.

Sanjit Krishna was questioned by the CID on Monday and his residence in Guwahati was also raided on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, the CID raided the officer's Karimganj residence and interrogated five police personnel, including the

driver of the former SP, the in-charge of the police guest house and the security guard of the SP's official residence.

After this, CID officials produced the five police personnel at a local court in Karimganj.

Police are also investigating the involvement of PK Dutta, an APS officer who served as Sanjit's deputy in Karimganj.

Meanwhile, Assam chief secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna in social media post clarified that the law would take its course and his name should not be dragged in as his brother “is a mature, independent individual in a different profession”.

BJP RELEASES
REPORT CARD FOR
CENTRE, BIHARNAYEAR AZAD | DC
PATNA, OCT. 16

The BJP on Friday released a report card to highlight the performance of the Centre as well as the state government ahead of Bihar polls. Assembly elections in the state are scheduled to begin from October 28 and the NDA comprising JD(U), the BJP and two partners HAM and VIP are in the fray against Opposition coalition led by the RJD.

The report card released by the BJP claims that the Centre, as well as the state government, extended all kind of support to the people who were stuck outside the state during the Covid period. The BJP also asserted that the state saw all-round progress under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led NDA government.

The report card highlights that “the government spent about ₹30,000 crore to support people during the Covid period. ₹203 crore were transferred to the bank account of about 21 lakh people who were stranded outside the state”.

While presenting the achievements of the state government, Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, who was also present on the dais along with other senior NDA leaders, said that that the party is contesting polls in alliance with Nitish Kumar's JD(U) for the development of Bihar.

“We are here to discuss the work done under the leadership of Nitish Kumar. We understand our responsibility and we will continue to work for the development of Bihar. But there are others who are only interested in the development of their family”, Ravi Shankar Prasad said while targeting the RJD.

Actors ‘employed’ as
MNREGA workersRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, OCT. 16

Bollywood stars Deepika Padukone and Jacqueline Fernandez have been given “employment” under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in a Madhya Pradesh village.

This may sound ridiculous but villagers in Piparkheda Naka Panchayat in Khargone district have found to their shock that job cards carrying photographs of the actors have been issued by the local authorities under MNREGA scheme.

A job card issued to a member of the family of Monu Shivshankar carried Deepika Padukone's photograph. Similarly, a job card issued to a woman beneficiary carried a photograph of Jacqueline Fernandez.

Fake job cards carrying photographs of

Bollywood stars and models have been issued in the panchayat under the anti-poverty scheme, enquiry by the local villagers have found.

The corrupt practices in the scheme have come to the fore when the local villagers started browsing the MNREGA site to know if wages under the scheme have been released to the beneficiaries, Sonu alias Sunil Singh, one of the beneficiaries of MNREGA in the panchayat said on Friday.

According to him, funds under the scheme have been siphoned off by issuing fake job cards as the website indicated release of wages to fake beneficiaries.

The villagers promptly took up the matter with the ‘zilla panchayat’ chief executive officer Gaurav Binal who ordered a probe into it. “Stringent action will be taken against the officers involved in the fake job card scam”, the CEO said.

NEXT 2.5 MONTHS CRUCIAL IN FIGHT
AGAINST CORONAVIRUS: VARDHAN

New Delhi, Oct. 16: The next two-and-a-half months are going to be crucial in the fight against coronavirus because of the winter season and festivals, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Friday.

Vardhan, who is also Science and Technology Minister, said three vaccine candidates are progressing well in India with one of them in the advanced stage-III clinical trial and two others in stage-II trial.

He hoped that India will soon have indigenous production of vaccine against coronavirus.

The next two-and-a-half months are going to be very crucial for us in our fight against corona because of the winter sea-

son and the festival season. It becomes the responsibility of every citizen to not let our guard down and follow Covid-19 appropriate behaviour to curb the spread of the infection, Vardhan said.

Meanwhile, India's Covid-19 caseload rose to 73,70,468 with 63,371 new infections being reported in a day, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease crossed 64 lakh pushing the recovery rate to 87.56 per cent, according to the Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The toll climbed to 1,12,161 with the virus claiming 895 lives in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

WORLD

SHORT TAKES

GUINEA'S PREZ ,
SEEKS TO PROLONG
RULE FOR 3RD TIME

Conakry (Guinea), Oct. 16: Guinean President Alpha Conde, 82, is seeking a third term in office on Sunday, insisting his attempt to prolong his rule does not make him a dictator even as opposition protesters slam his candidacy as an illegal power grab.

The electoral campaign in this West African nation already has seen deadly protests, which some fear could explode after results are announced. More than 50 people have been killed in anti-Conde protests since October last year, Amnesty International said this month, urging the government to investigate.

Already the International Criminal Court at The Hague has said it is “deeply concerned” about the mounting tensions.

“These recurring episodes of election-related violence are deplorable,” ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said.

POLICE GRILL ANWAR OVER BID TO BECOME PM

Kuala Lumpur, Oct. 16: Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim was grilled by police on Thursday over his bid to oust the government, in what he called “political harassment” to thwart his attempt.

Anwar met the nation's king on Tuesday to show evidence that he has majority support in Parliament to form a new government and unseat Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, who has only a thin two-seat majority in the house.

Police summoned Anwar to give a statement Thursday after 113 complaints were lodged over a purported list of 121 lawmakers allegedly backing Anwar that has spread on social media.

Televised townhalls replace US Prez debate

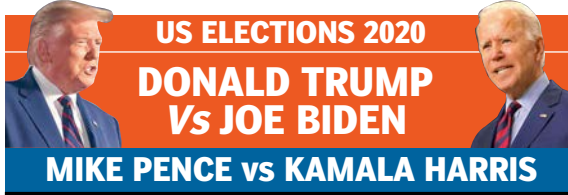
Greenville (US), Oct. 16: US President Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger Joe Biden held simultaneous and separate televised town halls in lieu of the second presidential debate, taking questions from pre-selected individuals at sessions moderated by eminent television journalists.

While Trump's town hall was hosted by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in Miami, Florida, that of Biden was held in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia by the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) News. The second presidential debate had

originally been scheduled for on Thursday night. However, it was cancelled after Trump refused to participate in a virtual format of the presidential debate as amended by the independent debate commission following the president's Covid-19 diagnosis.

A final debate is still scheduled for October 22 in Nashville, Tennessee. The first debate was held on September 29 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Trump, 74, has recovered from a brief spell of Covid-19 after he and First Lady Melania Trump, 50, tested positive for the deadly viral infection on



October 1. Trump's doctors have now cleared him for his election campaigns. During the town hall, Trump defended his handling of the Coronavirus pandemic.

He also reiterated his stand on tax returns. However, Trump refused to denounce the QAnon conspiracy theory. According to QAnon, a far-

right group that has been labelled a terror threat by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Democrats are running a secret paedophilia ring. When asked by moderator Savannah Guthrie if he would denounce the QAnon theory and “just say it's crazy and not true”, Trump said, “I don't know about QAnon.” Wh-

en pressed further on whether or not he believed that Democrats were running a pedophile ring, Trump said, “I have no idea.”

Biden's during his town hall said he would soon express his position on court packing, an issue that he has avoided so far. The 77-year-old democratic presidential nominee said he will come out with a clear position before Election Day about where he stands on expanding the Supreme Court, depending how the rest of the confirmation process of Judge Amy Coney Barrett is handled. President Trump has selected Judge

Barrett to succeed Supreme Court Justice late Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The Senate Judiciary Committee finished its confirmation hearings for Barrett earlier on Thursday. Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham said that the committee will vote on Barrett's nomination on October 22. If the committee approves her nomination, which is expected, it would be sent to the full Senate floor.

At the town hall with ABC's George Stephanopoulos, Biden said he is “not a fan” of court packing. When asked by

Stephanopoulos if he was open to increasing the number of judges on the court if Barrett is confirmed before the election, Biden said, “I'm open to considering what happens from that point on”.

Republicans have repeatedly criticised Biden for not directly giving his view on court packing. “They do have a right to know where I'll stand and they'll have a right to know where I stand before they vote,” Biden said, when asked whether voters had a right to know where he stands on the issue of expanding the court.

— PTI



Pro-democracy protesters react as police use water cannons to disperse the anti-government rally in Bangkok on Friday.

— AFP

Thai PM rejects calls to resign

2 Thai protesters held for
‘violence against queen’

Bangkok, Oct. 16: Thailand's prime minister rejected calls for his resignation on Friday, while his government failed to stop student-led protesters from rallying again in the capital in defiance of a strict state of emergency.

More than 1,000 protesters gathered in torrential monsoon rains to push their core demands, including that Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha leave office, the constitution be amended and the nation's monarchy undergo reform. It was the second day

they defied an order not to gather, imposed after some demonstrators heckled a royal motorcade, an unprecedented development in Thailand, where the monarchy is normally held in reverence.

Police had earlier closed roads and put up barricades around a major Bangkok intersection where some 10,000 protesters defied the new decree Thursday. Police in riot gear secured the area, while malls in the normally busy shopping district closed early.

— AP

Bangkok, Oct. 16: Authorities in Thailand have filed the most severe charges yet in connection with ongoing pro-democracy demonstrations, charging two men under an article of the law covering violence against the queen.

Ekachai Hongkangwan and Paotthong Bunkueanum were arrested Friday. They could face

anywhere from 16 years to life imprisonment.

The move against the two activists comes as the student-led protest movement continues to press its demands, including new elections, changes to make the constitution more democratic and reform of the monarchy to make it conform with democratic norms.

— AP

Antiviral drug Remdesivir
found ineffective: Study
WHO disappointed with test results

London, Aug. 16: Antiviral drug remdesivir has “little or no effect” on a hospitalised Covid-19 patients' chances of survival, a World Health Organisation (WHO) clinical trial has suggested. The potential Coronavirus treatment option is one of four repurposed drugs being examined under the UN agency's large Solidarity trial that launched in March.

Randomised trials at hospitals around the world have involved remdesivir; lopinavir; hydroxychloroquine and interferon-beta 1a — looking to assess their impact on inpatient mortality.

The hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir arms of the trials were discontinued on June 20 and July 4 respectively. In a statement provided to the PA news agency on Thursday evening, the WHO press office said results from these first four treatment options of the Solidarity trial were “unpromising”.

“The trial found that remdesivir, lopinavir/hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir/ritonavir and Interferon have little or no effect on mortality for hospitalised patients,” WHO said.

— Agencies

MILLIONS OF FRENCH FACE COVID CURFEW

Paris, Oct. 16: Millions of French people were looking forward to a last night of freedom on Friday before a Covid-19 curfew in Paris and other large cities comes into force for a least a month, prompted by an alarming surge in new cases.

The curfew aims to keep some 20 million people home from 9 pm to 6 am — 30 percent of the French population. It was ordered

by President Emmanuel Macron this week as the number of new infections and deaths raised the spectre of hospital overloads like those seen in March and April.

Health authorities reported on Thursday a record 30,621 new cases in the previous 24 hours as well as 88 deaths and over 200 new Covid admissions to intensive care units.

— AFP

CHINESE COVID-19 CURE SHOWS HOPE

Beijing, Oct. 16: One of China's leading Covid-19 vaccine candidates, called BBIBP-CorV, was shown to be safe and elicited immune response in a small early-phase human trial, researchers said on Friday. A previous clinical trial reported similar results for a different vaccine that is also based on inactivated whole SARS-CoV-2 virus, but in that study the vaccine was only tested in people aged under 60 years.

The latest study, published in The Lancet

Infectious Diseases journal, included participants aged between 18 and 80 years, and found that antibody responses were induced in all recipients. Participants aged 60 and over were slower to respond, taking 42 days before antibodies were detected in all recipients compared with 28 days for participants aged 18-59, the researchers said. Antibody levels were also lower in those aged 60-80 years compared with those aged 18-59, they said.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

India in 4th spot at Asian chess

Chennai: India enjoyed an unbeaten day with a win and two draws to move up to fourth place after six rounds in the Asian Online Nations (Regions) Cup Team Championship for men on Friday. The top-seeded Indians, who were sixth after three rounds, were held to a 2-2 draw by a strong Kazakhstan team, seeded second, in the sixth round after having shared points with Iran in round four before beating Jordan 3.5-0.5. In the India-Kazakhstan match, the talented 16-year-old Nihal Sarin and the experienced K Sasikiran scored wins over Rustam Khushnudi and Denis Makhnev respectively. B Adhban and captain Surya Shekhar Ganguly lost their games. — PTI

Pak invites Eng for tour in 2021

London: England could tour Pakistan for the first time in over a decade after officials confirmed they had received an invitation to visit the Asian giants early in 2021 for a "short white-ball series". England have not played in Pakistan since 2005/06. An England and Wales Cricket Board statement issued Thursday said: "After discussions with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), we can confirm the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has received an invitation in respect of a short white-ball tour to Pakistan during the early part of 2021." It is understood the proposed tour could consist of three T20 internationals, none of which would replace England's rescheduled tour of Sri Lanka. — AFP

Irani new chief of Weightlifting body

Lausanne: The crisis-hit International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), fighting to keep its place at the 2024 Paris Olympics, on Friday named a third president in a troubled week. The IWF said it had appointed Michael Irani, the British chair of the federation's medical committee and a former chair of its anti-doping commission, as interim president. While Irani accepted the nomination, he insisted he was not interested in the job full-time, but committed to furthering reforms around the issue of drugs testing that has plagued the sport. "I am grateful to the IWF executive board for entrusting me with the presidency on an interim basis," Irani said. — AFP

Tokyo Olympics on, assures IOC

Tokyo: The International Olympic Committee tried to assure dozens of international sports federations on Thursday that the postponed Tokyo Games will open on July 23. The IOC and Tokyo organisers have been holding on-line sessions this week with about 200 national Olympic committees, and with the more than 30 summer sports bodies that are represented on the program. "We are very confident that the games in Tokyo next year will take place," IOC sports director Kit McConnell told delegates in the on-line seminar. It's still unclear if fans will be allowed to populate venues, and if non-Japanese fans will be allowed to enter the country. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Rajasthan Royals vs Royal Challengers Bangalore from 3.30 pm; Delhi Capitals vs Chennai Super Kings from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

FOOTBALL

English Premier League: Everton vs Liverpool from 5 pm; Chelsea vs Southampton from 7.30 pm; Manchester City vs Arsenal from 10 pm; Newcastle vs Manchester United from 12.30 am (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 2, HD

Italian League: Inter Milan vs AC Milan from 9.30 pm; Crotone vs Juventus from 12.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

UFC FIGHT NIGHT

Brian Ortega vs Chan Sung Jung and other bouts from 4.30 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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QUINTESSENTIAL!

Quinton cracks whip as MI thrash KKR

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 16: The Mumbai Indians juggernaut rolled on unabated as they recorded their fifth straight win with an eight-wicket mauling of Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL here on Friday.

A tidy bowling effort by Mumbai Indians ensured that KKR were restricted to 148 for 5 after an unbeaten 53 by pace spearhead Pat Cummins. Then, the defending champions rode on a blistering 44-ball 78 by Quinton de Kock, to chase down the target with 3.1 overs to spare.

De Kock, who struck nine fours and three sixes and skipper Rohit Sharma (35 off 36 balls), laid the foundation for the emphatic win with their 94-run first-wicket stand. The two openers took the KKR attack to cleaners with de Kock being the more aggressive one. The South African notched up his fifty in just 25 balls, with a maximum over deep-square leg.

It rained boundaries for Mumbai as the two dominated the KKR bowling attack. Pacer Prasidh Krishna (0/30) faced their brunt, conceding three fours in the third over and de Kock followed that up by hammering Cummins (0/28) for two successive fours, both pull shots, in the next. De Kock kept playing shots all around the park and was again brutal on Prasidh, whom he hit for two fours and a six, in the seventh over.

Earlier, after a top-order failure, it was Cummins (53 off 36 balls 5x4;2x6) and new skipper Eoin Morgan (39 not out off 29 balls; 2x4; 2x6) who pulled KKR out of trouble after they were 61 for 5. — PTI



Quinton de Kock (right) of Mumbai Indians gestures after scoring a fifty against Kolkata Knight Riders during their Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Friday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Kolkata Knight Riders: R. Tripathi c Suryakumar Yadav b Boult 7, Shubman Gill c Kieron Pollard b Rahul Chahar 21, Nitish Rana c Quinton de Kock b Nathan Coulter-Nile 5, D. Karthik b Rahul Chahar 4, Eoin Morgan not out 39, Andre Russell c Quinton de Kock b Jasprit Bumrah 12, Pat Cummins not out 53, Extras (LB-2, W-5) 7, Total (for 5 wickets in 20 Overs) 148.
FOW: 1-18, 2-33, 3-42, 4-42, 5-61.
Bowlers: Trent Boult 4-0-32-1, Nathan Coulter-Nile 4-0-51-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-22-1, Krunal Pandya 4-0-23-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-18-2.

Mumbai Indians: Rohit Sharma c Dinesh Karthik b Shivam Mavi 35, Quinton de Kock not out 78, Suryakumar Yadav b CV Varun 10, Hardik Pandya not out 21, Extras (LB-5) 5, Total (for 2 wickets in 16.5 Overs) 149.
FOW: 1-94, 2-111.
Bowlers: Chris Green 2.5-0-24-0, Pat Cummins 3-0-28-0, Prasidh Krishna 2-0-30-0, Andre Russell 2-0-15-0, CV Varun 4-0-25-1, Shivam Mavi 3-0-24-1.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	8	6	2	0	12	+1.353
Delhi Capitals	8	6	2	0	12	+0.990
Royal Challengers Bangalore	8	5	3	0	10	-0.139
Kolkata Knight Riders	8	4	4	0	8	-0.684
Sunrisers Hyderabad	8	3	5	0	6	+0.009
Chennai Super Kings	8	3	5	0	6	-0.390
Rajasthan Royals	8	3	5	0	6	-0.844
Kings XI Punjab	8	2	6	0	4	-0.295

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

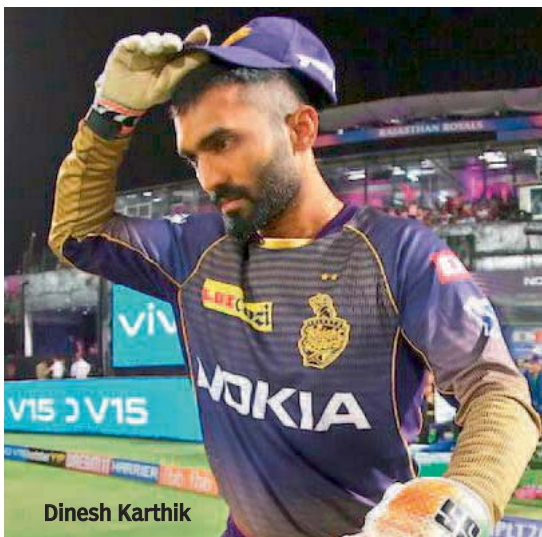
Karthik passes on KKR captaincy baton to Eoin

Abu Dhabi, Oct. 16: Wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik on Friday stepped down as captain of the Kolkata Knight Riders team, handing over the reins to his English deputy Eoin Morgan hours before the IPL match against Mumbai Indians here.

Karthik told the KKR management that he wants to "focus on his batting and contributing more to the team's cause." Appointed skipper in 2018, the 35-year-old led KKR in 37 matches.

"We are fortunate to have leaders such as DK, who has always put the team first. It takes a lot of courage for someone like him to take a decision such as this," team CEO Venky Mysore said in a statement.

Midway into the ongoing season, KKR find themselves at fourth place in the points table with four wins and three losses. Morgan was widely tipped to take over at some point from



Dinesh Karthik

Karthik given the topsy-turvy run.

"...DK and Eoin have worked brilliantly together during this tournament and although Eoin takes over as captain, this is effectively a role swap and we expect that this transition will work in a seamless manner," Mysore said.

Even though Mysore termed Karthik's decision surprising, the move was always on the cards with a World Cup-winning captain in the mix. The veteran Indian wicketkeeper-batsman's captaincy had come under intense criticism due to the team's erratic campaign so far. — PTI

Virat & Co. take on reeling RR

Dubai, Oct. 16: Royal Challengers Bangalore would aim to get their strategy right after some inexplicable decisions during the loss to Kings XI Punjab when they take on an erratic Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here on Saturday.

The Virat Kohli-led RCB has won five of its eight games on the back of all-round performances but

seemingly blundered in the eight-wicket defeat to laggards KXIP on Thursday.

Against KXIP in Sharjah, AB De Villiers, who has been in fine form, was sent in to bat at number six, a baffling decision by the RCB. The experiment didn't work as all three batsmen struggled with the South African scoring just two

off five balls. However, Kohli and his men will look to shrug off the defeat.

On the other hand, the Royals' campaign this season has been marred by numerous top-order collapses, forcing the lower half of the side to pull them across the finish line.

After failing in his first match of the season, Ben

REJUVENATED CHENNAI FACE IN-FORM DC

Sharjah, Oct. 16: Their campaign is back on track, courtesy Mahendra Singh Dhoni's smart captaincy but a stiff test awaits Chennai Super Kings when they face a dominant Delhi Capitals in their next IPL match, here on Saturday.

Every tactic that Dhoni employed against Sunrisers Hyderabad, worked, and they are expected to continue in the same vein as they battle to salvage the season. Whether it was promoting Sam Curran to the opener's slot or finishing pacer Deepak Chahar's quota upfront while using seven bowlers to dry up runs, every move produced desired result.

The three-time champions will look to build on the win over Sunrisers Hyderabad as the league phase moves towards the business end. However, they are up against a team which is high on confidence and well-served by the pace duo of Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje. — PTI

ABD ORDER WAS PLANNED, SAYS KOHLI

Sharjah, Oct. 16: Royal Challengers Bangalore's decision to push AB de Villiers down the order backfired but skipper Virat Kohli said it was a well-thought-out strategy that somehow did not work against KXIP. "We had a chat, a message from outside about left-right combination and we wanted to go with it because they had two leggies. Sometimes things don't come off. We're pretty happy with the decisions," he said. — PTI

SRIKANTH OUT OF EVENT

Odense, Oct. 16: Top Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth bowed out of the Denmark Open badminton tournament with a 22-20, 13-21, 16-21 defeat to Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the men's singles quarterfinals here on Friday.

The world number two Taipei player came back after losing the first game and took the next two to win the match in one hour and two minutes and storm into the semifinals. — PTI

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