

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | MONDAY | 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER

Max: 33.8°C
Min: 24.9°C
RH: 58%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Rain likely. Max/Min temp. 33/24 °C

COVID-19 CUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+90,890)	(+990)
42,00,366	71,663
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+2,574)	(+9)
TS: 1,40,969	886
(+10,794)	(+70)
AP: 4,98,125	4,417
CASES AROUND THE WORLD	
2,72,15,198	
DEATHS	
8,85,932	
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES	213
worldometers.info/coronavirus	

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Bhadrapada Bahula
Panchami till 9.38 pm
Star: Bharani full day
Varjyam: 4.11 pm to 5.59 pm
Durmuhurtam: 12.38 pm to 1.27 pm; 3.05 pm to 3.54 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
HJRI CALENDAR
Muharram 18, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.02 am
Zohar: 12.24 pm
Asar: 4.35 pm
Maghrib: 6.30 pm
Isha: 7.39 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.24 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.03 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 9.46 PM
MOONRISE TODAY 9.57 AM

COUNTER POINT



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IN BRIEF

Full refund for lockdown tickets

New Delhi: Full refund shall be provided by airlines immediately for tickets booked during the Covid-19 lockdown for domestic or international travel within the lockdown period, civil aviation regulator DGCA has proposed in the Supreme Court. For all other cases, the airlines shall make all endeavors to refund the collected amount within 15 days, the Director General of Civil Aviation said in an affidavit. The DGCA said that after various rounds of deliberations between the stakeholders including the airlines, they have arrived at a proposed workable solution.



WORLD | 5
Harris won't trust Don word on Covid vaccine



SPORTS | 8
Chennai to take on Mumbai in IPL opener

TABLOID
Bollywood-drug-debauchery



Guarding skies



An IAF fighter jet flies over Ladakh amid the prolonged India-China stand off in the region on Sunday. Indian and Chinese militaries held another round of talks on Sunday to calm tensions as the situation remained "delicate" with both sides rushing additional troops and weapons after last week's confrontations. — PTI

India on alert along LoC as China uses proxy Pak

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 6

Following specific intelligence inputs that China could use Pakistan to trigger large-scale violations along the border, the Border Security Force and the Army have been put on high alert along the international border and the Line of Control (LoC). "We have specific inputs that Pakistan could try and foment trouble along the borders. But we have taken adequate preventive measures and substantially increased our security presence along the Indo-Pak border," a senior BSF official said. India and China are engaged in a four-month long tense military stand-off in the Ladakh sector and tensions between the

● **A SENIOR BSF official said they had specific inputs that Pakistan could try and foment trouble along the borders and have taken adequate precautions**

two armies flared up again last week after India, in a preemptive move, occupied around two dozen peaks on the southern banks of Pangong Tso and Spanggur Gap.

Given the tense situation along the Indo-China border, there are intelligence inputs that in an attempt to divert the focus and attention of Indian security forces, China could use Pakistan to start an armed offensive along the border and LoC by violating ceasefire. Earlier, the home min-

istry had increased the presence of forces along some parts of the Indo-China border, particularly in Sikkim and Uttarakhand.

Close to 100 companies or 10,000 personnel of para-military forces have been rushed to border areas. Most of the additional security companies that were deployed along Chinese borders are those that were pulled out of Jammu and Kashmir a couple of weeks back. Both ITBP and SSB have beefed up security in the Doklam region in Sikkim and Kalapani region in Uttarakhand following increased Chinese activity. CDS General Bipin Rawat had on Thursday said that Pakistan could try to take advantage of any threat along India's northern borders.

Sons throw out 84-yr-old mom

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 6

Unwilling to keep their 84-year-old paralysed mother in home isolation after she tested positive for the Coronavirus, her four sons sent her to their agricultural field where they set up a tent for her to stay.

The resident of Peech-ara of Velair mandal in Warangal Urban district, tested positive for Covid-19 during a rapid antigen test that the family underwent recently at the primary healthcare centre in Velair.

Only the elderly woman tested positive, the others were cleared. Doctors suggested that she be placed in home quarantine, and provided the family with a home isolation kit.

However, fearing the virus would spread to the

other members of the family, her four sons refused to allow her into their house. They set up a tent in their agricultural field on the outskirts of the village and left her there on Saturday night.

Other farmers in the village who saw the 84-year-old alone in the field on Sunday informed the local public representatives and the ANMs (auxiliary nurse midwives).

The villagers and local representatives tried in vain to persuade her family members to take her home. Left with no other choice, the villagers informed the police.

Inspector Md Shadulla Baba said the police went to the spot immediately after receiving information and counselled her family to take care of the octogenarian.

■ **Page 3: Family agreed to take her back: Cops**

12 COVID +VE IN TS ASSEMBLY BEFORE SESSION

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 6

At least 12 persons were found to be Covid-19 positive during the Coronavirus tests conducted at the Assembly on about 650 persons including legislators, Assembly staff, police personnel and journalists ahead of the monsoon session of the legislature that will start on Monday.

The names of those who tested positive were not released, but they will not be allowed inside the legislature when the sessions resumes.

It was expected that the session will continue for 19 days, a final decision will be taken at the Business Advisory Committee meeting which will meet on Monday.

■ **Page 3: House to adjourn on first day**

India overtakes Brazil in Covid as Unlock 4 starts

30% of new virus cases reported worldwide from India

S. UMAMAHESHWAR | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 6

India on Sunday surpassed Brazil's Coronavirus tally and is now behind only the United States as far as Covid-19 cases are concerned. The country has reported 90,890 new cases on Sunday, taking its aggregate case count to 42,00,366, compared to Brazil's 41.23 lakh cases.

With the Unlock 4 guidelines coming into effect from Monday, there could be a further spurt in cases as they allow large-scale public transport systems like Metro Rail to resume and also let more people participate in social events.

Though India had tentatively crossed Brazil's figure on Saturday, the Latin American country re-established its unenviable lead on India later on as it came out with its fresh numbers. However, with the difference between India and Brazil widening to 77,000, India went out of reach for Brazil, which has been

● **INDIA NOW** has 15 per cent of the total global Coronavirus patients.

● **THE COUNTRY** has risen up the ladder for Coronavirus infections in spite of testing six times fewer people compared to the US and Brazil.

● **IF IT** matched the testing metric of the US and Brazil, India could have long been the world's number one in infections.

reporting a daily case addition of around 45,000 as against India's 85,000.

According to health economist Rijo M. John, India now contributes about 30 per cent of daily cases reported across the world.

India now has 15 per cent of the total global Coronavirus patients. The country has risen up the ladder for Coronavirus infections in spite of testing six times fewer people compared to the US and Brazil. If India were to match the

testing metric of the US and Brazil, the country could have long been occupying the world's number one position in infection cases. A serosurvey in Pune concluded that over half of its population would have been contracted by the virus. The survey in most other cities indicated an infection rate of over 20 per cent. In Hyderabad, a study showed that actual infected patients in the city could be six times more than the official figure.

As many as 1,065 deaths were reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total fatalities in the country to 70,626 and is ranked third in the world behind the US and Brazil. The current Case Fatality Rate in India is 1.72 per cent.

Though government officials have been quoting low death rates to deflect criticism over ineffective handling of Covid pandemic, a report in the scientific journal *Lancet* expressed doubt about the country's official Covid-related death figures.

According to official Union health ministry data, India's recovery rate, at the same time, has picked up.

For the second successive day, India clocked a record recovery of more than 70,000 patients in a single day. The total numbers of recoveries have reached nearly 32 lakh, taking the country's recovery rate to 77.32 per cent.

According to economist Prof Shamika Ravi, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have been two of the largest Covid-19 India hotspot states since the beginning. "Tamil Nadu is showing stabilisation at 6,000 cases daily, while Maharashtra is still on exponential growth — reporting higher daily cases — now at 17,500 daily," she said. For several days now, Andhra Pradesh has been reporting over 10,000 cases a day and stands just behind Maharashtra in the daily caseload. On Sunday Maharashtra reported 23,350 cases and AP 10,794.

Engg lecturers work at petrol bunks

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 6

Look carefully the next time you shop at a supermarket or fill fuel in your vehicle at a petrol bunk. The assistant helping you could well be an engineering lecturer.

With their colleges not paying them at all, or paying just a part of the salary, some engineering teachers have taken up part-time jobs in the evening to eke

● **THE LECTURERS** earn between ₹8,000 to ₹12,000 as part-timers as colleges pay ₹5,000 to ₹14,000

out a living. If their colleges pay them ₹5,000 to ₹14,000, the teachers, among them post graduates and PhD holders, make ₹8,000 to ₹12,000 as part-timers.

Some of them work as medical shop assistants and food delivery executives. A professor with 15 years of experience in a famous col-

lege in Kompally is working in a transport company. There are cases where a few lecturers have taken up daily wage labour work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. If they find that this work pays more during the crisis, they cannot take leave from the colleges which have implemented the 'no work-no pay' rule.

Siddhartha Institute of Technology and Sciences in

Narapally has invented an innovative method to not pay the staff. The management deposits the full salary into the teachers' account and ask them to return 75 per cent of the money to a separate bank account. College officials evaded questions regarding non-payment of teaching staff and disconnected the call.

■ **Page 3: 139 engg colleges booked for not paying staff**

STATUTE | CHECK Judgment gave permanence to Indian Constitution

Seer behind defining verdict dead

Kasaragod (Kerala), Sept. 6: Kesavananda Bharati, 79, on whose petition the Supreme Court delivered the landmark judgment on the celebrated doctrine of basic structure of the Constitution, died here on Sunday.

Police said Kesavananda Bharati Sripadagalvaru died at the Edaneer Mutt here due to age related ailments. "As per the information with us, he passed away at around 3.30 am on Sunday," police said. The case in which Bharati



Kesavananda Bharati

had challenged Kerala Land Reform laws nearly four decades ago set the principle that the Supreme

Court is the guardian of the basic structure of the Constitution and the verdict involved 13 judges, the largest bench ever to sit in the apex court.

While the seer did not get the relief he wanted, the case became significant for its landmark judgment which clipped the widest power of Parliament to amend the Constitution and simultaneously gave judiciary the authority to review any amendment.

Former Judge of Madras High Court Justice K

Chandru said: "The Kesavananda Bharati case is significant for its ruling that the Constitution can be amended but not the basic structure."

Senior Advocate Arvind P. Datar said when some parcels of land of the Edaneer Mutt were acquired under the land reform laws of Kerala, Bharati moved the Kerala High Court against it and partially succeeded.

■ **Page 3: SC said Parliament can't emasculate Constitution**

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OTHER STORIES

TRS CONTRIBUTION TO WARANGAL IS ZERO, SAYS BJP

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 6

Any development in Warangal Urban district is because of the BJP government in the Centre and not the TRS government in Telangana, said Warangal Urban District BJP President Rao Padma.

Welcoming 50 youth into the party on Sunday, she said that the public representatives in Warangal are busy encroaching public and private lands and do not have time for development.

Padma alleged, "Instead of working for the farmers and the people of the state, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is working at the behest of his family by giving projects to them so that they earn commissions. Telangana, which was a rich state after formation was pushed into debts by the Chief Minister."

The Modi government has set forth the Atmanirbhar Bharat movement, but it is not being implemented in Telangana. The Chief Minister is playing with the lives of the people, she said.

"The Chief Minister had given several promises before the elections but has failed to keep any of them. The local public representatives are incompetent to take up development, but they blame the previous governments for everything. What did the local MLA, who is a legislator since 2009, achieve for the constituency?" she asked.

Padma warned that the people of Warangal are preparing to teach a fitting lesson to the TRS leaders in the upcoming municipal elections.

BJP general secretary Deshini Sadanandam, Bakam Harishankar, Warangal West Convenor Pashikant Rajendra Prasad were present among others.



Rao Padma invites a youth into the party on Sunday.
— DC

CONG PLAYING CHEAP POLITICS, SAYS TRS

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 6

Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) senior leader, Manda Nagesh Mudiraj came down heavily on the Congress on Sunday.

Speaking to the media, Mr Nagesh criticised the Congress for playing cheap politics and trying to divert the attention of the people by attacking senior leaders of TRS.

He said, "Congress leaders are confused seeing the development taking place under the TRS government. Unable to face the TRS they are taking up petty issues."

The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president, Uttam Kumar along with Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka are intentionally trying to defame health minister, Etala Rajendar by dragging his name into unnecessary issues.

Mr Nagesh alleged that during the inspection of Huzurabad Government hospital the man who accompanied Mr Vikramarka and suddenly attacked hospital superintendent, Dr Ravi Praveen verbally pointing his finger at him was Mr Uttam Kumar Reddy's relative Padi Koushik Reddy of Veenavanka mandal of Huzurabad constituency. Only to highlight Mr Koushik Reddy in Huzurabad constituency from where Mr Etala Rajendar is representing, Mr Uttam Kumar Reddy along with CLP leader Mr Vikramarka targeting Mr Etala.

By introducing several welfare schemes for all sections of people the Telangana state is heading towards development under the leadership of Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao. The Congress which is sinking in the state and the country is raking up petty issues to defame the senior leaders of the TRS, he said.

How can the TPCC president Mr Uttam Kumar Reddy demand the government to remove the health minister, Etala Rajendar, he questioned. The constant efforts of Mr Etala Rajendar has seen the number of Coronavirus cases in the state drop and the recovery rate is increasing.

People will teach the Congress a fitting lesson in the days to come, he warned.

One lakh illegal plot owners eye new LRS

Opportunity to get layout regularised, say experts

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, SEPT. 6

Following the announcement of a new Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) for unauthorised properties, the Kakatiya Urban Development Authority (KUDA) is preparing to receive an overwhelming one lakh applications from people who bought unapproved and unauthorised plots.

KUDA holds jurisdiction in 19 mandals and 181 villages under Warangal Urban, Warangal Rural and Jangaon districts.

A lot of new layouts and unauthorised plots have been created in the recent past in the area.

Experts call this a once in a lifetime opportunity and urge the owners to get their lands regularised without further ado.

Former president of Confederation of Real



Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI), Warangal chapter, P. Venkat opined that purchasing of plots in layouts that have all the permissions from competent bodies might be a costly affair but they do not pose any issues in the future.

"Even if people have taken a wrong step by purchasing unauthorised plots, the new LRS GO will come to their rescue.

Though they need to pay a hefty fee, it is suggested to go ahead with the regularisation," he said.

When the government gave the permission for LRS in 2015, about 30,000 applications were received. While 20,000 were approved, 10,000 were pending due to various reasons.

The government cancelled the registration of unauthorised plots, which

KUDA HOLDS JURISDICTION

19 Mandals

181 villages

Under Warangal Urban, Warangal Rural and Jangaon districts.

RESPONSE TO LRS

WARANGAL

30,000 applied

20,000 approved

10,000 kept pending

KARIMNAGAR

4,368 applied

2,968 were regularised

1,400 still pending

₹30 cr Karimnagar Municipal Corporation earned

led owners to suffer hardships. KUDA Chairman Marri Yadava Reddy said that there would be no further chances for illegal plots. "Owners must apply for LRS before October 15 and complete the registration in time.

We are expecting about one lakh applications this time and suitable arrangements are being made to clear the applications," he said.



An illegal layout of lands in Bommakal village of Karimnagar district.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Officials expect revenue of ₹60 cr under KMC limits

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
KARIMNAGAR, SEPT. 6

The government has given one more chance for registration of illegal layout of lands with a fresh Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) in the name of 'Telangana Regularisation of Unapproved and Illegal Layout Rules, 2020'. This will be applicable not only for urban areas under municipal corporation limits but also for rural areas under the municipal limits.

The old Karimnagar district had two corporations and 14 municipalities. There was a good response from people when applications were invited for regularisation of layout lands five years back.

Karimnagar Municipal Corporation (KMC) received around 4,368 applications and of them 2,968 were regularised. The corporations and municipalities earned good revenue with KMC alone netting around ₹30 crore.

However, the scheme was stopped immediately

● **THE SCHEME ends on October 15. The applicants can file online or at a MeeSeva centre or a citizen service centre by October 15 with individual plot owners having to pay ₹1,000 while layout developers should shell down ₹10,000.**

after the cut-off time. Around 1,400 applications are still pending and it is likely that they may get permission for regularisation under the new LRS scheme.

This time around, officials are expecting revenue to the tune of ₹60 crore under KMC limits and around ₹50 crore under Satavahana Urban Development Authority (SUDA) limits.

The scheme ends on October 15. The applicants can file online or at a MeeSeva centre or a citizen service centre by October 15 with individual plot owners having to pay ₹1,000 while layout

developers should shell down ₹10,000.

In hindsight, plots or layouts which are not regularized by the cut-off time and those that are not provided with water supply connections and other amenities, like drainage facilities, will be barred from selling such plots by the registration department, which will also outright reject applications seeking approval for constructions.

Additional collector of Rajanna Sircilla district, Satya Prasad said that the government has provided an opportunity to the owners of unapproved plots that were bought before August 28.

He said that the layout development activity will not be permitted within 30 meters from the boundary of river and lakes that cover in excess of 10 hectares of land and also nine meters from boundary of lakes, kuntas of shikam lands which are less than 10 hectares, nine meters from boundaries of canals along with two meters from the defined boundary of the nala or storm water drains.

People question the timing of LRS

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, SEPT. 6

Many owners of illegal plots say though they want to regularise their properties under the Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) of the state government, they are unable to do so due to loss of income in the wake of Covid-19 epidemic.

They are also not happy with the period of time within which they have to apply for regularisation, the last date being October 15, 2020. They point out that the scheme will only become an additional burden on the municipal staff, who are already busy in controlling the Coronavirus within their

municipalities.

The state government has asked owners of illegal layouts, which have been registered through sale deeds prior to August 26, to regularise their layouts through payment of penalty to municipalities and panchayats.

Venkateshwarlu of Adilabad town said the intension of state government in bringing LRS may be good, but the timing is wrong. It is very clear that the TRS government wants to mobilise money, as it facing a financial crisis in the state due to Covid-19 pandemic. "But it should also realise that people have no money with them for the same reason," he remarked.

Scheme a financial burden on people

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, SEPT. 6

People in rural and urban areas expressed displeasure at the layout regularisation scheme (LRS). They said that charges fixed for LRS are unaffordable for middle and lower middle-class people. After a gap of five years, the state government has declared LRS to regularise unapproved plots and unapproved layouts and ventures. For the first time, LRS is extended to rural areas too along with urban areas.

It is estimated that around 182 unapproved ventures were set up in undivided Nizamabad district. Throwing norms to the winds, agricultural lands have been converted into residential plots on the outskirts of municipal

● **IT IS** estimated that around 182 unapproved ventures were set up in undivided Nizamabad district.

● **THROWING NORMS** to the winds, agricultural lands have been converted into residential plots on the outskirts of municipal towns and villages.

● **MUNICIPAL, REVENUE, town and country planning officials did not initiate stringent action against the illegal plot sales and development of ventures.**

towns and villages. Municipal, revenue, town and country planning officials did not initiate stringent action against the illegal plot sales and development of ventures.

A section of officials turned mute spectators either under political pressures or after accepting huge bribes from realtors. As a result, unap-

proved plot sales continued in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. Realtors, brokers, agents earned huge amounts in these illegal activities for the last few years. Income tax department officials have not concentrated on illegal money transactions.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, Suryanarayana

(name changed), a noted realtor in Bodhan town, said that the new LRS scheme is a burden on people. There is no sense in collecting money from people on open plots, he opined. The government should allot LRS funds to the respective urban and rural local bodies, he suggested.

Bodhan town BJP president, Maroju Sudhakar Chary, said that state government inefficiency is proved with the new LRS scheme. "Why has the government allowed illegal edifices to come up in the state for the last few years?" he asked. LRS will benefit only two percent of people and remaining 98 percent will suffer a lot, he said. Instead of specific deadlines, the government should continue the LRS, BPS schemes, he said.

PARTIES RAISE OBJECTIONS AGAINST GO 131

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 6

All the political parties except the Telangana Rastra Samiti (TRS) are opposing the GO MS no. 131, which is layout regularisation scheme announced by the government. The parties said that there is a clause of not registering plots until they are regularised.

CPI-M district secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao said, "The government brought the GO to loot the people. Thousands of families are approaching banks for loans to buy provisions and pay rents.

Even the middle and upper middle class families are trying to sell their plots to meet their needs. The GO MS no. 131 is a curse as they cannot sell their plots now without regularisation.

District Congress Committee president Puvvalla Durga Prasad said that the TRS government has to take back the GO MS No. 131, otherwise they will face the music.

CPI district secretary Potu Prasad said, "It is unfair on the part of the government to bring a GO to fill its coffers. People do not have money to meet their daily needs, how will they have money for LRS."

CPI (ML) New Democracy leader P Ranga Rao said that the GO 131 is a faulty one and that the government should withdraw it immediately.

● **CPI DISTRICT secretary Potu Prasad said that it is unfair on the part of the government to bring a GO to fill its coffers. People do not have money to meet their daily needs, how will they pay for LRS.**

BIG DEBATE However due to Covid-19 people may not have money to pay for regularisation

Govt pins hopes on GO 131 to fill empty coffers

A. RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 6

Though the state government is pinning considerable hopes on GO MS No. 131, which provides for regularisation of lands from gram panchayats to municipal corporations, it may not serve the purpose of filling the empty coffers of the government.

With a drastic fall in tax collections due to lockdown following the Coronavirus pandemic, the government has been facing difficulties every month even in paying salaries to its employees.

Looking to increase its revenues, one of the measures the state government has taken is issuing GO MS No. 131 to regularise unauthorised layouts in cities, towns and even in villages.

The GOs previously issued were related to land regularisation only in towns and municipalities. GO 131 takes regularisa-

tion of unauthorised lands to even gram panchayats. The response of people has, however, not been enthusiastic.

Covid-19 has ruined the budgets of people belonging to all walks of life. Many plot owners, though interested in regularising their lands, are unable to mobilise money for the purpose.

People feel GO 131 offering land regularisation scheme (LRS) is not rational. They point out that the basic regularisation charges are the same in Banjara Hills in Hyderabad and Prodduturu, a village in Chintakani mandal of Khammam district.

The government has fixed the basic charge of ₹400 per square metre to regularise plots ranging from 101-300 square meters.

In addition, the plot owner should pay registration charges from 25 percent to 100 percent of the market value.

The registration charges will be high if the market value of lands is high.

N. Rajasekhar, a resident of Khammam, has two plots in the city. He says it will be difficult for him to get money for regularising his plot at this time.

N. Sitaram, a private employee, said, "I have to approach a bank to get money for land regularisation. I will exercise the bank option to meet some important need but not LRS".

Realtors, who have sold more than 10 per cent of their illegal layouts, too are eligible to regularise their remaining plots. But they will have to pay the amount for each and every plot regularised.

K. Sambasiva Rao, a realtor said, "It is difficult for us to mobilise money. Lockdown has cut down the money in circulation in the market. Nobody is coming forward to buy plots at this time," he pointed out.



A view of the Khammam Municipal Corporation.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

OTHER STORIES

FAMILY AGREED TO
TAKE HER BACK,
SAY COPS

From Page 1

"We spoke to them and informed them about the care needed to be given to the elderly woman. We also told them that it is safe to live with a Coronavirus patient while taking proper care. They were convinced and agreed to take care of their mother and took her home," the inspector said.

PARLIAMENT CAN'T
AMEND STATUTE'S
BASIC FEATURES: SC

From Page 1

However, when the 29th Constitutional Amendment was adopted by Parliament giving protection to Kerala laws, the seer moved the Supreme Court challenging it.

The apex court ruled that the 29th Amendment is valid and held that the two Kerala land Acts that were included in the Ninth Schedule are entitled to the protection of Article 31B of the (validation of certain acts and regulations) Constitution.

The verdict had held that though Parliament has power to amend under Article 368 of the Constitution, it did not have the power to emasculate its basic features.

The case of Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala was heard for 68 days and continues to hold the top spot for the longest proceedings ever to have taken place in the top court. The hearing in the case commenced on October 31, 1972, and concluded on March 23, 1973 and it's the most referred to case name in Indian Constitutional law.

— PTI

● THE CASE of
Kesavananda Bharati vs
State of Kerala was
heard for 68 days and
continues to hold the
top spot for the longest
proceedings ever toHOUSE TO
ADJOURN ON
FIRST DAY

From Page 1

The House will adjourn on the first day after passing condolence motions to mourn the death of former President Pranab Mukherjee, TRS legislator Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy and nine others.

Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy on Sunday issued a bulletin dispensing with the Question Hour on Monday.

Meanwhile, all arrangements were made for the monsoon session. Wearing a mask has been made compulsory, and visitors will not be allowed to witness the proceedings. Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has instructed ministers to ensure that issues such as Covid-19, and the fire that claimed nine lives at the Srisailem hydel power project are discussed there.

The House is expected to witness debate the power sector, the new Revenue Act and the construction of projects by the AP government under the Rayalaseema lift irrigation scheme.

Discussion is likely on injustice meted out to the state while implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the financial and economic losses due to the financial policies of the Centre.

The Chief Minister has called for the Cabinet meeting at 7.30 pm on Monday to discuss the various Bills including the New Revenue Act to be tabled before the House.

Meanwhile, Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka announced that the Congress will demand that the government discuss the shortage of facilities, equipment, doctors and paramedical staff in government hospitals to treat Covid-19 patients.

He told the media that the Congress will raise issues pertaining to agriculture, farmers, unemployed, teachers and state government employees.

He said that the Congress MLAs will demand discussion on the alleged irregularities in irrigation contracts and the burden caused to the poor and middle class with the Layout Regularisation Scheme.

BJP MLA Raja Singh, the only representative of the party in the House, said that their party will raise 15 issues including the Covid-19 spread, the Srisailem fire mishap, compensation for farmers who lost their crops due to the recent rains and floods and will demand that September 17 be celebrated officially as Hyderabad Liberation Day.



A belt shop near Venkatapuram in Vemsoor mandal which is on the border of Andhra Pradesh.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Spike in Covid cases due to belt shops

People from border areas of AP visit these shops; don't maintain Covid-19 protocol

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, SEPT. 6

There seems to be a relationship between belt shops that sell liquor illegally in Vemsoor mandal on the border of Andhra Pradesh and the number of Covid-19 cases reported from villages in their proximity. People from border areas of AP are visiting these shops for consuming liquor and returning to their state.

There are 26 villages in Vemsoor mandal and Covid-19 cases have been reported from all the villages, including Venkatapuram, Kunchaparthi, Duddepudi, Kallurgudem and Sambunigudem, which are very near to the villages of Andhra Pradesh.

Interestingly, belt shops are there in all these villages except Bharanipadu, where local women have strongly objected to them.

As per details available, 167 Covid-19 have so far been reported in Vemsoor mandal. About 32 cases of Coronavirus are from Kunchaparthi village.

Asodu Venkateswara Rao, social activist of Vemsoor said, "People at the belt shops are not maintaining physical distance. They are catching the virus there and spreading it when they return to their villages."

In Marlapadu, a key village in Vemsoor mandal, there are 30 belt shops. One person has already died due to Covid-19 in the village. Another nine cases have been reported in the village. Marlapadu is in the centre of all villages in the mandal. People going to their villages have to pass through Marlapadu. They invariably spend some time at the belt shops before heading for their destinations.

As per one estimate, nearly 2,000 people from

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, SEP. 6

The interior villages in old Adilabad district have seen an increase in Covid-19 cases in the last week.

As many as 80 positive cases were reported in Asifabad district on Saturday. Of these, 26 cases in Asifabad, 34 in Kagaznagar, 3 in Rebbena, 14 in Sirpur (T), one in Dahegam and 2 in Jainoor in Kumarambheem Asifabad district.

During the early days of the pandemic, Kumarambheem Asifabad

bordering villages of Andhra Pradesh visit villages in Vemsoor mandal every day for consuming liquor at the belt shops. Women of Bharanipadu

● AS MANY AS 80 positive cases were
reported in Asifabad district on Saturday. Of
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Kumarambheem Asifabad district.

district had controlled the spread of the virus.

Positive cases were confined to Jainoor and Asifabad initially. Later, it spread to various mandals.

Though positive cases have come down in Adilabad district, it remains close to the 80-mark unlike in the past

when the number of cases touched 100.

Eighty-four cases were reported each on Thursday and Friday and 74 on Saturday in Adilabad district.

In the last three days, four deaths took place taking the total number of Covid-19 deaths to 26 in Adilabad district.

have not allowed belt shops in their village. No person has also dared to open belt shop there.

There is a demand that the government conduct

Coronavirus tests on persons coming to the belt shops for consuming liquor. Matta Prasad, former MP of Duddepudi said, "It is fact that these

Covid positive cases in high numbers are also being reported from the villages in Jainad and Bela mandals that share border with Maharashtra.

The number of Covid-19 positive cases was higher in Karanji and Bhora villages in Jainad mandal.

Villagers from Jainad and Bela often visit Adilabad town to buy groceries and other shopping purpose.

Some even visit villages in neighbouring Maharashtra. As a result, the number of villagers getting infected has risen.

belt shops are a curse for people during the Covid-19 times. They have turned a haven for boozers from Andhra Pradesh," he remarked.

DGP REVIEWS
SECURITY IN
ASIFABADPILLALAMARRI
SRINIVAS | DC
KUMARAMBHEEM
ASIFABAD, SEPT. 6

Director-General of Police M. Mahender Reddy completed his five-day visit to Kumarambheem Asifabad district and left for Hyderabad by road on Sunday evening.

The DGP's visit comes in the midst of the police trying to control Maoist activities.

Reddy will submit his report to the state government which will come up with an action plan to wean Adivasi youth away from the Maoists and towards the development agenda with the creation of livelihood opportunities in Maoist-affected areas.

The government may take steps to further strengthen the informant network to control the movement of Maoists in the Agency areas. It is said that the prime aim of the DGP to visit Asifabad was to assess the ground-level situation as far as Maoist movement is concerned.

Apart from interacting with forest officials in the district on Sunday, Reddy discussed social issues with collector Sandeep Kumar Jha, and sought information from police officials in the Agency mandals about the socio-economic and geographical conditions of the Adivasis and livelihood opportunities for them in the district.

The DGP did not interact with the media. He took all precautions to keep the information confidential about his tour and the meetings held with police and other officials. There was not much police security at the SP camp office where the DGP stayed for five days.

Ramagundam police commissioner and Asifabad in-charge S.P. Satyanarayana, north zone IG Y. Nagireddy and Mancherla DCP Udaykumar Reddy were present.

139 engg colleges
booked for not
paying staff

FROM PAGE 1

Then there are the lesser-known colleges such as Mallareddy Engineering and Management Science College at Kistapur in Medchal-Malkajgiri district, which has no connection whatsoever with minister Ch. Malla Reddy's group of institutions. MBA students working in the college also work as teaching staff. Officials of the Kistapur college could not be contacted as the phone number given on their official website mrem.ac.in does not work.

In the most serious case so far, a lecturer at a private engineering college in Ibrahimpatnam died by suicide in Sattipally of Khammam district last week. His college had paid him half the salary in April and May. His mother fell seriously ill and he couldn't pay her medical bills. His father was diagnosed with late stage cancer in June.

Prof. Balakrishna Reddy, president of the Telangana Technical

● IN THE most serious case so far, a
lecturer at a private
engineering college
in Ibrahimpatnam
died by suicide in
Sattipally of
Khammam district
last week.

Institutions Employees Association, said that they have sent representations to Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and three other universities regarding these practices but there was no response.

He said that 139 engineering colleges had been booked for not paying staff but no action had been taken. "I demand that the government implement GO 45 with immediate effect to rescue teaching staff. I demand that engineering colleges do not implement no work-no pay rule," he said.

OFFICE | POLITICS

Congress will take up the encroachment of office space in the assembly session

Cong Pinapaka in-charge goes on indefinite hunger strike

DC CORRESPONDENT
KOTHAGUDEM, SEPT. 6

The Congress has issued an ultimatum to Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) MLA from Pinapaka, Rega Kantha Rao to handover the party office that he is allegedly occupying.

Congress Pinapaka assembly in-charge Chanda Santhosh Kumar began an indefinite hunger strike on Sunday in protest against 'illegal' occupation of the party office by the ruling party MLA.

Mr Kantha Rao who

defected to the TRS from the Congress has been occupying the Congress office-space.

In the past, the Congress and the TRS had a showdown over the ownership of the office at Manugur. Bhadradi district Congress president Sodam Veeraiah said, "The Congress will take up the encroachment of the Congress office in the assembly.

We will fight until the Telangana Rashtra Samiti MLA is evicted from the Congress office."

Mr Veeraiah said that all

the parties, including the CPI, CPM and Telugu Desam (TD) are supporting the Congress on the issue. The 'brutal' behaviour of the TRS leaders will be exposed.

Mr Santhosh Kumar said, "Democratic principles are being compromised in the TRS-led regime.

The office spaces of the opposition parties are at risk of being grabbed by the Telangana Rashtra Samiti.

Congress will raise this issue in every village. We will continue with our agitation until the Congress office space is returned."



The rescue team deployed to catch the tiger.

Tiger spotted at Manair River side in Peddapalli

PULI SHARATH
KUMAR | DC
PEDDAPALLI, SEPT. 6

Animal tracking teams of the forest department on Sunday identified footprints of a tiger at Koyyagutta forest region in Advairirampur village of Mutharam mandal in Peddapalli district.

Announcing this, additional collector Lakshminarayana said people of Gajulapalli and Maidamband have been asked to exercise caution and advised not to take their cattle for grazing into the forests.

He warned villagers from taking any steps towards harming the tiger, as re-

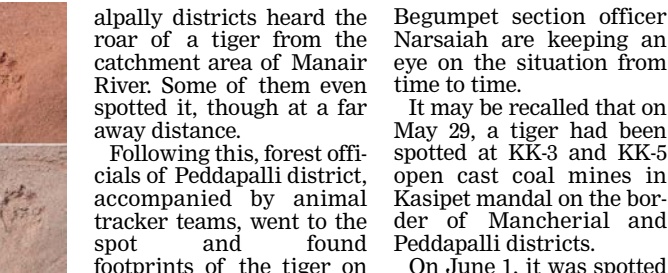
cue teams are trying to catch the tiger.

Forest officials have also asked villagers living along the borders of Peddapalli and Jayashankar Bhupalpally district to exercise caution after farmers of Odedu village in Mutharam mandal reported spotting of a tiger near Puredugutta on the outskirts of their village. A few days ago, forest officials of Jayashankar Bhupalpally district had identified footprints of a tiger in Kishanraopally forests of Malvar mandal. They also confirmed sighting of a tiger in Vencharam forests in Chityal mandal two days back.

On Saturday, farmers



Footprints of the tiger found in the Koyyagutta forest region in Advairirampur village of Mutharam mandal in Peddapalli district on Sunday.



alpal districts heard the roar of a tiger from the catchment area of Manair River. Some of them even spotted it, though at a far away distance.

Following this, forest officials of Peddapalli district, accompanied by animal tracker teams, went to the spot and found footprints of the tiger on the sands of the Manair River.

District forest officer Ravi Prasad said the tiger is a male. However, as the flow of water in the Manair River is high, the tiger may not be able to cross the river.

The DFO said Manthani range forest officer Shoukath Ali and

Begumpet section officer Narsalaiah are keeping an eye on the situation from time to time.

It may be recalled that on May 29, a tiger had been spotted at KK-3 and KK-5 open cast coal mines in Kasipet mandal on the border of Mancherla and Peddapalli districts.

On June 1, it was spotted at Kanpur. From there, it went to Indaram forest and on June 5 spotted at RK-8, RK-7 and RK-5 coal mines. It also killed a buffalo and a pig in the forest.

Officials are yet to confirm whether the tiger spotted on Saturday is the same one sighted three months ago.



Pinapaka assembly segment Congress incharge Santhosh Kumar began his indefinite hunger strike on Sunday demanding TRS MLA Rega Kantha Rao to handover the Congress party office space without delay.

— DC

SHORT TAKES

AMBULANCE DRIVER HELD FOR RAPE OF PATIENT

Pathanamthitta, Sept. 6: A 19-year-old woman Covid-19 patient was allegedly raped by an ambulance driver while shifting her to a first line treatment centre near here, police said on Sunday.

Taking note of it, the state women's commission registered a case on its own into the incident, which drew wide condemnation from the Opposition Congress and BJP, even as health minister K.K. Shailaja said strict instructions had been given to take strong action against the culprit.

"This is an unfortunate incident. We have given strict directions to take strong action against the culprit," she said in Thiruvananthapuram.

The ambulance driver Noufal (29) was taken into custody on Sunday based on a complaint by the victim's mother to the hospital authorities and the police.

UJJAIN TEMPLE TO OFFER 'PURE MILK' TO STATUE

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, SEPT. 6

The ancient shrine of Mahakaleswar in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh is planning to raise cows to meet the demand for milk in the wake of the recent directive by the Supreme Court to offer only pure milk to the jyotirlinga in the temple.

The temple administration is working out a plan to procure 150 Gir cows and to raise them in the shrine to make their milk available to the devotees to offer to the jyotirlinga, worshipped in the sanctum sanctorum of the eighteenth-century shrine.

"The temple administration is mulling over procuring Gir cows, a famous breed in India, to raise them in the gaushala or cowshed of the temple to meet the demand for pure milk in the shrine," temple administrator, S.S. Rawat, told this newspaper on Sunday.

According to him, around 1,000 litres of milk is being offered to the jyotirlinga by devotees every day.

The temple can build its captive reserve of pure milk to make it available to the devotees by raising the cattle breed, a senior temple administrator said.

GANJA SMUGGLERS THRASH HOME GUARD TO DEATH

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 6

A home guard died after allegedly being thrashed by a group of ganja smugglers near Chaulimendi under Balimela police limits in Odisha's Malkangiri district on Sunday.

According to reports, more than 100 persons disguised as kanwariyas were carrying the contraband using slings.

Acting on a tip-off, the police on Saturday night intercepted them near Chaulimendi for search.

The accused attacked the cops, during which home guard Banabasi Maharana was grievously injured. The accused fled the spot after assaulting the cops.

The victim was rescued and rushed to the Mathili Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries on Sunday morning while undergoing treatment.

SHEIKH HASINA PAYS TRIBUTE TO MUKHERJEE

Dhaka, Sept. 6: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday paid rich tributes to India's former president Pranab Mukherjee and said he was a true friend of Bangladesh, as the country's Parliament adopted a condolence motion over his death.

He was a true friend of Bangladesh since our 1971 Liberation War, Hasina told the maiden session of Parliament called for the second time since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The country's Parliament adopted a condolence motion to mourn the demise of Mukherjee and several distinguished Bangladeshis who died recently.

Mukherjee, 84, died on Monday in New Delhi following a 21-day battle with multiple ailments.

The former president was cremated with full state honours on Tuesday.

TA battalions deployed along LAC

TA units are in addition to 2 Mountain Divisions from Bareilly, HP-Ladakh Scouts, SFF

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD SEPT. 6

With situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh hotting up leading to massive deployment of forces — especially those well-versed with the art of survival in inhospitable terrains and harsh weather and fight the enemy — Territorial Army (TA) battalions, comprising people from Ladakh are the latest addition in the troop deployment at strategic points to thwart any designs of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China. The TA had played a key role alongside the Army in the 1962, 1965 and 1971 wars.

The TA units, sent recently to the strategic heights to assist the Army, are in addition to the deployment of two Mountain Divisions from Bareilly and Himachal Pradesh — Ladakh Scouts, Special Frontier Force besides the existing three divisions of 14 Corps apart from the Indian Air Force — making it the first of its kind deployment at the LAC, post the 1962 Sino-

● **TERRITORIAL ARMY** is a unique concept wherein any citizen can join the force while continuing with their main profession and serve the Army when required.

India war:

Each division has between 17,000 and 20,000 soldiers. Recently, the Army has put on hold the premature retirement of thousands of JCOs and jawans, who have been asked to be ready for deployment at short notice.

The TA shot to prominence after cricket stars like Kapil Dev, M.S. Dhoni, Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and some from the South Indian film industry joined the force and underwent training.

Sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that the "home and hearth" units of the TA, which was raised on the concept of the "son of the soil," is coming in handy at this crucial time. The soldiers in this force are locals who are well-versed with the terrain and geography of the area

and have the required survival skills. During peace time, these units, though well-trained, are used for mundane tasks within Army establishments.

While the TA has been supporting the Army in carrying out anti-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir, this would be the first time that they have been given bigger operational roles in the ongoing stand-off with the PLA. Known as the 'citizen's Army' wherein any citizen can volunteer to join the TA and serve the Army when required, the TA units form the second line of defence.

"Since the unit comprises Ladakhis, who are tough, intelligent and know the region like the back of their hand, it was decided to deploy them at various heights," sources said.

Raised in October 1949, the size and task of TA has increased manifold over the years. It now has a strength of about 45,000 and sources said there are major plans in the pipeline to further make the TA strong and give bigger roles.

Govt to improve livelihood of those living on borders

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, SEPT. 6

Amid escalating border tension with China, the Government of India has embarked upon an ambitious multi-pronged strategy to strengthen the border management along the international border with China by launching schemes aimed at improving the standard of living of people in those areas where they can become important stakeholders in border management.

The secretary of the border management wing of the ministry of home affairs Sanjeeva Kumar visited Ladakh to monitor the implementation of the border area development scheme along the border with China. Authoritative security sources in the ministry of home affairs told this newspaper that the ministry has asked

respective state governments and union territories to prepare the schemes in consultation with the border guarding forces and submit it to the border management wing of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Pointing out that improving road connectivity is the key component of the scheme, security sources said that the ministry has already started massive exercise to improve the connectivity along the international border with China.

Stressing the need for augmenting connectivity along the China border under the present circumstances security sources said that several road projects are at various stages of implementation. Creation of border outposts is another key component of the scheme. Infrastructure develop-

ment from zero to ten kilometres from the international border is given priority under the border areas development scheme, security sources said adding that adequate funds are being pumped in for speedy implementation of the schemes submitted by the state governments.

Informing that the government of Arunachal Pradesh, which has a long international border with China, is doing a good job in improving infrastructure along the international border with the funds provided by the ministry, security sources said that senior officers are in constant touch with the chief secretaries of the border states and a team of senior officers headed by Sanjeeva Kumar, Secretary, Border Management, has also been monitoring the execution of the schemes.

THACKERAY GETS THREATENING CALL, SECURITY BEEFED UP

Mumbai, Sept. 6: An unidentified man allegedly called up Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's personal residence 'Matoshree' in Bandra here, saying that he was calling from Dubai on behalf of fugitive underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, a police official said on Sunday.

The caller rang up twice around 10.30 pm on Saturday, following which the police beefed up security at Thackeray's bungalow located in Kalanagar Colony, the official said.

"Someone called up on 'Matoshree' phone number two times on Saturday night and said Dawood Ibrahim wanted to talk to the CM. However, the telephone operator did not transfer the call to the CM," the official said.

"The caller did not reveal his identity, but only said that he was calling from Dubai on behalf of Dawood Ibrahim. Both the calls were received around 10.30 pm," he added. — *PTI*

NCB grill Rhea in Sushant case

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, SEPT. 6

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Sunday grilled actor Rhea Chakraborty from noon to evening in connection with the drugs case pertaining to Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide. The central agency summoned her early in the day adhering to which she appeared at the agency's office in Ballard Estate, South Mumbai. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), who is probing the suicide to ascertain the motive behind the actor's extreme step, meanwhile grilled the late actor's sister Neetu at the DRDO guesthouse on Sunday, where the visiting team has set up their base.

The NCB officials grilled Rhea on the lines of the disclosures made by her brother Showik, Rajput's former house manager Samuel Miranda and arrested drug peddler Abdul Basit Parihar. While the probe has revealed that Parihar supplied drugs and Showik facilitated its procurement, the latter has claimed to have done that at the behest of his sister Rhea, a claim made by househelp Dipesh Sawant too in his statement.

The agency was also provided with the chats and text messages exchanged between Rhea and other suspects in which they discussed the procurement of narcotics, by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is probing the alleged money laundering involved in the suicide. The NCB used these premises to summon Rhea to question her on the procurement, consumption and peddling of narcotics.

"Rhea kept denying the charges despite being put up with relevant material supporting it. She may be confronted with other arrested accused as a part of the investigation," said an officer privy to the

NCB RAIDS B'LURU CORPORATOR'S HOUSE FOR SON

VINAY MADHAV | DC BENGALURU, SEPT. 6

While the Bengaluru police are busy with the Sandalwood drug link case, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) raided the house of a Bengaluru corporator in connection with drug racket involving suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

The NCB raided the house of Mahalakshimpura ward corporator, Keshavamurthy, who belongs to the Congress, in search of son Yashas, who is said to be involved in drug supply to Mumbai celebrities.

According to NCB regional officers, they had issued a notice to Yashas on September 2, to appear before NCB officials in Mumbai. His name cropped up when the NCB was investigating the drug angle in Bollywood. One of the accused, Mohammed, mentioned Yashas' name. Yashas was in contact with Mohammed and was organising parties in Goa and Mumbai. He has close contacts with Hindi film actors. The NCB had asked Yashas to appear before them before September 7.

investigation. Sawant was produced before the holiday court on Sunday that remanded him to the NCB custody for further investigation. The officials said that he has also stated that he saw Rajput smoking up while he worked there.

The CBI's confrontation was on the lines of her and other family members knowing of the dead actor's psychological condition and allegedly suggesting medication without prescription.

AHEAD OF POLLS, BJP RELEASES POSTER SEEKING JUSTICE FOR SSR

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, SEPT. 6

A BJP poster campaign seeking justice for actor Sushant Singh Rajput, has created a flutter in poll-bound Bihar.

Opposition parties are of the view that posters and pamphlets have been released to influence voters ahead of the assembly elections scheduled in October-November this year.

Talking to reporters in Patna, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) spokesperson, Mrityunjay Tiwari, said, "Tejaswi Yadav was the first to demand a CBI probe into the case but

Offering prayers



Devotees offer prayers at the Hazrat Nizamuddin Dargah after it reopened in New Delhi on Sunday, during Unlock 4.0. Union minister for minority affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi was among the people who paid obeisance to Sufi saint at Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia .

K'TAKA LABOUR MANTRI TESTS +VE FOR COVID

Bengaluru, Sept. 6: Karnataka Labour Minister A. Shivaram Hebbar on Sunday said he and his wife have tested positive for the Covid-19 and would be under treatment in their home itself being asymptomatic.

"Me and my wife underwent Covid-19 test and have been found positive for the virus. Since there are no symptoms of Covid-19, we decided to remain in home quarantine on doctors' advice and are getting treatment at home," Hebbar tweeted.

Rahul slams govt for 'faulty GST'

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 6

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi lashed out at the centre over the contraction of the economy and linked it with a 'faulty GST'. "Another big reason for record GDP contraction is Modi government's Gabbar Singh Tax (GST). Many have been badly affected by this — lakhs of poor families, crores lost their jobs, states' economy was affected (sic)," he said in a post on Twitter.

In a video, which he shared with the post, the former Congress president is heard saying: "GST

was the second biggest attack on the unorganised sector: GST was UPA's idea — one tax, intended to simplify the system.

NDA's GST was different — four different types of tax slabs, up to 28 per cent tax, it has become complicated. Small enterprises cannot pay this amount. These four slabs are only meant to help the privileged, the country's most powerful businessmen in the country."

He added: "NDA's GST has left states at receiving end. Centre is not able to pay the states. The GST is not just a failure, it's an attack on poor." In the last

couple of days, the Congress leader has been doing a series of videos attacking the government over its policies.

In his third video of the four-part series, he also accused the government of allowing 15-20 businessmen of having the reach to manipulate the tax payment and farmers, labourers and small businesses of not having similar leverage.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party on Sunday hit back saying "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing" and asked when will the Congress leader stop lying.

Reminding the former Congress president that he had to once "apologise" to the Supreme Court for one of his lies, the ruling party claimed that the Congress leader wants to have a tax regime where airplane and slippers are taxed same and essential commodities and services which have no tax are brought under the tax regime.

The BJP has claimed that the contraction in the GDP was from April to June when the country was under complete lockdown and barring essential services there was no economic activity.

MARITAL | DISPUTE

Varsha reportedly stayed with her husband only 18 months

Mohanty filed divorce petition: Lawyer

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, SEPT. 6

The controversy surrounding BJD MP, Anubhav Mohanty, allegedly harassing his actress wife Varsha Priyadarshini, took a new twist on Sunday after the lawmaker's legal counsel informed the media that his client has filed a divorce petition in the court of principal judge, Family Court, Patiala House, New Delhi, seeking a divorce.

"My client has filed a

divorce petition under Section 13 (i)(a) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955

on the grounds that the marriage between the two has never been consummated and as such no child was born. Though the couple got married on February 8, 2014, Varsha stayed with her husband only for 18 months. The married life was full of cruelty, tyranny, misery, harassment and suffering for Anubhav and his family members," Ashwini Dubey, the legal counsel of the lawmaker, told a local television channel here

over the telephone from Delhi.

In his divorce petition, a copy of which is with this newspaper, the respondent (Priyadarshini) fears the pain while thinking about having sexual intercourse. As such, she never allowed the petitioner (Anubhav) to consummate their marriage. Whenever the petitioner tried to even touch the respondent, she never allowed it. This behaviour made the petitioner uncomfortable and unhappy. The petitioner never felt he was married as the respondent never gave

him the pleasure of being married, reads the petition.

The petition says that the respondent did not allow the petitioner to establish a physical relationship on their first night after marriage and clearly told the petitioner that she is going to take three-four months to get comfortable and would allow physical relations only then. The petitioner appreciated the feelings of the respondent and gave her time to become comfortable.

The content of Anubhav's divorce is in

sharp contrast with the allegations levelled by Varsha.

In a petition filed before the sub-divisional judicial magistrate court, Cuttack, Varsha has charged Anubhav with domestic violence.

The actress, while accusing Anubhav of being an alcoholic, has said that though she insisted on a child, the actor did not show any interest.

Varsha has demanded a monthly maintenance and an indemnity of ₹15 crore from her actor-turned-lawmaker husband.

SHORT TAKES

BERLUSCONI RESPONDING TO VIRUS DRUGS

Rome, Sept. 6: Former Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi is responding “optimally” to Covid-19 treatment but is the most vulnerable type of patient and is in “the most delicate phase” of the virus, his personal doctor said on Sunday.

Dr Alberto Zangrillo repeated Sunday that he nevertheless remained “cautiously optimistic” about Berlusconi’s recovery. The three-time premier turns 84 in a few weeks and has had a history of heart problems that required being fitted with a pacemaker several years ago.

Zangrillo suggested Berlusconi wouldn’t be released anytime soon, recalling that the virus “requires adequate treatment and takes its time.”

SPEAKING ILL OF PEOPLE WORSE THAN VIRUS: POPE

Vatican City, Sept. 6: Speaking ill of other people and spreading gossip is worse than Covid-19 and Satan is the worst offender of all, Pope Francis said on Sunday.

When people see someone making a mistake, “the first thing we usually do is go and tell someone else about it. Gossip like this closes off the community,” the pope said in comments on a passage in the Bible where Jesus talks about what must be done to welcome back into the community those who have committed errors.

“The great gossip is Satan who always says bad things about people,” Francis said.

Satan “is a liar who seeks to divide the Church, to drive our brothers apart, so that they are no longer a community,” he added.

MOM KILLS 5 KIDS, GERMAN CITY MOURNS

Berlin, Sept. 6: More than 800 people came together for a memorial for the five children who were allegedly killed by their mother at their home in the western city of Solingen, the German news agency dpa reported on Sunday.

Neighbours, friends and others mourning the deaths of the five young children lit candles Saturday night in front of the building where they had lived. They brought flowers, toys and balloons with the names of the dead children them: Melina, Leonie, Sophie, Timo and Luca, dpa reported.

“It’s hard to mourn on your own, to express your sadness,” Hans-Peter Harbecke, a neighbourhood organiser, told public broadcaster WDR. “It’s easier when you’re together, it’s more intensive as a community.” Prosecutors have charged the 27-year-old mother of the five children, who were found dead at their home on Thursday, with murder.

The killings have caused widespread shock in Germany. Investigators have said that postmortem examinations on the children, who were between 1 to 8 years old, showed signs of sedation and suffocation, but it was still unclear how exactly they died.

HEZBOLLAH, HAMAS CHIEFS MEET OVER TIES

Beirut, Sept. 6: Leaders of Lebanon’s Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas movement, both enemies of Israel, have met to discuss diplomatic normalisation between the Jewish state and Arab countries, a report said on Sunday.

They stressed the “stability” of the “axis of resistance” against Israel, the Hezbollah-run Al-Manar TV channel reported, without saying where or when the meeting took place.

Hassan Nasrallah, head of the Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah movement, was pictured meeting Ismail Haniyeh, who heads the political bureau of Hamas, the Islamist movement that control the Gaza Strip.

They discussed “political and military developments in Palestine, Lebanon and the region” and “the dangers to the Palestinian cause” including “Arab plans for normalisation” with Israel, Al-Manar said.

The meeting comes after an August 13 announcement that the Jewish state and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to normalise ties.

While the US-backed diplomatic drive aims to boost a regional alliance against Iran, Palestinians have condemned it as a “stab in the back” as they remain under occupation and don’t have their own state.

1 killed, 7 hurt in late-night stabbings in Birmingham

Victims were drinking, dining at outdoor tables, UK cops launch manhunt

London, Sept. 6: UK police said a murder inquiry has been launched on Sunday after one man was killed and seven people injured in multiple stabbings overnight in the city of Birmingham.

According to reports, West Midlands Police believe the victims were picked at random and do not believe the incident was terror or gang related. While a man and a woman are battling serious injuries, the injuries of five others are not thought to be life-threatening, the force said.

A hunt has been initiated for a male suspect, who is believed to have gone on a stabbing spree, starting at Constitution Hill in Birmingham. “The events during the early hours of this morning are tragic, shocking and understandably frightening,” said Chief Superintendent Steve Graham, responsible for policing in Birmingham.

“Please be assured that we are doing absolutely everything we can to find whoever was responsible and try to understand what exactly happened. We have well-rehearsed plans for dealing with major incidents,” he said, calling on the public to remain vigilant and report anything suspicious.

The force is also calling for anyone with CCTV or mobile footage to contact the police. The police believe the incidents, which took place between 12.30 am and 2.20 am local time, are linked and are following a number of lines of enquiry.



Police forensic officers gather evidence inside a cordon on Hurst Street, following a major stabbing incident in the centre of Birmingham, central England, on Sunday. — AFP

An increased uniformed and armed response has been put in place across the city. The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson, said: “Last night’s events are truly terrible and have shocked the people of Birmingham, the West Midlands and the country.”

“My first thoughts are with the victims and their families at this time. I have every faith in West Midlands Police who are working extremely quickly on this investigation.”

Earlier, the police had declared a “major incident” as cordons were put up and an investigation was launched following reports of the stabbings.

A major incident describes any situation involving serious harm or a security risk to the public and covers special arrangements for all of the emergency services to work together.

West Midlands Police said they are uncertain as to the motive behind the stabbings and are working to establish the details after they were called to reports of one stabbing just after midnight in the city centre.

Officers have set up a cordon at the junction of Hurst Street, a popular nightlife area in the city centre referred to as the Gay Village, and Bromsgrove Street. Emergency services attended and some of the injured people were rushed to local hospitals.

A heavy police presence remains in the area as officers urged people to remain calm and stay away from the area as cordons remain in place.

Many people had been seated at outdoor tables eating and drinking on Saturday evening just before the incident. The streets in the area had already been closed to traffic due to Coronavirus restrictions.

— PTI

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Wouldn’t trust Trump’s word on vaccine: Harris

Washington, Sept. 6: Democratic vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris said in comments released on Saturday that if a Coronavirus vaccine is available before November’s election, she would not take President Donald Trump’s word on its safety and efficacy.

Trump faces intense pressure to curb the contagion that has clouded his re-election prospects, sparking worries his administration could rush vaccine research to fit a political timetable.

“I would not trust Donald Trump and it would have to be a credible source of information that talks about the efficacy and the reliability of (a vaccine),” Harris said.

“I will not take his word for it.” A shot against the virus that has killed over 188,000 in the US and hobbled the world’s largest economy has become another flashpoint ahead of the November 3 vote.

This week news broke that the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention asked states to sweep away red tape that could prevent a network of vaccine distribution centers being “fully operational by Nov 1, 2020.”

The US Food and Drug Administration has also raised the possibility that a vaccine might be given emergency authorization before the end of trials.

Trump dangled the possibility in front of supporters last week at the Republican National Convention saying the US “will produce a vaccine before the end of the year, or maybe even sooner.”

However, Anthony Fauci, the country’s leading infectious disease expert, said on Thursday that the initial results of vaccine trials could come in “November or December.”

Fauci said that being ready in October, before the election, is “unlikely, not impossible.” White House spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany denied any pressure to get the vaccine out before voters head to the polls.

“No one is pressuring the FDA to do anything,” she said Thursday. “The priority here is saving lives.” — AFP

Navalny case curbs likely on Russia

Berlin, Sept. 6: Germany, the current head of the European Union, will discuss possible sanctions against Russia over the poisoning of Alexei Navalny if the Kremlin does not provide an explanation soon, its foreign minister said on Sunday.

Russian opposition leader and anti-corruption campaigner Navalny fell ill on a flight last month and was treated in a Siberian hospital before being evacuated to Berlin.

Germany said last week there was “unequivocal evidence” that President Vladimir Putin’s top foe had been poisoned using Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok.

“We have high expectations of the Russian government to solve this serious crime,” Heiko Maas told German daily Bild. “If the government has nothing to do with the attack, then it is in its own interest to back this up with facts.”

If Russia does not help clarify what happened “in the coming days”, Germany will be compelled to “discuss a

response with our allies,” Maas said.

The crime against Navalny was a violation of the international Chemical Weapons Convention and there must be an appropriate response, he said. “When we think about sanctions, they should be as targeted as possible.”

Western leaders and many Russians have expressed horror at what Navalny’s allies say is the first known use of chemical weapons against a high-profile opposition leader on Russian soil.

The Kremlin has denied responsibility for the attack and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Germany is yet to share any findings with Moscow’s prosecutors.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Sunday accused Germany of stalling efforts to probe the Navalny case.

“Berlin is stalling the process of investigation for which it’s calling. On purpose?” she said on Facebook. — AFP

Belarus braces for new silent mass protest over Lukashenko

Police declare Portland stir a ‘riot’, open fire, tear gas

Minsk, Sept. 6: Thousands of Belarusians staged a peaceful new march on Sunday, keeping the pressure on strongman Alexander Lukashenko who has refused to quit after his disputed re-election and turned to Russia for help to stay in power.

Holding red-and-white flags and placards, protesters including many students took to the streets of the capital Minsk despite authorities mounting a massive show of force and detaining some demonstrators.

Troops, water cannon, armoured personnel carriers and armoured reconnaissance vehicles were deployed to the city centre ahead of the march and metro stations in Minsk’s centre were closed.

Unprecedented protests broke out after Lukashenko, who has ruled the ex-Soviet state for 26 years, claimed re-election with 80 percent of the vote on August 9.

Opposition rival Svetlana Tikhonovskaya says she won the vote but Lukashenko’s security forces have detained thousands of protesters, many of whom accused police of beatings and torture.

Several people have died in the crackdown.

Tikhonovskaya left Belarus under pressure from authorities and took shelter in EU member Lithuania.

Belarusians have been demonstrating across the country for nearly a month even though the

protest movement lacks a clear leader, with many activists jailed or forced out of the country.

Many say they will keep taking to the streets until Lukashenko quits.

“Lukashenko must go,” Nikolai Dvaylov, a 32-year-old protester, said. — AFP

Police arrested dozens of protesters in an ensuing game of cat-and-mouse through a residential district of east Portland.

“It was Day 100 for Black Lives Matter protests in Portland since George Floyd’s murder and they wanted to prevent us from marching,” said 20-year-old protester Jay, her eyes red from the tear gas.

“It’s our constitutional right to be here and to express ourselves,” Police said people were “engaging in tumultuous and violent conduct thereby intentionally or recklessly creating a grave risk of causing public alarm.”

Cops swoop down on Hong Kong protesters

Hong Kong, Sept. 6: Nearly 300 people were arrested by Hong Kong police on Sunday as riot officers swooped on democracy protesters opposed to the postponement of local elections.

Sunday was meant to be voting day for the city’s partially elected legislature, one of the few instances where Hong Kongers get to cast ballots.

But the city’s pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam suspended the polls for a year — citing the Coronavirus — angering the pro-democracy opposition who had been hoping to capitalise on seething anti-government sentiment.

Throughout the afternoon officers were heckled by people shouting slogans such as “Give me back my vote!” and “Corrupt cops!” as officers conducted multiple stop and searches and ordered crowds to disperse. — AFP

Police quickly declared the rally a “riot” after protesters hurled Molotov cocktails at them, and they responded with a barrage of tear gas to disperse the crowd.

At least one person was injured by the fire bombs, police said.

Officers arrested dozens of protesters in an ensuing game of cat-and-mouse through a residential district of east Portland.

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— AFP

Spacecraft was launched on board a Long March-2F carrier rocket on Friday

China’s reusable spacecraft lands successfully

Beijing, Sept. 6: China’s reusable experimental spacecraft, which was launched into orbit two days ago, successfully returned to its predetermined landing site on Sunday, according to the official state media.

The spacecraft was launched on board a Long March-2F carrier rocket from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Friday. The successful return marks an important breakthrough in china’s

research on reusable spacecraft technology, which will provide a more convenient and economical way for the peaceful use of space, state-run CGTN TV reported.

Chinese military officials, who were tight-lipped about the launch earlier, said there were many firsts in this launch. “The spacecraft is new, the launch method is also different,” they said.

An official, quoted by the Hong Kong-based South

China Morning Post on Sunday, declined to comment on the details of the

mission but suggested “maybe you can take a look at the US X-37B.”

The X-37B is an unmanned space plane that operates like a smaller version of the space shuttle, which is launched by a rocket and cruises back to earth for a runway landing.

It has flown four classified missions to date, carrying secret payloads on long-duration flights in Earth orbit, the Post report said. Friday’s launch comes weeks after China launched Tianwen-1, the country’s first Mars mission, from Hainan in late July.

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DECCAN Chronicle

7 SEPTEMBER 2020

No more slogans please, we need hard measures

The war on Coronavirus, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised to win for us in 21 days, gets more hopeless by the day with the daily increase in caseload crossing 90,000, a figure higher than all other nations. India added the last million to the number of infected people in 13 days, a record of sorts in pandemic history the world over. With 41 lakh infections, India is set to become the nation with the second largest number of Covid-19 patients, overtaking Brazil soon.

The nature of the pandemic has also been shifting. Those states which fared better in early stages are now becoming increasingly vulnerable. The southern states of Telangana state, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka see no let-up in new cases; even Kerala has started reporting cases upwards of 2,500 every day. Delhi is reported to be witnessing a relapse with the numbers increasing. Telangana state's finance minister is the latest high-profile person to contract the virus.

The saving grace till now has been the case fatality rate which has been quite low but experts fear that the situation could change as the pandemic moves towards the villages from cities and towns where the health infrastructure is in better shape. It is in this context that the criticism of Congress leader and former finance minister P. Chidambaram must be looked at. He has pointed out that India is the only country that has not benefited from the lockdown. When lockdown was declared, India had less than 500 cases but the number rose to 5.6 lakh when it ended on June 30. The economic cost the nation is made to pay is going to be humongous if it cannot arrest the spread of the pandemic. The nation's GDP experienced a historic contraction by 23.9 per cent in the first quarter. It will be cold comfort to

think that the period was spent mostly in lockdown. This quarter, which started with half-a-million infections, will see the number multiplied several times when it ends. It is time the government explained to the people what its game plan was when it declared the lockdown and set a deadline to win the war, and how it all went awry. The lockdown had not only shut down the economy completely, it had also put people to untold miseries. Millions of guest workers were made to trek their way back home in villages from the towns and cities and several of them fell and died by the wayside. There was little help coming from the government; even the courts refused to see the unfolding human catastrophe in the earlier days.

It will be suicidal for the nation to return to lockdown; instead, it must launch a massive awareness campaign on the pandemic and educate the people on the need of social distancing. It must also ramp up the healthcare infrastructure in the interiors. Instead of advising the resource-starved states to borrow, the government must loose its pursestrings instead. The time for hollow slogans and meaningless gestures has passed long ago.

Kesavananda's lessons

At a time when socialism has emerged as a saviour to the suffering in a Coronavirus-hit world, the Supreme Court's landmark Kesavananda Bharati judgment holds a few lessons. It was this judgment that led to the formulation of the basic structure doctrine for the Constitution, one that has been cited over and over again to settle multitudes of lawsuits having far-reaching impact on our society and governance.

Led by then chief justice of India S.M. Sikri, the 13-judge Constitution bench's 7-6 verdict in the apex court's longest trial at 68 days put much-needed curbs on a government's unbridled majoritarianism, holding the Constitution of India above it, ruling that even Parliament cannot tamper with the basic structure of the document, in particular Part Three concerning fundamental rights. The seminal verdict included the concept of the welfare state in the ambit of that basic structure.

Today a tribalist, populist government is invoking *force majeure* to escape accountability after single-handedly decimating the economy. Its stooges have filed a petition in court to remove the words "socialist" and "secular" from the Preamble.

Few are aware that *Kesavananda (1973)* validated the Constitution amendments enacted by the then Indira Gandhi government to uphold the nationalisation of banks and abolition of privy purses. The judgment also defined the extent to which Parliament could limit property rights, in order to redistribute large land holdings to cultivators.

Kesavananda Bharati, pontiff of Kasaragod's Edneer Mutt, who, at 29, contested in court the Kerala government's move, under two state land reform acts, to take partial control of his temple property, is no more. But the eponymous judgment that bears his name is a legacy critical to India's functioning as a parliamentary democracy.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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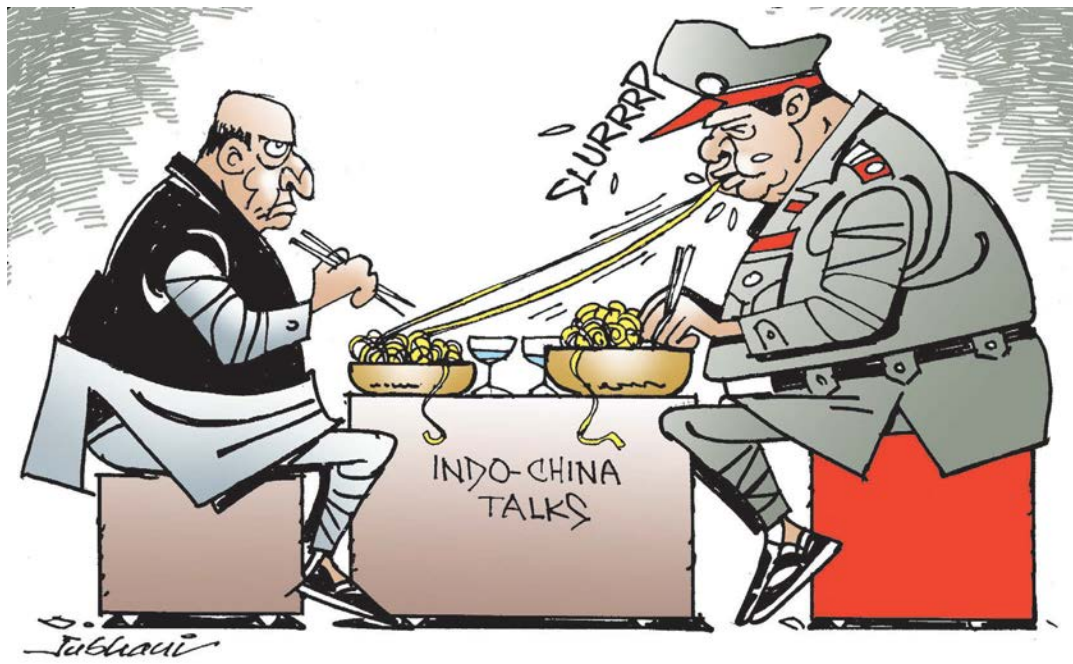
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Subhani



A controversial judge with a tumultuous legacy



Faizan Mustafa
& Pranav Verma



View with apprehension the attitude of judges", remarked Lord Atkin in his storied dissent in *Liversidge (1941)*, "who show themselves more executive-minded than the executive". Justice Arun Mishra has demitted office, and it is worth evaluating the implications of his tenure on the independence of the judiciary. As his critics have argued, his tenure may have contributed even more to the already alleged transformation of the Indian Supreme Court into an executive court — or, as Lord Atkin warned against, a court more executive-minded than the executive itself.

Growing deference to the executive: Constitutional democracies are predicated upon a natural and healthy tension between the executive and the judiciary, with the latter serving as a counter-majoritarian check upon the former. However, the first clear indication in recent years of this basic principle having come under strain was the public adulation by Justice Arun Mishra (appointed as Supreme Court judge on July 7, 2014, after the UPA government had twice blocked his well-deserved elevation) for the Prime Minister, calling him "an internationally acclaimed visionary", and "a versatile genius who thinks globally and acts locally". Justice M.R. Shah who sat on many benches with Justice Mishra too in 2018, immediately after taking over as Chief Justice of Bihar, had called Prime Minister a "model and hero". True, an overwhelming majority of Indians similarly admire Prime Minister but should a judge say so publicly is the moot question. To be fair, Justice Mishra's praises were not unprecedented by any means. It was, in fact, a grim reminder to an earlier time where the Supreme Court bent way

over backwards for the executive. When Mrs Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980, Justice P.N. Bhagwati wrote to her, that "... I am sure that with your iron will and firm determination, uncanny insight and dynamic vision, great administrative capacity and vast experience, overwhelming love and affection of the people and, above all, a heart which is identified with the misery of the poor and the weak, you will be able to steer the ship of the nation safely to its cherished goal." Interestingly, the same Justice Bhagwati in *State of Rajasthan (1977)* had favoured mass dissolution of nine elected Congress governments by the Janata government by observing that "never in the history of this country has such a clear and unequivocal verdict been given by the people, never a more massive vote of no-confidence in the ruling party".

It appears that the clock seems to have started to run backwards for the Supreme Court, unlearning the lessons on the need for an independent judiciary acting as a check over the untrammelled powers of the executive. Justice Ranjan Gogoi's nomination to Rajya Sabha and his justification of acting as "bridge between Parliament and judiciary" rather than a watchdog over the legislature and government gave further credence to the allegation of an executive court.

That the judiciary is independent from the executive is equally a matter of perception as it is of fact — i.e. it must not only be independent, but in order to inspire confidence, it must also appear to be so. The government is the biggest litigant — ie in 80 per cent cases — before the courts, and the implications of such praises of

the chief executive upon an ordinary citizen's perception of the top court are axiomatic.

A strained relationship with the Bar: Justice Mishra

also leaves behind a legacy of a liberal and frequent use of contempt threats against the Bar. In fact, long before the contempt case against Mr Prashant Bhushan was instituted, the judge threatened contempt action against senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan while the latter was arguing for Justice Mishra's recusal in the Indore Development Authority Case (2019). Justice Mishra not only threatened contempt in the midst of the oral arguments, but also promised to "see through" the conviction. On senior lawyers' objection, he offered *dandavat pranam* ie prostration in abject apology.

The Indore Development Authority Case (2019) also reignited the debate on recusal by judges when Justice Mishra steadfastly denied

multiple pleas seeking his recusal on the ground of him leading a bench which was to re-examine his own earlier opinion passed as part of a smaller bench — this raised a significant perception of bias. Lord Esher in *Allison (1894)* observed that the question is not that the judge, in fact, was biased. It is the "perception" of bias that has to be the guiding factor. The Indian Supreme Court, too, in *Ranjit Thakur (1987)* held that judge should look at the party's perception.

The ghost of the judges' press conference: The year 2018 marked a watershed moment for the Indian Supreme Court when four of its senior-most judges took to the media and alleged through an open press conference, that sensitive cases were being allotted to a select few judges. The then future CJI Ranjan Gogoi, during the press conference, indicated that the assignment of Judge Loya's case to Justice Arun Mishra was

one of the reasons that forced the judges to go public. Justice Mishra in Bhushan's sentence order said that it must be the 'first and the last occasion that judges had gone to press' (Para 44).

Justice Mishra was part of 540 benches and delivered as many as 132 judgments, which means he really worked very hard. Several matters with significant stakes for the central government came to be heard by benches which were led by Justice Mishra — these include, the Rajasthan disqualified MLAs case; the dispute over the control of Delhi government over services; the Karnataka disqualified MLAs case; the CBI director Case; the AGR dues case; Sahara papers; a total of eight cases pertaining to the Adani group. The last being Adani Power Rajasthan Ltd (2020) delivered last Monday benefitting the Adani Group with Rs 5,000 crore. He delivered a controversial judgment in *Haren Pandya (2019)* convicting the accused who were acquitted by the Gujarat high court. Justice Mishra has also held in *Davinder Singh (2020)* that sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes is permissible. His judgment in *Chebrolu Leela Prasad Rao (2020)* quashing 100 per cent ST reservation of primary teachers in ST areas was also seen as diluting the reservation scheme. The final order was eviction of 48,000 slum clusters. In many cases, Justice Mishra overlooked the earlier precedents. But Justice Mishra's judgment in *Vineeta Sharma (2020)* upholding coparcenary rights of Hindu daughters is widely appreciated.

Justice Mishra's tenure at the Supreme Court would be located in the context of the court's overtly deferential approach towards the executive, a strained relationship with the Bar, and a continuing lack of clarity in allocation of sensitive cases, all of which seem to have contributed to the tumultuous legacy that he leaves behind.

Faizan Mustafa is a constitutional law expert. Pranav Verma is an LL.M student at Cambridge University. The views are personal.

LETTERS

COVID CRISIS

India is set to cross 1 lakh cases per day and the government is shamelessly unlocking under the guise of saving the economy, despite 70,000 daily deaths. Government has violated Article 5 — the right to live — of the Constitution. The Centre must save the lives of people. Financial constraints can be overcome by recovering black money, a poll promise of the ruling party.

Ramadev B.R. Hyderabad

EASE OF DOING BIZ

AP and UP are leading in terms of ease of doing business when compared to TS. The government should find out the reason for this. Only then can they face the challenge and solve the problem.

Chandra Kantha Awasthi Hyderabad

VILE MUGHALS

Nice article by Krishna Shastri Devulapalli (*Blame it all on those vile Mughals, DC, Sept. 6*). Nowadays everyone, even the educated, are more concerned about what happened 1,000 years ago and not about growth. Proper education can change some mindsets.

Zeenath Hyderabad

PRIVATE TEACHERS

It was sad to know that private teachers observed 'black day' on the eve of Teachers' Day. Every private educational institution should be made to pay salaries to teachers based on their strength and fees they collect from students. The government should make rules accordingly and save the lives of teachers.

C.K. Vinaya Chandra Hyderabad

PRINCES TO BE DE-RECOGNISED

NEW DELHI, Sept. 6 Rulers of former Indian States are being "derecognised" forthwith. This will imply the abolition of privy purses.

The President is expected to issue an order under Article 366 (22) of the Constitution. The sen-

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle sational decision was taken by the Union Cabinet last night

after being in session for 75 minutes at the PM's residence. Mrs Indira Gandhi summoned a meeting of her colleagues soon after the Rajya Sabha rendered infructuous the Government's move for the abolition of privy purses and privileges.

G. Kishan Reddy



NEP presents Telangana with opportunity to course-correct

A lot has been deliberated on the transformative potential of the recently issued National Education Policy (NEP). The policy that has stood out for introducing sweeping changes in school and higher education is a boon for Telangana where it will improve learning outcomes, especially for socially and economically vulnerable students.

It is important to understand the performance of Telangana in education. The performance grading index used by the ministry of education ranks Telangana at 17 out of the 37 states and Union territories in 2018-19. The broad-based metrics included learning outcomes and quality, access, equity, infrastructure and facilities, and governance processes. Telangana was ranked 30th in infrastructure and facilities and 20th in access. It also performed below-par in two other parameters — learning outcomes and quality, and access to education.

The National Achievement Survey, conducted by NCERT, too, revealed that the performance of Telangana students from classes five to eight as

poorer in comparison to students from other southern states. Even the Comptroller and Auditor General in its audit report in 2018 pulled up Telangana, where 14.26 per cent of primary school students and 21.47 per cent of upper primary school students scored less than 40 per cent between 2014 and 2017.

It is thus imperative for Telangana, which is financially well endowed, to implement the NEP.

The NEP understands the critical importance of good quality childhood care and education (ECCE). Experts believe that over 85 per cent of a child's cumulative brain development occurs prior to the age of six. By bringing ECCE to the centre of education with an explicit focus on building foundational and numerical skills for every child by end of Grade 3, a quantum improvement in learning outcomes is expected. The NEP also aims for a holistic, comprehensive education as it breaks down prevailing insularity by introducing the 5+3+4+4 system of school education.

The NEP further strikes the right chord in terms of equity and access.

Schools are often regarded as the second home in a child's life and this will thus, in turn, build an inclusive and empathetic society. In both domains of school and higher education, the NEP has opted for restructuring of the system in terms of curriculum, pedagogy and recreational opportunities to prevent any form of exclusion or isolation of disadvantaged communities. The NEP aims to provide food and nutrition in terms of breakfast and midday meals in government schools. This will encourage parents of children, who often have to make their child work for their next meal, to send them to school.

Another striking example to improve equity is the attempt to include the mother tongue as the medium of both educational and vocational education. By including regional languages, in this case Telugu, as a medium of instruction, NEP 2020 strives to focus the child's energies on learning concepts rather than a new language. The NEP also acknowledges special mechanisms required to ensure that children belonging to tribal communities receive the benefits of

these interventions. The decision to promote tribal languages will contribute to their educational empowerment. Telangana has at least 10 districts with scheduled areas and children belonging to Lambada, Koya, Gond, Yerukala, Chenchu and other communities will stand to benefit.

One of the reasons for poor infrastructure and facilities of schools is lack of funds with states. The NEP stipulates the Centre and states work together to increase public investment in the education sector to six per cent of GDP. The Telangana state government's budget allocations to education for the 2020-21 fiscal saw a reduction from previous allocations. This is of major concern given that data recorded by the 2011 census shows Telangana's literacy rate as 66.4 per cent, much below the national average of 74.4 per cent.

Lastly, the NEP has proposed sea changes in higher education that will better align with the needs of a changing employment market. Telangana has a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 36.2 per cent. The NEP issues a bold call for enhancing GER in higher edu-

cation including vocational education to 50 per cent by 2035. It also aims to enhance access by establishing more high-quality higher education institutes (HEI) in aspirational districts and special education zones containing larger numbers of social and economically disadvantaged groups. By 2030, the NEP aims to have at least one large multidisciplinary HEI in/near every district. Aspirational districts in Telangana such as Jayashankar Bhoopalpally, Kumarambheem Asifabad and Khammam will benefit.

Education is a concurrent subject and this stipulates the collaboration of both the Centre and the state to enact proposed reforms. State governments will also now need to act in a manner in which we can truly usher in the vision of India as a "knowledge powerhouse" as envisaged by the Prime Minister. This is an opportunity that the state of Telangana cannot afford to miss at any cost.

The writer is Union minister of state for home affairs and represents Secunderabad in the Lok Sabha

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	38,357.18	-1.63
Nifty 50	11,333.85	-1.68
S&P 500*	3,426.96	-0.81
Dollar (₹)	73.14	0.48
Pound Sterling (₹)	97.22	0.46
Euro (₹)	86.62	0.27
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,770.56	0.10
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	42.66	0.00
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.930	0.034
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.721	0.00

* As of Friday/Saturday

Faceless vetting of all imports by December 31

The Customs Department will roll out pan-India faceless assessment for all imported goods by October 31, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has said. While faceless assessment for import of certain goods was already rolled out in Bengaluru and Chennai ports on June 8, it was extended to Delhi and Mumbai Customs on August 3. This will now be extended in phases to all ports across the country by December 31.

Thriveni Earth bags ₹31,428 cr NTPC contract



Thriveni Earthmovers has bagged a contract worth Rs 31,428 crore from NTPC to develop and operate Talaiipalli coal mine in Chhattisgarh. "Thriveni Earthmovers... a Coimbatore-based mining company, has bagged another mine development and operation contract from NTPC on August 26, with a contract value of Rs 31,428 crore," an official said. NTPC had terminated the contracts awarded to BGR Mining & Infra.

EV charging kiosks at 69,000 pumps mull

The Centre is mulling setting up at least one electric vehicle (EV) charging kiosk each at nearly 69,000 petrol pumps across the country to induce people to go for electric mobility. The government is also thinking of making it compulsory to install EV charging kiosks at all company-owned, company-operated petrol pumps of state refiners. Power minister R. K. Singh suggested oil ministry officials to issue an order in this regard.

Airtel launches 'unlimited' net plans at ₹499

Bharti Airtel launched 'unlimited' category broadband plans starting at Rs 499 per month, which will come bundled with subscription to video entertainment apps and high definition set-top box (STB) against refundable deposit. The move comes within a week of Reliance Jio revising broadband plans with unlimited data usage and bundling subscription fee of video entertainment apps in them.



■ Rangarajan says half the economy may do well Chances of positive growth this fiscal

New Delhi, Sept 6: A small positive economic growth in 2020-21 may not be ruled out as sectors like agriculture and essential goods and services were fully operational in the first quarter despite coronavirus-induced lockdown, according to a paper co-authored by former RBI governor C. Rangarajan.

Although many international and national agencies have projected a sharp contraction in the GDP in 2020-21—ranging from World Bank's projection of 3.2 per cent to SBI's 6.8 per cent—there are reasons to believe that the outcome may be better than these strong contractionary prospects, the paper said.

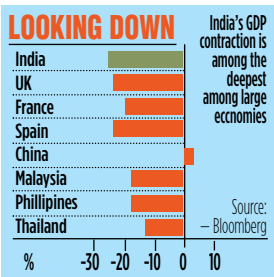
"We may note that some key sectors like agriculture and related sectors, public administration, defence services and other services may perform normally or better than normal given the demand for health services," said the paper authored by Rangarajan and India EY India chief policy advisor D. K. Srivastava.

However, the paper, titled 'India's Growth Prospects and Policy Options: Emerging from the Pandemic's Shadow' also stated that the story of the Indian economy as it unfolds under the impact of Covid-19 is disquieting.

The report said half the economy could support positive growth. It pointed out that goods and services categorised as essential



C. Rangarajan



TATA STEEL PRODUCTION BACK AT 100% CAPACITY, SAYS NARENDRA

New Delhi, Sept. 6: Tata Steel's production level has now recovered to 100 per cent as the company sees a revival in domestic demand in the current quarter led by a good monsoon and rural economy, its CEO and MD T. V. Narendran has said.

The company is now less dependent on exports compared to the first quarter, he added. Due to the lockdown,

steel makers like Tata Steel were forced to cut down their operations by up to 50 per cent in April. The players also had to turn to exports to find markets for their produce. However, with the relaxation of lockdown norms, the company ramped up its production in a phased manner. "Production is running at 100 per cent," Narendran told PTI.

goods and services in other sectors, technically called 'permitted goods and services' together with agriculture and public administration, defence and other services, may have a weight in the range of 40-50 per cent of total output. "These were fully operational even in the first quarter of 2020-21. Thus, nearly half of the economy may perform normally or better than normal over the full 2020-21," it said.

Also, given the current geopolitical situation, the government at the central and state levels have become more active in attracting investment from abroad. "Thus, a small positive growth may not be ruled out," the paper said.

India's economy has suffered its worst slump on record in April-June quarter of 2020-21, with the GDP contracting by 23.9 per cent.

—PTI

Suddenly ed-tech is hot, gets over \$1 bn from PE/VC funds

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, SEPT. 6

Companies in the online education space have attracted over 200 per cent more private equity and venture capital funding in the first eight months of this year compared to last year.

Between January and August this year, ed-tech companies have received a total funding of \$1,191 million across 36 deals. In the same period last year, they could garner only \$373 million across 31 deals—a growth of 219 per cent. During the entire calendar year 2019, the space had witnessed just 43 deals aggregating to \$409 million, as per data from Venture Intelligence.

The growth in investments also saw ed-tech companies increasing their share in the total venture capital funding in the first eight months of this year to 23.1 per cent against 5.2 per cent in 2019. Though the ed-tech space has seen a gradual rise of investments and share in the past five years, 2020 saw a quantum jump. In 2015, ed-tech companies had



received just \$84 million and had a minimal share of 1.1 per cent in the venture capital funding.

Emergence of newer companies to tap the opportunity in online education combined with maturing of some of the larger companies has led to the increase in the funding. However, the pandemic was a game-changer. The new education policy of the government too enhances the role of online in continuous learning.

"In this pandemic situation where every other sector is struggling to survive, ed-tech is one and only sector that has seen maximum traction from VC/PEs, and the ed-tech industry has seen the highest investments in the last 3 months. Due to Covid-19, the complete education sector has

Over ₹10 L cr loans may come up for restructuring: Bankers

New Delhi, Sept. 6: Banks may restructure loans of more than Rs 10 lakh crore, largely attributed to five-to-six critical sectors, including aviation, commercial real estate and hospitality, according to bankers.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman last week asked banks and NBFCs to roll out one-time loan restructuring scheme for Covid-19 related stress by September 15.

According to a top official of a public sector bank, it is win-win for both lenders and borrowers.

Explaining the rationale, the banker said, companies will try to save their

business from turning non-performing asset (NPA) and buy crucial time for getting cash flow back for servicing the debt.

Secondly, banks have to make only 10 per cent provision against restructured account as compared to 15 per cent if the same account turns into NPA, the official said, adding that the lure of 5 per cent conservation of capital will also push banks for recast.

Given the benefit, the official said, it is estimated that 12-15 per cent of total loan book would avail of one-time restructuring.

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are already covered under the ongoing restructuring scheme which was tweaked recently to cover those impacted by Covid-19 crisis.

A total Rs 100 lakh crore worth of loan is outstanding in the banking system.

Another banking official said nearly half of the 30 per cent of the total loan book which sought moratorium that ended on August 31 may opt for restructuring.

Companies in about half-a-dozen vulnerable sectors—hospitality, aviation, entertainment, commercial real estate and travel

& tourism—whose businesses have been impacted severely due to the Covid-19 crisis will make a bee-line for the scheme.

The K. V. Kamath committee report is expected to give financial parameters like hair cut, debt service coverage ratio, debt-equity ratio post-resolution and interest coverage ratio for recasting corporate loans for over half a dozen vulnerable sectors, the official added.

Last month, Punjab National Bank managing director S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao said about 5-6 per cent of loan book would go for restructuring as per RBI guidelines. —PTI

SBI mulls VRS for 30K staff

New Delhi, Sept. 6: In a bid to optimise its costs, the State Bank of India (SBI) has planned a voluntary retirement scheme (VRS). About 30,190 employees are eligible to opt for the scheme.

The country's largest lender has a total employee strength of 2.49 lakh, at the end of March 2020, down from 2.57 lakh in the previous year.

According to sources, a draft scheme for VRS has been prepared and the board approval is awaited. The proposed scheme—Second Innings Tap VRS-2020—is aimed at optimising human resources and costs of the bank. Besides, by

PTI, said it will provide an option and a respectable exit route to employees who have reached a level of saturation in their career; may not be at the peak of their performance, have some personal issue or want to pursue their professional or personal life outside the bank.

The scheme will be opened to all permanent officers and staff who have put in 25 years of service or completed 55 years of age on the cut-off date.

The scheme will open on December 1 and remain open till the end of February.

As per the proposed eligibility criteria, a total of 11,565 officers and 18,625

staff members will be eligible for the scheme. The total net savings for the bank would be Rs 1,662.86 crore if 30 per cent of eligible employees opt for retirement under the scheme, as per estimates based on July 2020 salary.

"The staff member whose request for retirement under VRS is accepted will be paid an ex-gratia amounting 50 per cent of salary for the residual period of service (up to the date of superannuation), subject to a maximum of 18 months' last drawn salary," the draft report said. Other benefits like gratuity, pension, provident and medical benefits will be given to employees seeking VRS.

A person retired under the scheme will be eligible for engagement or re-employment in the bank after a gap of two years.

Ahead of amalgamation of SBI's five associates with it in 2017, the merging subsidiaries had announced VRS for their employees. In 2001 also the bank had announced VRS to optimise human resources.

However, the scheme is not finding favour with bank unions. Such a move at a time when the country is in the grip of a pandemic reflects the anti-worker attitude of management, Ashwani Rana, vice-president, National Organisation of Bank Workers, said. —PTI

Equity mutual funds see redemptions in August

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, SEPT. 6

Retail mutual fund investors booked profit in equity mutual funds in August too, just like in July, encouraged by gains in the broader market and need to protect their savings in times of job losses and salary cut.

Equity mutual funds have seen almost daily redemptions last month, barring a few days of net buying, as per August month data now available with Securities and Exchange Board of India. Data released by custodians to Sebi shows August saw redemptions worth Rs 8,358.68 crore from equity mutual funds, a tad lower than Rs 9,195.04 crore reported in July 2020.

In August, equity mutual funds saw redemptions on all but four trading days during the month. Only on August 31, when the equity market fell sharply due to Indo-China border stand-off and extremely negative first quarter GDP data fears, equity mutual funds turned net buyers by a sizable amount of Rs 891.58 crore, being the highest single day investment in the month.

The redemption trend remained similar to those seen in the month of July and the first day of September also saw redemption worth Rs 263.68 crore. Monthly data to be released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India later during the week, will throw more light on equity mutual fund trends in August.

At the same time fixed income/debt mutual funds have seen investments worth Rs 24,293.21 crore in August as against Rs 31,897.85 crore in July, indicating investors are moving away from equity mutual funds but getting back to debt investment.

Debt mutual fund investments had turned negative in April (-Rs 9,797.50 crore) after Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund had closed six funds abruptly on April 23, 2020.



Financial advisers give women a ride

RONOJOY MAZUMDAR SEPT. 6

Women looking to manage their investments wisely now have another thing to worry about: whether the advice they are getting is biased.

A two-year academic study covering every local financial-planning firm in Hong Kong found consultants frequently pushed women into chancier investments than they recommended for men with similar risk appetite.

"Advisers think they can fool the women and get away with selling them advice with subpar results," study co-author Utpal Bhattacharya of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology said, suggesting that's because they perceive women to be less financially literate than men. "This is what we call statistical discrimination."

The motivation, the researchers suggest, is the financial planners saw an opportunity for commissions. The logic goes that women were less likely to be able to spot bad advice and more likely to buy products if the recommendation chimed with what they wanted to do anyway.

It's an attitude that could cost not only clients but backfire on the advisers themselves. A separate gender-bias survey from Bank of America Corp recently found wealthy female investors who have negative experiences with their financial advisers are in fact more likely than men to fire them. —Bloomberg



Vaccine-makers plan to resist Trump pressure

ROBERT LANGRETH SEPT. 6

Drugmakers are planning a public pledge to not send any Covid-19 vaccine to the FDA for review without extensive safety and efficacy data, according to people familiar with the effort.

The joint stance is seen as a bulwark against political pressure being applied on the Food and Drug Administration to get a vaccine out as soon as possible. It is likely to be announced in a multi-company statement as soon as this week. The plans, which could still change, were described by people involved in the effort on condition of anonymity.

The companies involved in the discussions include Pfizer Inc, Moderna,

Johnson & Johnson, GlaxoSmithKline, Sanofi and possibly others. All are developing vaccines for Covid-19.

The drug industry has long relied on the FDA as a gold-standard seal of approval for its drugs and vaccines, assuring patients that the products are safe and effective. But in the middle of the pandemic, the agency has made several controversial decisions to allow emergency use of therapies without rock-solid evidence they work.

A vaccine, which will need to be taken by millions of healthy people, requires significant uptake to be effective in battling down the virus in the US. One recent poll found that a majority of the public thought a vaccine approval would be



driven by politics.

Health officials inside the Trump administration have said the process will be based entirely on science, and FDA commissioner Stephen Hahn has said he would not participate if he thought a vaccine were being rubber-stamped.

At the same time, the president has accused the agency of slowing work to hurt him politically, and said he believes a vaccine will be ready before

election day on Nov. 3.

At a news conference at the White House on Friday, President Donald Trump said a vaccine could be ready "maybe even before November first" or "some time in the month of October."

"I think you're going to see results that are shockingly good," Trump said. It's not clear what Trump was talking about, since results of trials are typically kept confidential while they're ongoing, with occasional looks by a panel of experts to see if there are safety issues, or overwhelming signs a product is working or failing.

Much of the vaccine work is being done under the umbrella of the government's Operation Warp Speed, which has struck deals with drug-

makers to fund development and manufacturing.

Others in the administration, including Moncef Slaoui, the chief adviser for the Warp Speed programme, have tamped down those expectations. Slaoui told National Public Radio last week that it's "extremely unlikely" a vaccine would be ready by election day.

In an interview with the news organisation Axios last week, Eli Lilly & Co chief executive officer David Rickes said that most companies in the industry wouldn't submit a Covid-19 product to the FDA until they were confident in the science behind it. The company is developing a Covid-19 treatment, but isn't among the companies that are part of the vaccine effort. —Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Gasly wins after Hamilton penalty

Monza, Italy: Pierre Gasly won an extraordinary Italian Grand Prix at Monza on Sunday for his maiden Formula One success in his 55th race and the first by a French driver since 1996. Alpha Tauri's Gasly benefitted from a 25-minute red flag suspension after Charles Leclerc crashed his Ferrari. Spain's Carlos Sainz was second in a McLaren with Canada's Lance Stroll of Racing Point in third. Pole sitter Lewis Hamilton was on his way to a comfortable win before a 10-second stop-go penalty pushed the Mercedes world champion to the back of the pack. The six-time champion eventually ended up in seventh place. "It was such a crazy race and we capitalised on the red flag," said Gasly who was dropped by the Red Bull team last season. "I have been through so much in the space of 18 months, to get my first win in Formula 1 I am struggling for words." — *AFP*

Mick grabs first F2 win of season

Monza, Italy: Mick Schumacher, son of legendary Formula One driver Michael, won for the first time this season in the European Formula 2 Championship on Saturday at Monza in Italy. The 21-year-old German finished 3.185 seconds ahead of Italian Luca Ghiotto with Dane Christian Lundgaard in third. Schumacher's fourth consecutive podium finish, and seventh this season, lifted him to third in the driver standings on 131 points. Schumacher had hit a wall in qualifying on Friday and told the F2 website that he had his mechanics on the Italian Prema Racing team to thank for his win. "It was a long night for the boys," he said. "They stayed up until 2am yesterday and worked on the car to get it ready. They did that and they did it in style, so I am very, very proud of them." — *AFP*

Nuggets numb Clippers in playoff

Miami: The Denver Nuggets bounced back with a vengeance on Saturday, powering to a 110-101 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers to even their NBA playoff series 1-1. It was all-square between the Toronto Raptors and Boston Celtics, too, after the Raptors notched a second straight win, 100-93, to knot their Eastern Conference semi-final series 2-2 in the NBA's quarantine bubble in Orlando, Florida. The Nuggets, routed 120-97 in game one of the Western Conference series on Thursday, turned the tables with a blistering first half in which they led by as many as 23 points. "Game one, we were tired. I hate to admit it, but we were tired," said guard Jamal Murray, who led Denver with 27 points. "We came out sloppy, came out exhausted, fatigued. We didn't make any shots, we didn't get back on defense." — *AFP*

Heavyweights off to winning starts

Paris: European heavyweights England, France, holders Portugal and Belgium all enjoyed winning starts to their Uefa Nations League campaigns on Saturday even if there were signs of international rust after the coronavirus shutdown. England needed a stoppage-time penalty to beat Iceland 1-0 while world champions France saw off Sweden by the same scoreline. Portugal shrugged off the absence of Cristiano Ronaldo to thrash Croatia 4-1 with top-ranked Belgium coming away from Denmark with a 2-0 win. In Reykjavik, Raheem Sterling's last minute penalty salvaged England from another embarrassing result against Iceland. Gareth Southgate's men also survived going down to 10 men and seeing Birkir Bjarnason miss a late spot-kick for the hosts. — *AFP*

Live on TV

US OPEN TENNIS

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

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Bosnia-Herzegovina vs Poland from 12.15 am (Tuesday) on Sony Six, HD; Netherlands vs Italy from 12.15 am (Tuesday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

WWE RAW

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

ROYAL OPENING

IPL schedule out, MI to face CSK in first match

Dubai, Sept. 6: Ending days of anxious wait, the BCCI on Sunday released the schedule for the upcoming IPL, and in keeping with tradition, defending champions Mumbai Indians will take on runners-up Chennai Super Kings in the opener in Abu Dhabi on September 19.

Moved out of India due to a surge in Covid-19 cases, the upcoming edition of the world's biggest T20 league will be held in the three venues of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah in the UAE.

After the tournament-opener in the capital city, Dubai will host its first game the next day when Delhi Capitals take on Kings XI Punjab followed by the third match on Monday between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Royal Challengers Bangalore.

The action will then shift to Sharjah on September 22 when Rajasthan Royals will host Chennai Super Kings.

There will be 10 double headers, with the first match starting at 3:30pm IST and the second 7:30pm, according to a BCCI release.

In all, 24 matches will be held in Dubai, 20 in Abu Dhabi and 12 in Sharjah.

Venues for the playoffs and the IPL 2020 final will be announced later. The final is slated for November 10.

The upcoming 53-day edition is by far the longest in the history of the league.

The schedule was expected to be out in the last week of August but the announcement was delayed after 13 personnel of the Chennai Super Kings camp tested positive for the dreaded virus.

Also, due to different quarantine rules in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, IPL's operations team took time to finalise the schedule. As per IPL rules, the defending champions and the last year's runner-up face off in the tournament opener. The same is going to happen this year after concerns over Chennai Super Kings' readiness were erased with their first practice session in Dubai on Friday.

This year's IPL was originally scheduled to be held from March 29 to May 24 but was postponed barely two weeks before the start of the tournament due to the virus outbreak.

— *PTI*



Mumbai Indians players Rohit Sharma (left) and Japrit Bumrah at a practice session in Abu Dhabi on Sunday.

Chahar 'touch and go' for opener

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, SEPT. 6

They may have suffered a series of blows, with a dozen Covid-19 positive cases and player pull-outs, but Chennai Super Kings are not worried about the preparation time, or lack of it. As expected, M.S. Dhoni's team will take on Mumbai Indians in the opening match of IPL-13 to be held in Abu Dhabi on September 19.

Having started their training a week late due to extended quarantine period, Super Kings have the least preparation time going into the high-profile showdown against their arch-rivals.

CSK CEO K.S. Viswanathan, however, said Super Kings are rar-

ing to go. "A great leader on and off the field, Dhoni has navigated the team through a difficult phase. All members are in good shape and in a positive frame of mind. We have had three training sessions so far (including Sunday) and our preparation is on track. We have no worries in playing the opener," said Viswanathan.

Along with a couple of net bowlers, the team's throwdown specialist and analyst are also in quarantine. Viswanathan said the support staff, headed by Stephen Fleming, has ensured that players get adequate training in the run-up to the tournament. "We have enough bench strength. We have another throwdown specialist who is available

● **Viswanathan said the support staff, headed by Stephen Fleming, has ensured that CSK players get adequate training in the run-up to the tournament.**

and part of the nets."

Deepak Chahar, who is Dhoni's No.1 choice in the fast bowling department, and Ruturaj Gaikwad, considered Raina's replacement, will complete their 14-day quarantine on September 11. They will undergo two Covid-19 PCR tests, 24 hours apart. Their return to the bubble is subject to those test results. They must also undergo a car-

diac screening before resuming training.

"We can't predict (when they will return) at this point of time. They have to complete their quarantine period and then undergo a series of tests. It will be touch-and-go," said Viswanathan.

Viswanathan also said the team management hasn't decided on replacements for Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh.

CPL PLAYERS TO LAND ON SEPTEMBER 12

Players who are currently part of the Caribbean Premier League are expected to land in the UAE on September 12. The CPL final is scheduled to be held on September 10. They have to undergo a six-day quarantine upon arrival.

THE RESULTS

Men's singles third round: Matteo Berrettini (ITA x6) bt Casper Ruud (NOR x30) 6-4, 6-4, 6-2; Andrey Rublev (RUS x10) bt Salvatore Caruso (ITA) 6-0, 6-4, 6-0; Frances Tiafoe (USA) bt Marton Fucsovics (HUN) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2; Daniil Medvedev (RUS x3) bt Jeffrey Wolf (USA) 6-3, 6-5, 6-2; Vasek Pospisil (CAN) bt Roberto Bautista (ESP x8) 7-5, 2-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; Alex De Minaur (AUS x21) bt Karen Khachanov (RUS x11) 6-4, 0-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-1; Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN x15) bt Corentin Moutet (FRA) 6-1, 6-0, 6-4; Dominic Thiem (AUT x2) bt Marin Cilic (CRO x31) 6-2, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

Women's singles third round: Alize Cornet (FRA) bt Madison Keys (USA x7) 7-6 (7/4), 3-2 retired; Tsvetana Pironkova (BUL) bt Donna Vekic (CRO x18) 6-4, 6-1; Maria Sakkari (GRE x15) bt Amanda Anisimova (USA x22) 6-3, 6-1; Serena Williams (USA x3) bt Sloane Stephens (USA x26) 2-6, 6-2, 6-2; Victoria Azarenka (BLR) bt Iga Swiatek (POL) 6-4, 6-2; Karolina Muchova (CZE x20) bt Sorana Cirstea (ROU) 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (9/7); Elise Mertens (BEL x16) bt Caty McNally (USA) 7-5, 6-1.

Serena survives Sloane scare

New York, Sept. 6: Serena Williams battled into the US Open last 16 Saturday.

Williams, chasing a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title, came from a set down to oust 2017 champion Sloane Stephens 2-6, 6-2, 6-2, in what she called an "intense" encounter on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"In that first set I don't think she made any errors, honestly. She was just playing so clean and I just said, 'I don't want to lose in straight sets'," said Williams, who will play 15th seed Maria Sakkari for a place in the quarter-finals.

The Greek player, who stunned Williams at the Western & Southern Open last month, progressed with a 6-3, 6-1 dismantling of America's 22nd seed Amanda Anisimova.

Back on the court on Saturday, Russian third seed Daniil Medvedev, Italy's sixth seed Matteo Berrettini and Andrey Rublev, all entered the last 16 with easy three-set wins.

Second seed Dominic Thiem also progressed to round four, overcoming 2014 champion Marin Cilic 6-2, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

And Canada's 94th-ranked Vasek Pospisil shocked eighth-seeded Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut and Australia's 21st seed

ROHAN IN DOUBLES QUARTERS

New York, Sept. 6: India veteran Rohan Bopanna and his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov stunned sixth seeds Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies in a hard-fought three-setter to advance to the quarterfinals of the US Open men's doubles event here. The unseeded Indo-Canadian pair on Saturday overcame a set deficit to beat the German duo 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 in a second round encounter that lasted one hour and 47 minutes.

Bopanna and Shapovalov will take on Dutch-Romanian combination of Jeal-Julien Rojer and Horia Tecau in the quarterfinals. — *PTI*

Alex de Minaur upset 11th-seeded Russian Karen Khachanov. In the women's draw, unranked Bulgarian Tsvetana Pironkova, playing her first tournament in three years, knocked out 18th seed Donna Vekic.

Second seed Sofia Kenin defeated Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 7-6 (7/4), 6-3. — *AFP*



Sofia Kenin of the United States returns to Tunisia's Ons Jabeur in their US Open third round match in New York on Saturday. Kenin won 7-6 (7/4), 6-3. — *AFP*

Fresh controversy hits US Open

New York, Sept. 6: The US Open was plunged into controversy on Saturday after New York health officials ordered the women's top doubles pairing be withdrawn from the tournament due to possible exposure to coronavirus.

Number one seeds Kristina Mladenovic and Timea Babos were yanked from the competition after Mladenovic was instructed to quarantine for coming in contact with Benoit Paire, who tested positive for

Covid-19 last weekend.

"All persons who were identified as having prolonged close contact with the infected player will quarantine in their rooms for the remainder of their quarantine period," the United States Tennis Association said.

"Kristina Mladenovic is one of these individuals, and as the women's doubles competition has begun, the women's doubles team of Mladenovic and Babos has been withdrawn from the

US Open," it added.

The USTA said that local public health issues had issued the quarantine notices, which prevented the players commuting from their hotel to the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

The shock intervention came a day after health officials tried to prevent Adrian Mannarino, who had also been in contact with Paire, from playing his last-32 match.

— *AFP*

IPL FIXTURES

M	Date	Time	Teams	Venue
1	19-Sept	7.30 pm	MI vs CSK	Abu Dhabi
2	20-Sept	7.30 pm	DC vs KXIP	Dubai
3	21-Sept	7.30 pm	SRH vs RCB	Dubai
4	22-Sept	7.30 pm	RR vs CSK	Sharjah
5	23-Sept	7.30 pm	KKR vs MI	Abu Dhabi
6	24-Sept	7.30 pm	KXIP vs RCB	Dubai
7	25-Sept	7.30 pm	CSK vs DC	Dubai
8	26-Sept	7.30 pm	KKR vs SRH	Abu Dhabi
9	27-Sept	7.30 pm	RR vs KXIP	Sharjah
10	28-Sept	7.30 pm	RCB vs MI	Dubai
11	29-Sept	7.30 pm	DC vs SRH	Abu Dhabi
12	30-Sept	7.30 pm	RR vs KKR	Dubai
13	1-Oct	7.30 pm	KXIP vs MI	Abu Dhabi
14	2-Oct	7.30 pm	CSK vs SRH	Dubai
15	3-Oct	3.30 pm	RCB vs RR	Abu Dhabi
16	3-Oct	7.30 pm	DC vs KKR	Sharjah
17	4-Oct	3.30 pm	MI vs SRH	Sharjah
18	4-Oct	7.30 pm	KXIP vs CSK	Dubai
19	5-Oct	7.30 pm	RCB vs DC	Dubai
20	6-Oct	7.30 pm	MI vs RR	Abu Dhabi
21	7-Oct	7.30 pm	KKR vs CSK	Abu Dhabi
22	8-Oct	7.30 pm	SRH vs KXIP	Dubai
23	9-Oct	7.30 pm	RR vs DC	Sharjah
24	10-Oct	3.30 pm	KXIP vs KKR	Abu Dhabi
25	10-Oct	7.30 pm	CSK vs RCB	Dubai
26	11-Oct	3.30 pm	SRH vs RR	Dubai
27	11-Oct	7.30 pm	MI vs DC	Abu Dhabi
28	12-Oct	7.30 pm	RCB vs KKR	Sharjah
29	13-Oct	7.30 pm	SRH vs CSK	Dubai
30	14-Oct	7.30 pm	DC vs RR	Dubai
31	15-Oct	7.30 pm	RCB vs KXIP	Sharjah
32	16-Oct	7.30 pm	MI vs KKR	Abu Dhabi
33	17-Oct	3.30 pm	RR vs RCB	Dubai
34	17-Oct	7.30 pm	DC vs CSK	Sharjah
35	18-Oct	3.30 pm	SRH vs KKR	Abu Dhabi
36	18-Oct	7.30 pm	MI vs KXIP	Dubai
37	19-Oct	7.30 pm	CSK vs RR	Abu Dhabi
38	20-Oct	7.30 pm	KXIP vs DC	Dubai
39	21-Oct	7.30 pm	KKR vs RCB	Abu Dhabi
40	22-Oct	7.30 pm	RR vs SRH	Dubai
41	23-Oct	7.30 pm	CSK vs MI	Sharjah
42	24-Oct	3.30 pm	KKR vs DC	Abu Dhabi
43	24-Oct	7.30 pm	KXIP vs SRH	Dubai
44	25-Oct	3.30 pm	RCB vs CSK	Dubai
45	25-Oct	7.30 pm	RR vs MI	Abu Dhabi
46	26-Oct	7.30 pm	KKR vs KXIP	Sharjah
47	27-Oct	7.30 pm	SRH vs DC	Dubai
48	28-Oct	7.30 pm	MI vs RCB	Abu Dhabi
49	29-Oct	7.30 pm	CSK vs KKR	Dubai
50	30-Oct	7.30 pm	KXIP vs RR	Abu Dhabi
51	31-Oct	3.30 pm	DC vs MI	Dubai
52	31-Oct	7.30 pm	RCB vs SRH	Sharjah
53	1-Nov	3.30 pm	CSK vs KXIP	Abu Dhabi
54	1-Nov	7.30 pm	KKR vs RR	Dubai
55	2-Nov	7.30 pm	DC vs RCB	Abu Dhabi
56	3-Nov	7.30 pm	SRH vs MI	Sharjah

RCB coach all praise for Kohli

New Delhi, Sept. 6 Basu Shanker, the man responsible for the fitness transformation of the national team, feels India and RCB skipper Virat Kohli has returned from the long break an even fitter athlete after working on "specific physical pointers" that needed attention.

Kohli was stuck in Mumbai for five months due to the coronavirus-enforced lockdown and had his first proper hit in the nets only after his arrival in the UAE for the Indian Premier League, beginning September 19.

However, he ensured during the break that his supreme fitness level was not impacted and, in fact, it helped him skill-wise on his return to action even though he was "scared" to hit the nets.

"He (Kohli) has come back in much better shape. He is at his best weight at the moment and his movement patterns are pretty much in sync with his best

self in the past," former India trainer Basu, who is now the strength and conditioning coach of Royal Challengers Bangalore, said from Dubai.

"He has taken this break as an opportunity to work on all the pointers which needed attention from a physical point. I guess his motto to life is 'Bear the cross and wear the crown'," he added.

He has worked extensively with Kohli, both at RCB and during his time with the Indian team.

Basu said Kohli was able to work on things which an international cricketer finds it difficult to do in a packed calendar.

"He had the time to be very specific with his meal plans and running intervals at home. He did not have much of a choice during the lockdown and he invested on a treadmill and worked on his endurance which is otherwise not possible during a packed calendar," Basu added. — *PTI*

BUTTLER SHINES AS ENG SEAL T20 SERIES

Southampton (United Kingdom), Sept. 6: Jos Buttler made a dashing 77 not out as England beat Australia by six wickets in a series-clinching win in the second Twenty20 international at Southampton on Sunday.

Victory saw England go an unbeatable 2-0 up in a three-match contest.

England, set 158 to win, finished on 158-4 with seven balls to spare. They needed 18 off the last two overs, with Australia having failed to score 19 off two overs in a dramatic two-run defeat in the first game.

AFP Brief scores: Australia 157/7 in 20 overs (A. Finch 40, M. Stoinis 35) lost to England 158/4 in 18.5 overs (J. Buttler 77 n.o., D. Malan 42; Agar 2/27).

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20

Printed and Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Vallabh Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist. Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-3.

RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: Aditya Sinha