

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

COIMBATORE | TUESDAY 8 | SEPTEMBER 2020

WEATHER



Max: 32°C
Min: 24°C
Rainfall: 1.1 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Aavani 23
Tithi: Shashti
Star: Krithigai
Rahukalam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm
Yamagandam:
9 am to 10.30 am

PRAYERS

Fajar: 4.47 am
Zohar: 12.12 pm
Asar: 3.21 pm
Maghrib: 6.16 pm
Isha: 7.28 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.15 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.58 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 10.24 PM

MOONSET TOMORROW 11.23 AM

CORONA COUNT

| CASES | DEATHS |
|-----------|--------|
| (+56,155) | (+685) |
| 42,58,717 | 72,372 |

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+5,776)
TN: 4,69,256 7,925

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

2,73,87,167
DEATHS
8,94,476

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
213

worldometers.info

Threat call for Pawar and Maha home minister

Mumbai: Even as police are probing the threat call to blow up Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's private residence here, an anonymous caller phoned Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh's Nagpur office, threatening him and NCP chief Sharad Pawar, a minister said. Police have been informed and they are investigating, the state minister, who did not wish to be named, told reporters at Vidhan Bhawan here on Monday.

RBI broadly accepts Kamath panel recommendations

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank on Monday specified five financial ratios and sector-specific thresholds for resolution of COVID-19-related stressed assets in 26 sectors, including auto components, aviation and tourism.

COUNTER POINT



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

Novak out from US Open after hitting line judge with a ball

New York, Sept. 7: Novak Djokovic was kicked out of the U.S. Open for accidentally hitting a line judge in the throat with a tennis ball after dropping a game in his fourth-round match on Sunday, a stunning end to his 29-match winning streak and bid for an 18th Grand Slam title. As he walked to the Arthur Ashe Stadium sideline for a changeover, trailing Pablo Carreno Busta 6-5 in the first set, Djokovic — who was seeded and ranked No. 1 and an overwhelming

favorite for the championship — angrily smacked a ball behind him. The ball flew right at the line judge, who dropped to her knees at the back of the court and reached for her neck. Tournament referee Soeren Friemel said that even if Djokovic didn't intend to hurt the line judge, she was hurt, and that was enough to merit the ruling. Eventually, Djokovic walked over to shake hands with Carreno Busta. The chair umpire then announced that Djokovic was

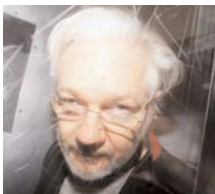
defaulted, the tennis equivalent of an ejection. Djokovic quickly left the tournament grounds without speaking to reporters, posting an apology on social media hours later. — AP

Serbian tennis star >>>
Novak Djokovic checks a line umpire after hitting her with a ball in reaction to losing a point to Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain during the fourth round of the US Open tennis championships on Sunday. Djokovic defaulted the match. — AP



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Osaka powers into quarters



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India lifts wail on SFF, honours fallen soldier

India makes big step to hypersonic club

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

In a rare move, the last rites of commando Nyima Tenzin from India's covert elite paramilitary force Special Frontier Force (SFF), which recruits its men exclusively from Tibetan migrants, was performed on Monday in Ladakh with full honors in public glare attended by top BJP functionaries.

Conducting the funeral ceremony of an SFF commando, who died in a mine blast in South Pangong Tso where India is involved in a face-off with China, openly is unusual as creation of the force in 1962 and its operations have never been officially acknowledged.

The body of Company Leader Tenzin, 51, was wrapped in Tibetan and Indian national flags. He was honored by traditional military 21-gun salute. The senior BJP leader Ram Madhav attended the funeral and laid a wreath. Tibetans and people from Ladakh raised slogans of "Bharat Mata ki Jai", "Tibet desh ki Jai" and "We salute Indian army". The Buddhist monks chanted hymns as the funeral pyre was lit.

Earlier his mortal remains were taken from his house in a "military truck" which was followed by a rally of people in cars and motorcycles carrying Indian and Tibet's national flag. India has traditionally tried to keep Tibetans activities in the country under wraps to avoid provoking China which has been hypersensitive on the Tibet issue. The question being asked is if the latest India-China stand-off has led a change in India's Tibet policy. ■ P4

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Monday successfully flight-tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle. This will pave the way for indigenous development of hypersonic cruise missiles by India which can breach some of the conventional air-defence systems and hit targets in the rival countries during a war. In what will give India a technology edge the scramjet demonstrator vehicle travelled 6 times the speed of the sound. "DRDO has successfully demonstrated the hyper-



The DRDO's HSTDV being launched at the APJ Abdul Kalam testing Range in Balasore, Odisha.

— DC

sonic air-breathing scramjet technology with the flight test of Hypersonic Technology Demonstration Vehicle (HSTDV) at 11.03 hours from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Launch Complex at Wheeler Island, off the coast of Odisha today," said a defence ministry statement. It said that the hypersonic cruise vehicle

was launched using a proven solid rocket motor, which took it to an altitude of 30 kilometres (km), where the aerodynamic heat shields were separated at hypersonic Mach number. The cruise vehicle separated from the launch vehicle and the air intake opened as planned. ■ P4

Army bid on for 5 porters' release; China says no info

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

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

Disclosing that the Indian

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

But reports quoting state-run *Global Times* quoted Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian who refused to give details on five

civilians. "We have no details to release yet about the question on Indian Army sending a message to PLA about five missing Indians in the region," he was quoted as saying.

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



CM pledges to donate his eyes

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami gave an undertaking to donate his eyes through the website that he launched for the purpose at the Secretariat on Monday and was immediately handed over the certificate for that by the Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan. Through the website — www.hmis.tn.gov.in/eye-donor - people can register themselves as eye donors and also download the certificate for that. The website was launched with a view to create an awareness on eye donation and also educate the people of the procedures to be followed, an official press release said.

Sushant case: NCB questions Rhea for 8 hours on day two

Mumbai, Sept. 7: Actress Rhea Chakraborty was questioned by the NCB for around 8 hours on Monday, the second consecutive day of her interrogation, in the drugs case linked to the death of her live-in partner and actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

The 28-year-old arrived at the agency's office in Ballard Estate around 9:30 am and she left around 6 PM.

Dressed in a pink hooded jacket and carrying a bag, Rhea was escorted by police personnel.

The actor was questioned for about six hours by the agency for the first time in the case on Sunday.

She may be called again for the third such session on Tuesday, officials said. The agency has said that it wants to question Rhea and confront her with her younger brother Showik Chakraborty (24), Rajput's house manager Samuel Miranda (33) and his house staffer Dipesh Sawant to ascertain their roles in this alleged drug racket after it obtained mobile phone chat records and other electronic data that suggested some banned drugs were allegedly procured by these people.

These three men were arrested by the NCB in this case over the last few days. The officials said the actress was questioned on these lines on Sunday. She was earlier questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Rhea, in interviews given to multiple TV news channels, has said that



Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty leaves the NCB office after being questioned in connection with actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, at Ballard Pierd in Mumbai, on Monday.

— PTI

she never consumed drugs herself.

She had, however, claimed that Rajput used to consume marijuana. The NCB, meanwhile, has arrested another man, identified as Anuj Keshvani, in the case. The agency said his name came up during the interrogation of Kaizan Ebrahim who was arrested by it in this case earlier. Ebrahim is currently out on bail. The agency had said it seized drugs like hashish, LSD and marijuana and cash after raids conducted against Keshvani on Sunday.

A total of nine people

have been arrested till now by the NCB with seven directly linked to this probe, while two were arrested when investigation was launched under criminal sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. When the probe in the case began, the agency arrested two men, Abbas Lakhani and Karan Arora, for alleged drug peddling. Officials have claimed that through them they reached Zaid Vilatra and Abdel Basit Parihar, who are allegedly linked to this drugs case as they were in touch with Miranda. — PTI



Kausalya in Udumalpet. A sessions court in Tiruppur had sentenced to death six of the 11 accused. Kausalya was the lead prosecution witness in the case against her parents and others.

The Madras High Court, however, set aside the death sentence imposed on the prime accused and commuted the death sentence of the other five accused to 25 years imprisonment.

The court, however, refused to pass an order preventing the accused from travelling abroad as sought by by Nitya Ramakrishnan, appearing for the appellant.

Centre orders 'Y-Plus' security for Kangana

New Delhi, Sept. 7: Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut has been given Y-Plus category security by Central security agencies and will be protected by about 10 armed commandos around the clock, Union Home ministry officials said on Monday.

Ranaut had said she felt unsafe in Mumbai after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput and also spoke of drug use in a section of the film industry.

BJP leader Ram Kadam recently asked the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government to provide police protection to Ranaut since "she wanted to expose the Bollywood



drug nexus".

Responding to Kadam's tweet, the actor said she feared Mumbai Police more than the 'movie mafia'. Reacting strongly to her comment, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut purportedly said, "We kindly request her not to come to Mumbai. This is nothing but an insult to Mumbai Police." — PTI

OTHER STORY

Complex surgery performed

Chennai, Sept 7: A complex single-stage jaw implant reconstructive surgery for advanced neck cancer was done at a city hospital on a 75-year-old man. The patient, evaluated by Dr. Sanjeev Mohanty, senior consultant & head of the institute of ENT, head & neck surgery and his team of surgeons and it was diagnosed as stage 4 cancer of the jaw bone with metastasis to lymph nodes of the neck using evidence-based science. The team decided that surgical clearance based on oncology principles both of the primary and the secondary site would be the optimal treatment. The patient underwent a radical removal of the right half of his jaw bone and affected portion of the left side along with the affected lymph nodes in the neck using the advanced surgical techniques available at MGM Healthcare and a prosthesis implant was used to reconstruct the jaw. Commenting on the success of the surgery, Dr. Sanjeev Mohanty said, "The case was quite complex, as it not just involved surgery but also the reconstruction of the facial symmetry post the procedure, so that the patient does not face any mental trauma based on his facial appearance."

'Empowering women in IT'

Chennai, Sept 7: The 14th anniversary of eWIT saw the bundling a host of events with top women leaders from across the world to speak on women leadership, innovation and honouring women through their excellence awards. Ms Rajalakshmi, the brain behind formation of eWIT, encouraged women to speak up for their rights and not to suffer in silence. President of eWIT spoke on the Digital Transformation agenda. Ms Donna Tuhs, spoke on women leadership in the new normal and encouraged them to seek opportunities for learning. Ms Pallavi Shome, articulated global trends in Innovation and transformation. A fireside chat was organized with Ms Shobha Shetty of World Bank on role of women and leveraging the new normal to create global opportunities. A number of achievers were given Excellence Awards - Poornima M Thakur, Manisha Gandhi, Siva Sankari Sekaran, Anzy Meerasahib, Shridevi S Bale and Reji Rajendran. Dr Vaidehi Vijayakumar, Vice Chancellor, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, was presented with the Academic Icon Excellence Award for 2020.

'TN will follow only Two-language policy'

■ Already achieved 49% GER: Minister

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

Tamil Nadu would achieve the target of 50 per cent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), fixed in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for 2035, in the present academic year itself as the State's present GER was 49 per cent, Minister for Higher Education K P Anbalagan said on Monday.

In a letter to Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on the NEP, Anbalagan said: 'We have taken various measures by opening new colleges, introduction of new courses, increasing the capacity of colleges by recruiting teachers, creating labs and other facilities and would continue to do the same and by 2035, Tamil Nadu can achieve an ambitious target of 65% GER.'

Pointing out that Tamil Nadu already has a teacher-student ratio of 1:17 as against the national all-India ratio of 1:26, he made it clear that the

State, which has always followed the "2 language policy" successfully, has already taken a decision to continue with it in future also.

Anbalagan said the NEP was discussed with the Chief Minister and all senior Ministers and the government had now appointed a seven-member committee, headed by the principal secretary of education, to go through the policy and offer comments and recommendations that could be adopted by the State.

Though the government would be in a position to submit its detailed remarks in due course of time, he wanted to put forth his initial remarks on the NEP, the Minister said, welcoming the proposed conversion of the B.Ed programme into a 4-year integrated degree course, including two major subjects.

"It will enable the students to complete the degree early and enter into the teaching profession quickly. This would

help lot of students who have opted for the core studies," Anbalagan said.

However, on the proposal to conduct Entrance Examination by the National Testing Agency (NTA), he said the move would discourage rural students and Tamil Nadu was it. Further, it would be an added burden on the students, he added.

On Section 10 of the NEP talking about institutional re-structuring and consolidation and Section 10.3 suggesting that either a college should be an autonomous degree awarding college or a constituent college of the University, the Minister said 'I would like to point out that this strategy of categorizing colleges only as Autonomous or Constituent Colleges, will deprive affiliated colleges the capacity or the capability of becoming autonomous degree granting colleges as they will lack, suitable guidance from the affiliated Universities.'

"I would like to point out



Minister for Higher Education K.P. Anbalagan made it clear that the State, which has always followed the "2 language policy" successfully, has already taken a decision to continue with it in future also.

I would like to point out that in Tamil Nadu, out of 587 colleges across the State, only 53 colleges are autonomous colleges and all the other colleges are required to be nurtured suitably by the affiliated Universities and then improve their quality standards. Hence, the present model of Tamil Nadu may be allowed to continue"

— K.P. Anbalagan, Minister for Higher Education



that in Tamil Nadu, out of 587 colleges across the State, only 53 colleges are autonomous colleges and all the other colleges are required to be nurtured suitably by the affiliated Universities and then improve their quality standards. Hence, the

present model of Tamil Nadu may be allowed to continue," he said.

Referring to the NEP envisaging Higher Education Institutions offering degree courses in regional languages, he said that it was already being followed in the State.

Anna University Vice-Chancellor M K Surappa said that the AICTE had raised objections to the move by the government

Did AICTE object to arrears exemption?

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

Did the popular announcement of Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami giving exemption for college and university students from appearing for the arrears papers that they had paid the fees for this semester draw flak from the AICTE?

The question has been bogging down students and those in the educational circles for the past few days after Anna University Vice-chancellor M K Surappa said that the AICTE had raised objections to the move by the government. The issue has not yet found a proper answer as the Minister of Higher Education K P Anbalagan said on Monday that there had been no communication of that sort.

At a function organised to launch a new college at Vepery in Chennai, the Minister said that the decision was taken by the government as the UGC had approved it and the

● The CM's announcement had earned him the gratitude of many students

AICTE had said that it would go by UGC guidelines. He said he was not sure as to what Surappa had said in his reply to the AICTE letter that he had received.

Soon after Surappa made that statement the government clarified that there had been no such letter from AICTE. But Surappa stood by his statement and said that he had sent a copy of the letter to the government once again. Even then the government maintained that it had not seen the AICTE communication.

The Chief Minister's announcement had earned him gratitude from many students who even circulated memes praising him for the kind gesture of helping them clear their examinations without appearing for them.

Corona infections continue unabated

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

Coronavirus infections on Monday stood at 5,776 with 89 deaths all over the State, while Chennai's new cases were 949 and fatalities 16. Some districts that had high levels of infections were Chengalpattu 330, Coimbatore 524, Cuddalore 398, Thiruvallur 248 and Thiruvannamalai 262.

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami claimed that the spread of Coronavirus had come down in Chennai and also in the neighbouring Thiruvallur district, where at one point it was quite high, and stressed on the need for people to wear face masks. He saw

at least 40 persons without masks as he drove down from Chennai to Thiruvallur, he said while speaking at a review meeting in the district collectors' office in Thiruvallur on Monday.

Since many people commute between Thiruvallur and Chennai on a daily basis due to work and other reasons, they should take precautions by following the government norms for the prevention of Covid-10, he said. Only by creating awareness could people be made to follow the norms, which alone was capable of preventing the spread of the disease for which no cure had been found so far, Palaniswami said.

FILM INDUSTRY DEMAND FOR MORE LENIENCE

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT. 7

The film industry has made a demand before Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami that at least 100 persons be allowed at a film shooting set. Film director R K Selvamani, who is the secretary of the film directors' association, called on the Chief Minister to explain that about 60 films had stopped shooting mid-way.

They were not able to resume shooting as they were unable to do the work with the 75 persons, allowed by the government now.

Similarly president of the Federation of traders associations, A M Vikramaraja, urged the government to open all the markets.

TN's electronic policy released

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEP 7

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami released on Monday the Tamil Nadu Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2020, which envisages increasing the State's production output to UD \$ 100 billion by 2025.

The policy aims at transforming the State into an innovative and globally competitive electronic systems design and manufacturing (ESDM) destination by providing adequate infrastructure and supporting ecosystem to ESDM companies.

It envisages attracting global ESDM players to

invest in Tamil Nadu and at the same time incentivise home grown start-ups in the sector, both in the component and product manufacturing sub-sectors.

Aiming to catalyse the growth of innovation-led enterprises involved in the manufacturing of hardware production and

solutions, the policy wants to develop a semiconductor fabrication industry in Tamil Nadu.

Among its targets are to contribute 25 per cent of India's total electronic export by 2025, undertake still training for more than 1,00,000 people by 2024 and so on.

Man booked under Pocso consumes poison

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

A man who went missing after allegedly molesting a minor, consumed poison in the Chengalpet on Monday. The accused, Vasudevan (28), a driver and a resident of Irumbuliyur near Tambaram, tried to end his life by consuming the poisonous substance after All Women police station and a search was launched for him. On knowing he had come under the radar, he reportedly consumed poison and is undergoing treatment, police said.

Vasudevan had on Saturday

barged into a house of a 14-year-old girl near Tambaram and allegedly molested her. The incident happened when the girl's parents were away at work. Police said a few neighbours who heard the girl's screams rushed to her house, by when Vasudevan had fled. On Sunday, the girl's family lodged a complaint with the Chengalpet All Women police station and a search was launched for him. On knowing he had come under the radar, he reportedly consumed poison and is undergoing treatment, police said.

Engineers turned ganja peddlers held

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

Three men who had lost their jobs owing to the Coronavirus lockdown were arrested by the police for allegedly selling ganja.

Two of the suspects identified as Saran Ram (25), a resident of Chitlapakkam and Alan, 25 of Vandalar, were software engineers who had lost their jobs during the lockdown. And the third suspect, Manoj (27) of Virugambakkam, who was working at a five star hotel in the city was sacked a

month ago, police said.

The trio decided they would make money by selling ganja and allegedly bought it from a man in Andhra Pradesh and began selling the substance here, police said. They established their network of customers, including college students and techies, and made brisk business. The matter came to light when Manoj who was travelling on his bike with the contraband was stopped by the Chitlapakkam police, who were on routine vehicle inspection near Radha Nagar.

Little hope for injured Makhna, say vets

ANANTH MATHIVANAN | DC
COIMBATORE, SEPT 7

The forest department has finally lost hope about the survival of the injured Makhna elephant being treated by the department veterinarians. The elephant estimated to be around 30 to 35 years old, suffered a serious mouth injury after biting Outtukai (crude country bomb) a few weeks ago.

Forest department staff noticed the injury only on August 15 during a driving operation, and the elephant slipped into Kerala forests, where it was tranquillised and given treatment. After its release, it again entered Tamil Nadu.

In the meantime, a video was circulated by 'Greens' on social media groups leveling charges of torturing the injured elephant in the name of driving operation. The clip contains a scene of forest department staff hurling rockets and bursting crackers at the animal. A department jeep is also seen rushing very close to the animal with blaring horn as if to knock it down, which is



The injured Makhna elephant that was forcefully driven into kerala forest on Monday.

claimed as routine 'driving technique'. This takes place after the elephant entered a shed near Mangarai.

According to DFO D Venkatesh, a couple of weeks back, the prognosis given by Kerala veterinarians on the elephant's health condition, was said to be grave. However, we are paying additional efforts to save the animal.

A special team was deployed to monitor the ele-

phant round the clock and provide medicine mixed with the favorite menu of elephants that is being placed on the migratory path despite knowing that the animal will not survive.

"An adult male elephant needs about 200 kgs of green fodder and about 150 litres of water every day for survival. The animal's tongue, molars, and cheek muscles coordinate and facilitate each other

in holding, chewing or masticating and swallowing the ground food material. The tongue has to move and press against the upper palate to initiate the swallowing process.

Unfortunately with the Makhna, all the three structures are damaged due to the grievous injury and it has developed sepsis. A close observation revealed paralysis of the tongue (tongue cannot be moved) and feed intake had become bare minimum to almost nil. This condition is irreversible. Tranquilisation and medicines will not correct the existing conditions in the present pathological condition. It will only prolong the agony of the animal. It is very unfortunate and the prognosis or outcome of the case is highly unfavorable and grave," assert veterinarians of both Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

"The animal is being given life support in the form of soft, juicy, nutritious food with oral medications and is monitored by the staff to meet any emergencies," added the DFO.

The new normal



It seemed like the dawn of a new era as trains (above) and buses (right) started running again. People who had to be on the move after five months of being confined to their homes began the opening day of the new normal while observing all the precautions even as public transportation operated at far less than capacity.

The Madras high court started in-person hearings on Monday and advocates queued up to gain entry (below) and deal with their cases.



OTHER STORY

Collector vows to open Gandhi market

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, SEPT 7

Members of the CITU and Labour Liberation Front (LLF)-affiliated load men association of Gandhi market, on Monday attempted a sit-in near the collectorate here demanding immediate opening of the traditional Gandhi market, which was closed for the last five months due to the pandemic. After meeting Collector S Sivarasu, Tiruchy urban district CITU president G K Ramar and LLF state deputy general secretary, Prabhakaran, told newsmen that the collector assured opening the Gandhi market along with the opening of the Koyambedu market in Chennai on September 18. Following this, the protesters dispersed peacefully.

1,600 ryots' accounts frozen in Tiruvavur

C CORRESPONDENT
TIRUVAVUR, SEPT 7

The Tiruvavur district administration has frozen the bank accounts of 1,600 farmers falling under the 'other district farmers list', who have allegedly availed farmers assistance under the Prime Minister Kisan Samman scheme, producing fake documents. Collector T Anand said they detected 1,600 such fake accounts and were taking necessary steps to recover the amount from them. Suitable legal action also would be taken against them. A special team led by joint director, agriculture, Sivakumar, is continuously verifying the credibility of the beneficiaries, he added.

Minister inspects start of bus services

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARUR, SEPT 7

TNSTC and SETC bus services between districts across the state commenced on Monday after a gap of over five months, said Transport Minister, M R Vijayabaskar.

Inspecting the operations of the TNSTC and SETC bus services at the bus stand here, the minister said, "Bus services are run in compliance to strict health norms. All buses are equipped with sanitizers and passengers without face masks have to get masks from conductors by paying Rs 5 per piece.

He said 60 per cent of bus services have been restored in the district, and if necessary, arrangements are being made to operate extra buses to required areas. Asked about the operation of private buses, the minister said, since the profit is less, private operators are reluctant to operate buses.



The Commissioner of Police, Greater Chennai Mahesh Agarwal (right) welcomes a police officer back to duty after she had fought off the coronavirus.

SCAM IN KISAN CASH NIDHI SCHEME

DMK chief demands CBI probe, BJP wants enquiry

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

The alleged large scale siphoning off of funds meant for the State's farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, which envisages an annual cash payment of Rs 6,000 to each of 9.5 crore farmers in the country, saw not just the BJP submitting petitions but also the DMK demanding a CBI investigation into the scam.

Looting seems to be the prime objective of the State government, led by Edappadi K Palaniswami, said DMK President M K Stalin in a statement on Monday, stating that the Central funds had been swindled by paying fake farmers the money.

In the Chief Minister's district of Salem alone 10,700 fake farmers had received the money meant

for farmers, Stalin said, adding that it was a state-wide scam running into Rs 4 crore. He also alleged a similar scam in the Prime Minister's Housing scheme, 'Pradhan Manthiri Awas Yojana,' saying that in Tiruvavur district alone 150 cases of fake drawing of money meant for providing houses to the poor had been detected.

Stalin demanded a BJP investigation into the farmers' fund scam and said the State government had pulled it off by appointing favourable agricultural officers. He even doubted if the Centre was conniving with the corrupt practices of the State government.

The central scheme envisages paying the Rs 6,000 to farmers in three instalments and swindling has taken place in the release of the first instal-

ment of Rs 2,000 each.

The BJP, as announced earlier, submitted memoranda to all district collectors in the State on Monday demanding action against those who had illegally siphoned off funds meant for farmers. In Chennai, BJP leader V P Duraisamy and Karu Nagarajan presented a petition to the Chief Secretary.

The petition urged the State government to appoint an enquiry commission to go into the scam and take action against all those who were responsible for the swindling of funds meant for farmers. It was a crime to take the money illegally, the petition said.

Reacting to the allegation, Textile Minister O S Manian said in Nagapattinam that the State government has launched an investigation

into the scam. It happened because the Centre simplified the procedures for enrolling into the scheme.

Initially they were identifying the beneficiaries through the village administrative officers and then through officials of the agricultural department. When they allowed direct applications, fake cases started drawing money, he said, adding that the State government was implementing the scheme only with the Centre's guidance.

Agricultural Minister R Doraikannu said in Thanjavur that the government had ordered an investigation by the CB-CID after receiving information of illegal drawing of money meant for farmers. Not only would the funds be taken back from the fake farmers but also action be taken against them, Doraikannu said.

Poll ties only if demands are met, say PT, TMMK

M ARULOLI | DC
TIRUNELVELI, SEPT 7

The alleged apathy of the state government in meeting the demand to club six sub-sects of scheduled caste groups as 'Devendrakula Vellalars' has the possibility of eroding the scheduled caste vote bank of the AIADMK, in the 2021 assembly election.

Advocating the categorisation of SC sub-castes like Kudumban, Kaladi, Pannadi, Kadayan, Pallar and Vathiriyar as Devendrakula Vellalar, as done in the past where several sub-castes of the Nadar and Vanniyar communities were clubbed and categorised as Nadars and Vanniyaars, leaders like Dr Krishnasamy of Puthiya Tamilagam party (PT) and John Pandian of Tamilaga Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (TMMK), have distanced themselves from the AIADMK alliance for the Nanguneri by-election. TMMK is a party with a strong Devendrakula Vellalar base in the southern districts.

John Pandian, TMMK president, when met by 10 ministers seeking his party's support to the AIADMK candidate in Nanguneri by-election last year, categorically stated that he would stand by the ruling party only if the demand is met.

"Despite our leader's condition for alliance, the AIADMK cared not to fulfill our demand," said Shanmuga Sudhakar, TMMK spokesperson. He also warned that if the government would remain reluctant to their demand, the AIADMK would face the consequences in the coming assembly election. The Puthiya Tamilagam party also has issued a similar warning to the government.

The case with the DMK is in no way different. Parties representing the Devendrakula Vellalar community maintain an equidistance with the DMK, since the DMK regime in 2006-2011, was also apathetic towards the demand. The DMK also constituted the Justice Janardhanam committee just to postpone the issue, added Sudhakar.

AWARDS GIVEN TO TEACHERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, SEPT 7

Tourism minister Vellamandir Natarajan lauded the role of school teachers for creating a better society.

Distributing the Dr Radhakrishnan award to 14 school teachers in the district at a function presided by Collector S Sivarasu on Monday, the Minister pointed out that the government was taking steps towards improving the standard of teachers.

Speaking on the occasion, Backward Class and Minorities Welfare Minister S Valarmathi said Chief Minister Palaniswami has allocated more funds for education to boost the education sector in the state.

She also congratulated school teachers, especially government school teachers for taking special efforts to enroll more students in government schools, despite Covid-19.

TEACHER'S ROLE CRUCIAL IN SHAPING STUDENTS'

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, SEPT 7

Agriculture minister R Duraikannu presented the Dr Radhakrishnan awards to 11 teachers in the district as part of teachers day function held at the collectorate here, on Monday. Along with

the award, a sum of Rs 10,000 and certificates were also presented to the teachers. He also presented appreciation certificates to 14 schools for providing more than Rs one lakh benefits to poor students during the pandemic, by school teachers. Duraikannu said that teach-

ers played a crucial role in moulding the character and personality of students.

MP R Vaithilingam said the government gave importance to education and helped students by providing free bi-cycles and laptops. Collector M Govinda Rao participated.

Regulated tourism on cards, spots to open Sept. 9

B.BRAVICHANDRAN
Ooty, SEPT 7

Tourist spots such as the horticulture department run public parks and gardens in Nilgiris to be reopened from Wednesday as the government has given its nod for regulated tourism in the hills with special Epass for the purpose.

Stating this, Ms.J.Innocent Divya, the Collector of Nilgiris, said that in the initial stage the public parks

and gardens run by the horticulture department such as the famed Government Botanical Garden, Government Rose Garden in Ooty Sim's Park and Katteri Park in Coonoor limits will be thrown open to tourists from Wednesday morning. This initiative is to relax norms to help the tourism sector to find its way to be back on track as it has gone without any activity since March due to restrictions as a measure to prevent corona

spread. However, other tourist destinations in the hills like the Ooty lake will remain closed, she added.

This initiative is to pave way for regulated tourism as only a limited number of tourists will be provided e-pass to visit the hills on a daily basis. A standard operation procedure has been laid down for this initiative.

The tourists need to apply in the tourism category in the e-pass column to visit Nilgiris. The inter-

ested tourists can apply from Tuesday itself, she added.

"This apart, inter-district public transport has begun from Monday morning. For those hill residents who wish to travel in the bus can show any proof of identity to state their domicile in the Nilgiris to travel in the bus. However, for those tourists who would like to travel by bus to Nilgiris, they need to apply for E-pass for the same" she added.

Ominous sky but...



Dark Clouds hovering over northern parts of the city promised much but there was little rain to be had on Monday.

— N. Sampath

Gold seized at city airport

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, SEPT 7

The Chennai Air Customs seized gold worth Rs. 19.5 lakhs on

Monday. According to an official statement, a person from Tiruchy who arrived from Kuwait by Go Airlines was intercepted at the exit of the arrival hall on suspicion he was carrying gold. During a search, three gold bars of 24k purity weighing 383 grams valued Rs. 19.5 lakhs were recovered from his bag.



The Chief Minister receives a certificate after pledging the donation of his eyes from health minister Vijay Bhaskar and health secretary J.Radhakrishnan.

— DC

FOR BIODIVERSITY REJUVENATION

Plea to defer resuming parks and sanctuaries

Chennai, Sept 7: The Tamil Nadu government should defer reopening of wildlife parks, zoos and sanctuaries across the state taking advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic and allow natural rejuvenation of biodiversity, experts suggest.

The COVID-19 crisis could be converted into an opportunity not only to carry out environmental reforms to benefit the people and the state but also strengthen the environment and make the economy more sustainable in the coming years, they said.

The state government has permitted numerous activities in Tamil Nadu under 'Unlock 4', to encourage economic development. On August 30, Chief Minister K Palaniswami while announcing the extension of the lockdown till this month-end, pronounced further relaxations. He however, said schools, colleges, cinema halls, swimming pools, amusement parks, beaches, zoological parks, museums and tourist spots would not be re-opened until further orders.

"The closure of tourism activities due to COVID-19 crisis, especially in reserve forests and protected areas i.e. national parks and sanctuaries, in Tamil Nadu, should be extended at least till the

end of this year so that the natural rejuvenation of forests and biodiversity can continue to prevail for some more time," Dr P Durairasu, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Head of Forest Force, Tamil Nadu, said.

Prof. L Venkatchalam, an environmental economics expert from the Madras Institute of Development Studies here, said the government could mull introducing long-term measures like "Green GDP," considered as an indicator of "economic welfare." "The currently measured state GDP cannot be treated as a proper indicator of economic welfare as the GDP measurement does not make necessary adjustments for changes in the value of the environment," he claimed.

Elaborating, he said the total turnover of the knitwear industry in Tiruppur in the state was Rs 50,000 crore in 2018-2019, which is included as 'income' in SGDP estimation. However, the unquantified environmental damage costs inflicted by the industrial activities on society, in terms of health cost, cost on agriculture and allied activities, and cost of biodiversity loss, as well as environmental defensive expenditure (EDE), in terms of hospitalisation

cost or additional fertilisers to improve soil quality, will amount to several thousand crores of rupees which are not quantified and netted out from the SGDP, he said.

As the current SGDP does not indicate if the economy is moving on an environmentally sustainable path or reflects true economic welfare of the society, periodical estimate of economic value of non-market ecosystem services, environmental damage costs, and EDE, should be resorted to. Accordingly, necessary adjustments should be made in the SGDP so that appropriate environmental policy can be initiated in the relevant sector and the SGDP becomes an indicator of both sustainable income as well as true economic welfare of the society, he suggested.

Indicating the direction of environmental reforms in Tamil Nadu post COVID-19, Durairasu and Venkatchalam argue that the priority wetlands in all districts should be notified before the end of this year so that focused attention could be given to protect the precious wetlands in the state.

Wildlife activists, however, disagree on a blanket ban on the tourist spots in the reserve forest areas which are in the control of the Forest department.

NTPC wins nat simulation game competition

Chennai, Sept 7: The Tamil Nadu based NTPC Tamil Nadu Energy Company Limited (NTECL), a joint-venture between NTPC Limited and Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Company (TANGEDCO) has won the National Championship in an online Business Simulation Game at the All India Management Association (AIMA) - Chanakya National Management Games (NMG) 2020 that was held recently.

NTECL operates the 1500 MW Vallur Thermal Power Station located in Tiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu. The team from NTECL achieved the feat of being crowned the national champion after competing against teams from 112 organisations from different parts of the Country. The victory was also significant since NTECL won the prestigious AIMA Chanakya NMG 2020 for the first time in five years.

The team comprised Shri Chinnathambi G, Manager, C&I - Maintenance; Shri Senkguttuvan P J, Manager, Operations (Main Plant); Shri Yoginderkumar J, Manager, Operation from NTECL, qualified for the regional rounds, which was held online and subsequently qualified for the Finals.

More teams from NTPC brought laurels for India's largest power generating company with a combined team of NTPC Talcher Kaniha and SSC-

ER II (Shared Services Center-Eastern Region II) from Odisha emerging as Runner-up in the Southern Regional Round of AIMA Chanakya NMG 2020. Shri Deepak Ranjan Sahoo, Shri Khageshwar Pradhan & Shri Ramani Kanta Jena from NTPC Talcher Kaniha & SSC-ER II were part of the team. 16 winning teams of NTPC Business Minds 2020 were nominated for the event and subsequently 2 teams qualified for the national finals.

NTPC won the competition earlier in 2015 while the power major had emerged as Runner-up in 2016 and 2017.

AIMA Chanakya NMG, an online Business Simulation Game conducted every year, is aimed at ensuring that participating executives from various industries get an introduction to the complexities of running an Organisation and gain expertise and skills from this event. The decisions are evaluated through the software "Chanakya" developed indigenously in India.

AIMA Chanakya NMG is one of its kind platform for Corporate Managers to face the thrill of Managing Business in a competitive mode. It is one of the most anticipated and reputable annual events based on Business Management Simulation.

The participants experience the complexities of running a Company by focusing on resource management. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

RHEA FILES
PLAINT AGAINST
SSR'S SISTER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INDIA
HONOURS FALLEN
TIBETAN SOLDIER

From Page 1

The role of SFF, which comprises of Tibetan soldiers, in India's plan to out-manoeuvre China in Southern banks of Pangong Tso by capturing two dozen strategic heights, will embarrass the top brass of Chinese Communist Party.

The "Establishment 22" or SFF was set-up during last stage of India-China war in 1962. To be manned by Tibetans its purpose was to carry out guerrilla activities and get intelligence inside Tibet. It comes under Cabinet Secretariat and was in initial days trained and equipped by US spy agency CIA.

Meanwhile, in a provocative statement Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said on Monday that "China has never recognised so-called Arunachal Pradesh which is China's south Tibet region." He said that China has no details to "release yet about question on Indian army sending message to PLA about five missing Indian in the region (Arunachal Pradesh)".

INDIA MAKES
BIG STEP TO
HYPERSONIC CLUB

From Page 1

"The hypersonic combustion sustained and the cruise vehicle continued on its desired flight path at a velocity of six times the speed of sound that is nearly 02 km/second for more than 20 seconds. The critical events like fuel injection and auto ignition of scramjet demonstrated technological maturity. The scramjet engine performed in a text book manner," said the statement.

The parameters of launch and cruise vehicle, including scramjet engine, was monitored by multiple tracking radars, electro-optical systems and Telemetry Stations. The scramjet engine worked at high dynamic pressure and at very high temperature. A ship was also deployed in the Bay of Bengal to monitor the performance during the cruise phase of hypersonic vehicle. All the performance parameters have indicated a resounding success of the mission, said the statement.

"With this successful demonstration, many critical technologies such as aerodynamic configuration for hypersonic manoeuvres, use of scramjet propulsion for ignition and sustained combustion at hypersonic flow, thermo-structural characterisation of high temperature materials, separation mechanism at hypersonic velocities were proven," it said.



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

For high altitude warfare,
ponies, mules are crucial

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

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC
HYDERABAD SEPT. 7

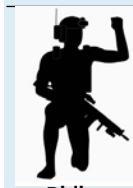
Tough, intelligent and naturally cautious, they have braved bullets, air strikes, harsh weather and proved their mettle by serving in some of the most treacherous tracks and ridgelines in high altitudes across the world. From World War II to the operations in Jammu and Kashmir during 1947-48, the wars of 1962, 1965, 1971 and the Kargil war in 1999, they have played a key role in mountain warfare, delivering last-mile logistics to soldiers along the LoC and LAC.

As massive deployment of forces is underway across the LAC from Ladakh to Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh following the stand-off between the Indian Army and the People's Liberation Army of China, the humble mules and ponies are back in action. Known for endurance and showing more patience under the pressure of heavy weights, these animals work alongside the soldiers, transporting mortars, guns and ammunition and other essentials needed to keep the soldier fighting fit.

Sources told *Deccan*

EQUINES & THE ARMY

● During World War II, British ships were modified especially to carry a total of 4,179 mules from the US to India for use by British and Indian troops operating in Burma



● Riding and animal management skills are a pre-requisite for even Special Forces

● Equines are called by their hoof numbers
● The Indian Army has recognised the contribution of the equines



● PLA also uses equines and Yaks, which have huge lungs which are perfect for high altitude

● Ponies are many breeds like the Zanskar ponies of Ladakh, Manipuri ponies, Spiti ponies and Bhutia ponies

● Mules and ponies are used to transport mortars, grenades, guns, ammo, kerosene and food among other material.



Chronicle that though the use of equines in mountain warfare has been minimal over the years except at a few places in the Kashmir Valley, where they are used to transport weapons and essentials for the Army, the stand-off with China and the massive deployment and men and material across the LAC has led the forces to rely heavily on the equines, which are best suited for the mountains. Even the special forces of the US and NATO have used the animals in the rugged terrain of Afghanistan.

Though helicopters and all-terrain vehicles have replaced animals over the years, ponies and mules are indispensable when it comes to high-altitude warfare. Army and ITBP personnel, who are being deployed in large numbers along the LAC in different states, rely heavily on them.

"Animals have always been an integral part of the Army's logistics and there cannot be a substitute to it. High altitude regions experience hostile weather, heavy snow and rainfall in winters besides low visibility. In some areas along the LAC, there is thick vegetation and these conditions restrict

the movement of helicopters which disrupts surveillance. These animals have been loyal to us at all our frontiers," sources said, adding that it is essential not to waste manpower during war time.

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

The equines, which have natural resistance to diseases and insects, can walk non-stop for 25 to 30 km and carry loads between 75 and 150 kg. Just before the Kargil war, there was a proposal to disband the animal transport units that function under the Army Service Corps but it was shelved. The Remount and Veterinary Corps later established the Zanskar pony breeding and training centre in Ladakh, which is the highest stud farm in the world. This unit is currently providing strong and hardy Zanskari ponies for use by the Army in high altitude for its adaptability to extreme climatic conditions.

Fact-checker
draws support
after police caseDC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Sinha, in a statement on Twitter, stood by his colleague and alleged that the FIRs were an

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

"An attempt is being made to hound co-founder of AltNews Mohammed Zubair (@zoo_bear) through misuse of legal apparatus. AltNews stands by Mohammed Zubair. Zubair has been in the forefront of fighting fake narratives and his work hurts those who have weaponised misinformation to subvert the Indian democracy," Sinha said on Twitter.

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

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

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

On August 8, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights took note of the matter.

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

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

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

Outrage in Kerala
over sexual assault
on Covid patientsGILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
SEPT. 7

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

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

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

In the first case, the ambulance driver Naufal, 29, has been arrested by police and charged with rape, assault, Prevention of SC/ST Atrocities Act and violation of Covid-19 safety protocol. In the second case, the junior health inspector Pradeep was

taken into custody and charged with sexual assault.

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

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

On Saturday at 10 pm Naufal put the victim in the ambulance. Instead of taking her to Pandalam hospital which is just 10 minutes away from where the pickup place, she was put in a different ambulance from Adoor General hospital along with another Covid-19 patient.

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

She secretly recorded the statement of the ambulance driver in which he is heard pleading with the woman to not reveal the incident to any one or else he would lose his job.

India's Covid cases cross 42 lakh; AP has 5 lakh

DC CORRESPONDENT
WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7:

India's Covid-19 tally of cases went past 42 lakh with a record 90,802 people being infected in a day, while 32,50,429 people have recuperated so far, pushing the national recovery rate to 77.30 per cent on Monday, according to the Union health ministry data. The total number of coronavirus cases mounted to 42,04,613, while the death toll climbed to 71,642 with 1,016 fatalities being reported in 24 hours.

AP number surges
past 5 lakh markVijayawada: Covid-19
infection in Andhra

Pradesh on crossed the five-lakh mark on Monday when the state reported 8,368 new cases taking the total tally to 5,06,493. The state also saw 70 more people losing their lives to the virus, pushing the toll up to 4,487.

The latest bulletin by the state government said 10,055 more patients recovered, taking the overall number of those cured to 4,04,074. The state now has 97,932 active cases. It broke a 12-day streak of reporting over 10,000 infections per day as only 8,000-plus cases were added on Monday, though relatively fewer tests were done on Sunday. The overall infection positivity rate climbed further up to 12.16 per cent while the recovery

rate also increased to 79.78 per cent.

Karnataka tally crosses
4 lakh with 5,773 case

Bengaluru: The total number of Covid-19 infections in Karnataka breached the four lakh mark on Monday, as the state reported 5,773 new cases and 141 fatalities, taking the death toll to 6,534. The day also saw a record 8,015 patients getting discharged after recovery, taking the total number of recoveries so far to over three lakh. Out of 5,773 fresh cases reported on Monday, 2,942 were from Bengaluru urban alone. As of September 7, cumulatively 4,04,324 Covid-19 positive cases

have been confirmed in the state, which includes 6,534 deaths and 3,00,770 discharges

1,802 new cases, 9
deaths in Telangana

Hyderabad: Covid-19 appears to have taken its regular weekend off in the state, with fewer cases of new Coronavirus infections being reported for Sunday by the state health department. Typically, during the weekend, fewer Covid-19 determination tests are conducted that results in a fall in the number of new cases reported.

Between Saturday and Sunday evening, only 36,593 tests were conducted in the state with 1,802 new Covid-19 cases being

reported. The previous day, between Friday and Saturday evening, 62,736 tests were conducted that saw 2,574 new cases. The bulletin issued on Monday said nine more people were reported dead from the disease taking the toll to 895.

Kerala records 1,648
new cases

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala on Saturday recorded 1648 new cases of Covid -19 even as 2246 persons recovered from the infection. Of the new cases, 1495 contracted the infection through contact, the source of infection among 112 is yet to be known and 29 came from abroad.

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

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

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

sacked.

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

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"The BJP IT cell has gone rogue. Some of its members are putting out

fake ID tweets to make personal attacks on me. If my angered followers make counter personal attacks I cannot be held responsible just as BJP cannot be held responsible for the rogue IT cell of the party," tweeted Dr Swamy, who often takes a different stand than the BJP like on the JEE-NEET issue.

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

TWITTER | WAR

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

Now, Swamy wants Malviya sacked as BJP IT cell head

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

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

sacked.

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

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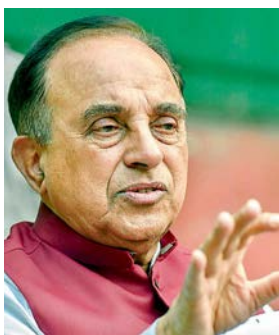
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"One Malviya character is running riot with filth. We are a party of *maryada purushottam* not of Ravan or Dushasan," tweeted the

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



Subramanian Swamy

IN BRIEF

Pakistan mine collapse kills 6

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

24 killed in Yemen clashes

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

Nirav reporting ban plea rejected

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

RESPECT BREXIT WITHDRAWAL DEAL: EU TO UK

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

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

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

Unicef to procure, supply vaccines

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

United Nations, Sept. 7: In what could possibly be the world's largest and fastest ever operation of its kind, Unicef has announced that it will be leading the procurement and supply of Coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe, fast and equitable access to initial doses when they are available. The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) is the world's largest single vaccine buyer, procuring more than 2 billion doses of various vaccines annually for routine immunisation and outbreak response on behalf of nearly 100 countries.

With several vaccine candidates showing promise, the UN agency, in collaboration with the Revolving Fund of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), will lead efforts to procure and supply doses of Covid-19 vaccines on behalf of the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility for 92 low and lower middle-income countries, whose vaccine purchases will be supported by the mechanism. "We are ready for an immense new challenge: To lead the global supply of Covid-19 vaccines and help end the worst stage of this pandemic," Unicef tweeted on Saturday. "Unicef is the world's largest single buyer of vaccines for diseases like measles and polio. Thanks to our supporters, we now have the experience and expertise to deliver a Covid-19 vaccine to the world," it said.

Unicef will also serve as procurement coordinator to support purchases by 80 higher-income economies, which have expressed their intent to participate in the COVAX Facility and would finance the vaccines from their own budgets, it said.

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

Belarus activist goes missing

Kyiv, Sept. 7: A leading opposition activist and several other members of an opposition council in Belarus went missing Monday and their colleagues feared they were detained as part of the authorities' efforts to squelch nearly a month of protests against the re-election of the country's authoritarian leader. Maria Kolesnikova, a member of the Coordination Council created by the opposition to facilitate talks with President Alexander Lukashenko on a transition of power, was reportedly put on a minibus in the capital, Minsk, and driven away by unidentified people. Her disappearance follows a massive rally Sunday that drew an estimated 100,000 protesters pushing for the resignation of Lukashenko, who extended his 26-year rule in the Aug. 9 election that the opposition sees as rigged. A council member, Maxim Znak, said Kolesnikova's colleagues fear she was detained. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius tweeted that Kolesnikova's disappearance is part of the Belarusian authorities' effort to "cynically eliminate one by one" and called for her immediate release.

The Belarusian Interior Ministry said it hasn't detained Kolesnikova, while other law enforcement agencies have kept mum. After a brutal crackdown in the first few days after the vote that stoked international outrage and swelled the ranks of protesters, the authorities have switched to threats and selective arrests of opposition activists and demonstrators. Sunday's demonstrations in Minsk and other cities went on despite the authorities' warning that participants could face reprisals. — AP

POLLS: RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE MAY HIT DEMS

Washington, Sept. 7: Russian interference could theoretically cost Democrats the presidential elections, party's vice presidential candidate Indian-American Senator Kamala Harris said on Sunday.

Harris, 55, is a Senator from California. She is the first ever PoC and a person of Indian descent to be nominated as a vice presidential nominee by a major political party in the United States. "I am clear that Russia interfered in the election of president of the United States in 2016," Harris told *CNN* in an interview.

"I serve on the Senate Intelligence Committee. We have published detailed reports about exactly what we believe happened. And I do believe that there will be foreign interference in the 2020 election, and that Russia will be at the front of the line," she said responding to a question on the allegations of Russian interference in the presidential elections. "Could it cost you the White House?" she was asked. "Theoretically, of course, yes," Harris said. The US presidential election is scheduled for November 3, wherein Democratic party's presidential candidate and former vice president Joe Biden along with Harris are challenging Trump and Vice President Mike Pence from the Republican Party. — PTI

PAK SCHOOLS SET TO REOPEN FROM SEPT. 15

SHAFQAT ALI | DC ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 7

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

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

It was decided that in first phase universities, colleges and school for ninth and tenth grade will be allowed to reopen from September 15 under strict implementation of SOPs and in second phase students of sixth to eighth standard will be allowed to return to schools from September 22.

NAVALNY OUT OF COMA, SAYS HOSPITAL

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

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

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

Khashoggi: 5 get death reprieve

Dubai, Sept. 7: A Saudi court issued final verdicts on Monday in the case of slain *Washington Post* columnist and Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi after his son, who still resides in the kingdom, announced pardons that spared five of the convicted individuals from execution.

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

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

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

Seoul, Sept. 7: A powerful typhoon damaged buildings, flooded roads and knocked out power to thousands of homes in South Korea on Monday after battering islands in southern Japan, killing one person and injuring dozens of others. The Korea Meteorological Administration said Typhoon Haishen was passing over waters off the eastern coastal city of Sokcho on Monday afternoon after barreling through South Korea's southern and eastern regions.

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

kilometres (67 miles) per hour after blowing at 144 kilometres (80 miles) in the morning, and was forecast to be downgraded to a tropical storm within six hours. Japanese disaster management officials in Kagoshima said a woman in her 70s died of a head injury after falling into a roadside ditch while evacuating from a coastal town as Haishen lashed southwestern Japan over the weekend with strong winds and rain.

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



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

Assange in UK court to fight US extradition bid over espionage

London, Sept. 7: Wikileaks co-founder Julian Assange, who faces charges of computer hacking and espionage in the US, on Monday returned to a UK court to fight his extradition to the US. The 49-year-old Australian national, who has been in Belmarsh Prison for 16 months, is wanted over the publication of classified documents in 2010 and 2011 and faces a possible penalty of 175 years in jail if convicted on being extradited to the US.

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

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



Julian Assange

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

James Lewis, the barrister-

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

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

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

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

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

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

London, Sept. 7: A 27-year-old man was arrested on Monday on suspicion of murder and attempted murder in connection with a stabbing spree in Birmingham which claimed one life and injured seven others, UK police said. West Midlands Police said the suspect was detained at an address in Selly Oak area of the city in the early hours of Monday after detectives worked through the night in a bid to catch the suspect, who remains in police custody for questioning over the knife attacks.

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

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

Tunis, Sept. 7: Tunisian authorities said Monday they had arrested seven people over a knife attack the previous day that killed a National Guard officer and wounded another. The attackers struck early Sunday morning in the tourist district of Sousse, ramming the officers with a vehicle and then assailing them with knives.

Three assailants were later shot dead in a firefight, the National Guard said, labelling the attack a "terrorist" act.

The wounded officer was "in a stable condition", the interior ministry spokesman Khaled Hayouni said.

Since Sunday, "43 people have been questioned and seven of them arrested", Guard spokesman Houc-

em Eddine Jebabli told private station *Radio Shems*. They included "the wife of one of the assailants, who described her husband as a 'martyr' during the interrogation", he said. Two brothers of one of the attackers and a person suspected of recruiting them were also arrested, he added.

He said the attackers were a pair of twins and a third man from the marginalised northwestern region of Siliana, he said, without confirming or denying reports of a fourth attacker. Jebabli said the twins had visited Facebook pages dealing with "explosive and armed attacks" but had stayed under the radar of the authorities. — AFP

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

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

The strong criticism from Harris, the first Indian-American woman on a major party vice presidential ticket came less than two months before the US presidential election. Democratic Party's presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate Harris are challenging incumbent President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence of the Republican Party in the November 3 election. But she said she was optimistic that as a nation, Americans hold dear to an ideal that is inscribed in marble on the Supreme Court, which is that ideal of equal justice under law. — PTI

Haishen lashes S. Korea after battering Japan

5 BOATS SINK DURING TRUMP PARADE

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

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

the Travis County Sheriff's Office.

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

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



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

DECCAN Chronicle

8 SEPTEMBER 2020

‘Justice for Sushant’ holds mirror to media

Wild and unabashedly outrageous, a little far out in its brazen attempt to exploit the voter’s sentiment as son of the soil, the BJP’s improbable “Justice for Sushant” campaign, launched ahead of the elections to the Bihar legislative Assembly, invites the media today to a spot of introspection.

The media is guilty of accoring the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput too much priority. To this end, it has blithely allowed itself to play into the hands of political lobbies that quickly converted the coverage into a running skirmish between the ruling party at the Centre and the Opposition-led Maharashtra government. Hungry for TRPs, the media remained oblivious. Rigour, due diligence and facts were tossed to the winds in the course of a media trial, masquerading as an investigation.

As floods raged through Bihar, alongside coronavirus and recession, the big media invisibilised the sufferings of the poor and the marginalised. The post-truth media was shy of putting governments on the mat. The social media fostered echo chambers; cancel culture, and trolling and real life stalking of ones with uncomfortable views.

But the cardinal sin committed by the media was trying to reverse-engineer the tastes of its audience and in so doing it underestimated it, badly. The masses are intelligent. They do not enjoy an exact overlap with the classes to which the journalist aspires to belong like every other middle class citizen. But they vote out governments. They have sections that are semi-literate and they also comprise minds that are not influential but are far more educated than the journalist themselves. The masses may be entertained by melodrama and kitsch but they know how to distinguish between news and entertainment. Sometimes, they knowingly opt for the latter. At other times, they do so in the former’s absence.

But to perpetrate their particulate frauds, journalists were encouraged to buy into the toxic middle class culture of misogyny, shame, fear and fascination of “drugs” and various “noble than thou” tribalisms that coexist as cognitive dissonances, indeed neuroses, in people’s psyches and milk them no end. It was surprising how the journalist of a television channel kept steering the conversation away to the topic of drugs even after Rhea Chakraborty dropped repeated clear hints about Sushant Singh being stressed out about the possibility of a “#MeToo-type allegation” prior to his death. Chakraborty has just been interrogated by the CBI and this adds to her statements new weight. It is also surprising how large sections of the media gave zero currency to the possibility that Sushant Singh’s death might have been the result of a suicide. This behaviour by the media invalidates the needs of people suffering from depression that the death had urgently highlighted.

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

Djokovic’s fault

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

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Subhani



Wuhan and the garden of false expectations

V Sudarshan



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

It is a song where two lovers pledge never to separate. This song helped define the so-called “Wuhan Spirit”. Later the following year, in Mamallapuram in another informal summit setting, which is to say, without the rigidity of official positions, Xi was to tell the media, looking as pleased as a fat Chinese cat that just tasted its favourite cream, that he had “heart to heart discussions” with Modi on bilateral matters. This heart to heart moment was branded by spinmeisters as the “Chennai Connect”.

What the formal communications were to claim later, after both these mutually rewarding meetings, where each leader much better understood the other’s strategic perspectives on a range of issues, reveal as much as they conceal. But Modi was to declare with much satisfaction: “The first informal summit between India and China last year in Wuhan led to fresh stability in our relations and gave a fresh momentum. Strategic communication between our two countries has also increased. The Wuhan summit instilled a new momentum and trust in our relations and today’s ‘Chennai Connect’ is the start of a new era in India-China relations.”

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

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

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

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

The fact is the strategic framework of how to take the relationship forward, in place since Rajiv Gandhi’s 1988 visit to Beijing, which downplayed the urgent resolution of the boundary question and made it a secondary goal while seeking to expand the horizon of relations, had long collapsed by the time Modi started meeting the Chinese leadership in 2014. Was Modi still waiting for a strategic communication when he declared on June 19: “Neither have they intruded into our border, nor has any post been taken over by them (China)”?

After all our Prime Minister had a chance to broadly survey and review what the two countries had been able to achieve and, more important, had a chance to map the path where the two were heading in an uncertain world. It was quite an unparalleled

achievement, expending so much political capital to better get a handle on this complicated relationship. Modi must surely have factored in the negative signals the Chinese have sent over the years, on the Nuclear Suppliers Group, on Jaish-e-Mohammed, on Pakistan, Arunachal Pradesh. Or were they, like the two characters in Chiroco’s painting, just conversations among the ruins, with the high Himalayas providing the barren backdrop? Could it be that for a while Modi and his policy-makers, based on Modi’s various heart-to-heart conversations with Xi, had thought there could be somehow a disconnect between Xi and sections of the PLA and that he would somehow prevail? Was this the context that we should have viewed our man in Beijing’s special pleadings in the middle of August with the director of the Office of International Military Co-operation of the Central Military Commission of China? Is it even possible that Modi, chowkidar exemplar, was blindsided by Xi and let himself be led up the garden path? If we allow for that possibility, then the recent surprise expressed by our external affairs minister, in the collective second person “we”, starts to make sense. He speaks not only for himself, but for those who provided close support in Wuhan, Mahabs and 16 other salubrious settings. Thus have the scales fallen from their eyes. That would explain the additional, proactive military scrambling, the forward deploying, in the areas of the Ladakh UT where we continue to plug the gaps. A delightful reworking of Nehru’s much-maligned forward policy.

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

LETTERS

KISAN SCAM

“If gold itself rusts, what can be said of iron?” goes the saying and the alleged swindling and embezzling ₹6 crore-earmarked for Kisan Samman scheme — by the touts with the connivance of officials is true to the hilt. It is ironical to note that the felony has been staged in Salem district, which is the Chief Minister’s home town. It is shocking to note that as many as 14,000 people are involved in hoodwinking banks by fake registrations. Banks can’t plead innocence or ignorance as the touts would not have operated from outside without the active role of insiders. Perhaps, it is the tip of an iceberg.

E.S.Chandrasekaran
Chennai

NOT IN GOOD TASTE

T-SHIRTS WITH the sensational slogan ‘Hindi Theriyadhu Poda’ is in high demand among the Chennai youths. The slogan, if translated into English will be like this “(I) don’t know Hindi — (you) ‘get lost’”. It is one thing to oppose Hindi imperialism and imposition on unwilling persons but totally different if opposition is demonstrated in a way that only exposes animosity and hatred towards Hindi speaking persons. Ignorance or lack of knowledge in Hindi cannot certainly be a disqualification for being an Indian citizen. But it is a different thing to ‘trumpet’ it as pride and a big qualification to be a Tamil. The word ‘da’ cannot be relished as it denotes contempt and hatred for the ‘person’ to whom the message is intended to be conveyed.

S. Nagarajan Iyer, Coimbatore

MESSI’S DECISION

AFTER INTENSE speculation and several unpleasant incidents, soccer legend Lionel Messi has reversed his decision to leave FC Barcelona and decided to stay with the club for another season. In fact, Messi’s earlier decision to leave Camp Nou was impelled after the Catalans were knocked out of the Champions League after a humiliating defeat in the quarter-finals against eventual champions Bayern Munich. Perhaps, more than the defeat, it was the bitter relations between him and the new Dutch Manager Ronald Koeman that must have prompted Messi to try and leave the club. Now that he has decided to stay back, Barcelona will be infused with renewed energy and look to come back with greater verve next season.

R. Sivakumar, Chennai

Anita Katyal

Political Gup-Shup

‘Pro-changers’ for voter lists; Anar ambition worries BJP

It has been more than ten days since the eventful meeting of the Congress Working Committee where its members hit out at their colleagues for writing a letter to Sonia Gandhi seeking far-reaching changes in the party organization. But a discussion on the subject continues to rage. There is considerable speculation about how the letter writers or pro-changers, as they are often called, will continue to push for the much-needed reforms in the party. To begin with, this group is waiting for the promised session of the All-India Congress Committee for the election of the next party president. Before that, they plan to seek the publication of the names of members who are entitled to vote for the party president to be able to peruse it in advance. It is an acknowledged fact that the list of voters comprises handpicked workers and supporters of office bearers whose contribution to the party is suspect. However, it is not clear if the publication of this list will actually help the letter writers as it will not be easy to detect bogus voters.

The coronavirus pandemic has come in handy for the Modi government to control the flow of information to the media.

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

from dog lovers like Maneka Gandhi.

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

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

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

ostracized by the ministry.

The letter by Abdul Manan, leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, to Sonia Gandhi demanding that senior leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury be appointed president of West Bengal Congress, is being interpreted in party circles as a done deal. Manan is close to Chowdhury and the latter is apparently keen on taking up this post which has been lying vacant after the last incumbent Somen Mitra’s death. This move serves a double purpose. The party needs a strongman like Chowdhury in election-bound West Bengal and, at the same time, it will pave the way for replacing him as the party’s Lok Sabha leader. But the question is: who is best suited for the job. Shashi Tharoor or Manish Tewari are obvious choices except the two have fallen from grace after they signed the famous pro-change letter to Sonia Gandhi.

Anita Katyal is a Delhi-based journalist

quick
BITES

| INDICATORS | % |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Sensex | 38,417.23 0.16 |
| Nifty 50 | 11,355.05 0.19 |
| S&P 500* | 3,426.96 -0.81 |
| Dollar (₹) | 73.34 -0.25 |
| Pound Sterling (₹) | 96.98 0.24 |
| Euro (₹) | 86.87 -0.28 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹) | 51,877.258 0.49 |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)* | 41.99 -0.67 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield | 5.993 0.063 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 0.721 0.00 |

* As of 9:30 PM IST

Dumping probe
into vitamin C
from China

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

RBI accepts Kamath panel suggestions
Debt recast: Ratios
for 26 sectors setFALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, SEPT. 7

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

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

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

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



K. V. Kamath

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

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

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

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

The committee said the resolution framework may

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

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

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

In these financial projections, the threshold total outside liability to adjusted tangible net worth and debt to Ebitda ratios should be met by fiscal 2023. The other three threshold ratios should be met for each year of the projections starting from fiscal 2022. The base case financial projections need to be prepared as part of the resolution plan.

ED arrests
Deepak
Kochhar
under PMLAFC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 7

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

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

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

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

Vodafone, Idea rebranded
as Vi; tariff hike on cardsMICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, SEPT. 7

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

The board of Vodafone Idea had approved fundraising up to Rs 25,000 crore on September 4 to pay off the hefty dues owed to the government.

It plans to raise up to Rs 15,000 crore through debentures and an equal amount by issuing shares and warrants.

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

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

time of its merger with Idea two years ago.

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

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

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

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

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

COFFEE-BREAK

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



Aries: BP patients might suffer fluctuating blood pressure. Invest extra money in a safe place that promises timely returns. You seek a comforting lifestyle.



Taurus: Teachers must make learning more creative. Unilateral work decisions may invite a colleague's wrath. Work on innovative ideas only at leisure to avoid problems.



Gemini: Helping those in need enhances your reputation. Investments in real-estate and selective stocks will benefit. Skip eating junk food as far as possible.



Cancer: Expect work problems because of your attitude towards work and colleagues and your partner's behaviour. A business-partnership approach may benefit.



Leo: You will be on bad terms with spouse and children. Expect differences with relatives. Avoid injuries during travel. Be aware of negative people around you.



Virgo: Skyrocketing expenditure keeps you occupied. Businessmen may enter profitable collaborations. You'll become economically sound. All your efforts will be productive, and colleagues and friends will cooperate.

You share your b'day with

Asha Bhosle, playback singer. She is best known for her songs *Piya Tu Ab To Aaja, Rangoela, Dum Maro Dum, Yeh Mera Dil, Dil Cheez Kya Hai, Mera Kuch Samaan* and *Parde Mein Rehne Do* amongst others.



Libra: Employees find recognition for their hard work. Use your budgeting skills today. Children may not bring joy. Stick to tried and tested methods for all essential activities.



Scorpio: Employees keep their superiors happy. Your proximity with your spouse and loved ones increase manifold. Wrong decisions bring loss and disappointments.



Sagittarius: Things aren't rosy at home. Your tendency to argue over trivial matters may irritate your loved ones. Friends and relatives may be angry with you.



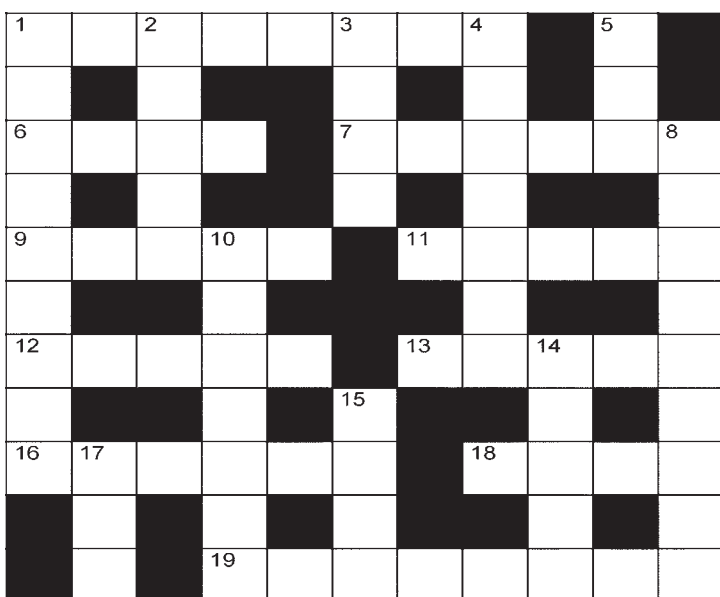
Capricorn: Self-employed professionals may handle irritable clients. Employees may face peer pressure. Expect body aches and slight fever. Avoid excessive stress.



Aquarius: The eligible can expect a marriage proposal. Someone at work lets you down. One of your plans works out. Your moodiness causes friction at home.

Pisces: You may implement new ideas in love. An increment helps you buy something big. A business trip brings new opportunities. Expect to meet someone who understands you. Some Pisceans may have to work hard to get fit.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- Across**
- As a rule (8)
 - Accompanying (4)
 - Winged child (6)
 - Verity (5)
 - Fully grown (5)
 - Sharp end (5)
 - Proverb (5)
 - Damaged irreparably (6)
 - Minor quarrel (4)
 - Hydro span (anag) (8)

- Down**
- Daily publication (9)
 - Proportion (5)
 - Decorative fabric (4)
 - Gave in (7)
 - Wildbeest (3)
 - Winged insect (9)
 - Wine merchant (7)
 - Spanish friend (5)
 - Concept (4)
 - Large vase (3)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 6. Deliberate, 8. Ounce, 10. Siege, 13. Kleptomania, 14. On tap, 17. Cello, 19. Competitor.

Down: 1. Fern, 2. Fife, 3. Lens, 4. Safe, 5. Generator, 7. Cockroach, 9. Copra, 11. Inane, 12. Lot, 15. Tome, 16. Pier, 17. Chic, 18. Loom.

Word Mine

J
N
E
U
R
O
E
Y
D

TODAY'S RATINGS: 4 AVERAGE; 5 GOOD; 7 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

Ant word 'UNUSUALLY' is the only one that can be made from the letters.

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|--------|---------|------------|
| North | ♦ 7 6 | ♦ 3 6 | ♦ 6 3 2 | ♦ 9 4 3 |
| West | ♦ 4 8 5 2 | ♦ 10 3 | ♦ 9 7 5 | ♦ 8 6 4 2 |
| East | ♦ 5 | | | ♦ 9 4 3 |
| South | ♦ 4 10 | ♦ 2 7 | ♦ 6 4 | ♦ 9 10 |
| Dealer: South | | | | ♦ 10 8 7 3 |
| Vulnerable: Neither | | | | |
| South | INT | West | North | East |
| Pass | NT | NT | NT | All Pass |
| Opening lead: ♦ 5 | | | | |

jumble

UNEEV
FEYBE
INCIOC
SNIVHA

Answer here: " " " " " "

Yesterday's Jumbles: FUSSY EVOKE MULLET HOTTER

Answer: The restaurant's all-you-can-eat buffet was being enjoyed — TO THE FULLEST



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

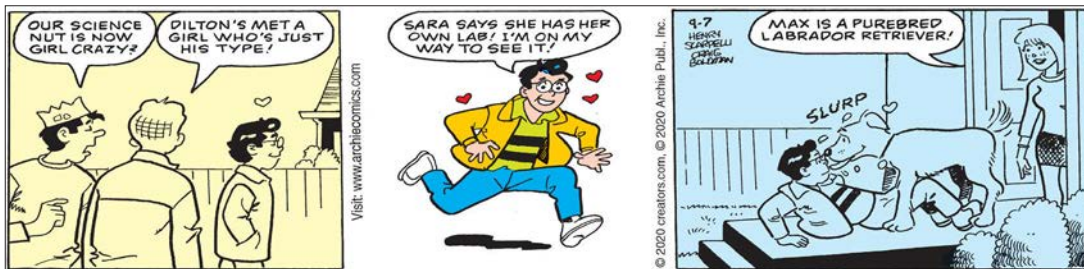
CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



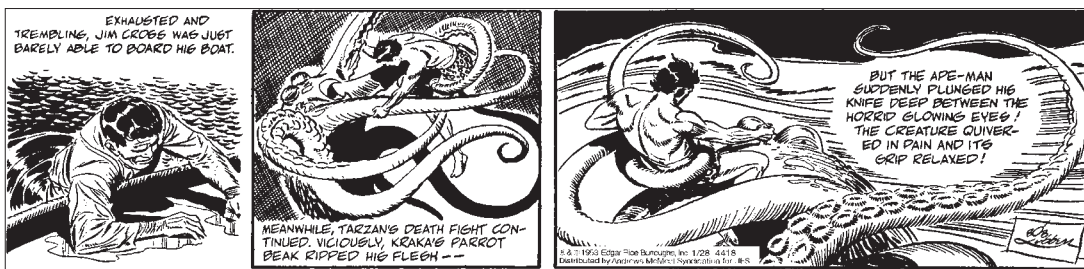
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs

bridge
PHILLIP
ALDERWHICH
SUIT FIRST:
SHORT OR
LONG?

Yesterday, you had to try to keep East off the lead so that he couldn't make a damaging switch. Today's deal is another variation on the danger-hand theme.

Cover the East-West cards. Against three no-trump, West leads the spade five; six, nine, 10. How should South continue?

Declarer starts with only five top tricks: two spades (given the first trick), two diamonds and one club. If the

club finesse works, that suit will provide the other four tricks.

That was as far as the original declarer went with his analysis. Immediately, he ran the club jack. However, East won with the king and returned a spade. Declarer finessed the queen unsuccessfully and won the third round with the ace. Now, whether he played on diamonds or hearts, West could get the lead to cash his two

spade winners, defeating the contract.

Declarer should have analyzed further. If the club finesse was working, there was no hurry to take it. All of the suits were still under control. The first order of business was to dislodge West's potential guaranteed entry: the heart ace. At trick two, South should lead the heart queen. If her majesty wins, the time has come to take the club finesse. Nine tricks are

assured. If East produces the heart ace and returns a spade, declarer will be the third round of the suit, then he finesses in clubs. Even if the finesse loses, declarer cannot go down (unless East started with five spades). Finally, if West wins with the heart ace, he cannot lead another spade without losing a trick. The contract makes easily.

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SHORT TAKES

Sindhu to play in Thomas, Uber Cup

New Delhi: Reigning world champion P. V. Sindhu has agreed to compete in next month's Thomas and Uber Cup after deciding to pull out of the event earlier due to personal reasons, national federation's president Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday. "I have requested @Pvsindhu1 to join the team as we have a favourable draw and have the best chance to take a shot at a medal at the ThomasUberCup," Badminton Association of India (BAI) chief Biswa Sarma tweeted. "She has agreed and will pre-empt her family function so that she can be part of the Indian Team and play for the country." The Indian women's team has been clubbed with 14-time winners China, France and Germany in Group D. — *PTI*

No Thai flavour in Thomas, Uber Cup

Bangkok: The Thai badminton federation says it has withdrawn from the Thomas and Uber Cups after high-profile players pulled out because of concerns regarding Covid-19. The federation says the absences of former world champion Ratchanok Intanon, No. 3-ranked mixed doubles pair Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai and others meant the country couldn't field a team in the October 3 to 11 world teams event in Denmark. Thailand badminton federation says "We respect the players' decision." The BWF said last month the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals would go ahead in Aarhus, Denmark, despite an overhaul of the tournament calendar following the shuttering of international competition during the coronavirus pandemic. — *AP*

Bucks lose Giannis but beat Heat in OT

Miami: Khristi Middleton starred as the Milwaukee Bucks, their backs against the wall and star Giannis Antetokounmpo injured, beat the Miami Heat 118-115 in overtime on Sunday to stay alive in the NBA playoffs. With reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Antetokounmpo ruled out after aggravating his sprained right ankle in the first half, Middleton stepped up to score 36 points — including nine of the Bucks' 11 in overtime. A Middleton three-pointer put Milwaukee up 116-112 with 6.9 seconds left in the extra session. Miami rookie Tyler Herro drained a three-pointer to close the gap to 116-115 before Middleton made two free throws to seal the win. Middleton led six Bucks players to score in double figures in the must-win game. — *AFP*

Fati impresses as Spain take control

Paris: Ansu Fati announced his arrival in international football on Sunday after becoming the youngest goalscorer in the history of the Spanish national team in a 4-0 thumping of Ukraine that put them top their Uefa Nations League group. Barcelona forward Fati put Spain three goals.

Live on TV

CARIBBEAN PREMIER LEAGUE

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

CRICKET

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

US OPEN TENNIS

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

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

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

WWE NXT

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

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Editor: **ADITYA SINHA**

NO DJOKE!

Novak out of Open after hitting line judge with ball

New York, Sept. 7: Novak Djokovic was dramatically disqualified from the US Open on Sunday after accidentally striking a female lines judge with a ball in frustration during his last-16 match, sending shock waves through the tournament.

The world number one apologized for hitting the ball in disgust after losing his serve to go 6-5 down in the first set to Spain's 20th seed Pablo Carreno Busta inside Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Djokovic appeared to be looking the other way when he pulled the ball from his pocket and smacked it in the direction of the official, it hitting her full toss in the throat.

The official cried out and began gasping for air as she collapsed to the ground.

Djokovic rushed over to check on her, placing his hand on her back as she struggled to breathe. After a few minutes she got up and walked off the court looking dazed.

Around ten minutes of discussions then ensued between Djokovic and the tournament referee Soeren Friemel, during which the world number one pleaded his case.

The umpire then declared that Carreno Busta had won by default. Djokovic shook hands with his opponent before leaving the court without appearing to shake the umpire's hand.

He went then directly to his car and left the Flushing Meadows site in New York without speaking to reporters.

Djokovic, 33, later posted an apology on Instagram saying he was "so sorry."

He also apologized to tournament organizers for "my behavior" but did not say whether he thought they were right to default him.

The United States Tennis Association said Djokovic had been defaulted under the Grand Slam rules for "intentionally hitting a ball dangerously or recklessly within the court or hitting a ball with negligent disregard of the consequences."

The body added that he would lose all ranking points and prize money from the tournament.

Referee Friemel said Djokovic told him he should not be defaulted because it was unintentional.

Friemel said he agreed there was no intent but that it was a clear-cut case of Djokovic hitting the ball "angrily and recklessly."

"She was clearly hurt and in pain. There was no other option," he told reporters.

The Serbian star is one of only a handful of players to be disqualified from a men's singles tournament at a Grand Slam since John McEnroe was infamously tossed from the Australian Open in 1990. — *AFP*

Stokes may miss first part of IPL

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

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

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



Novak Djokovic walks off the court after being disqualified in a fourth round match on Sunday.

— *AFP*

Extremely sorry, says Djokovic

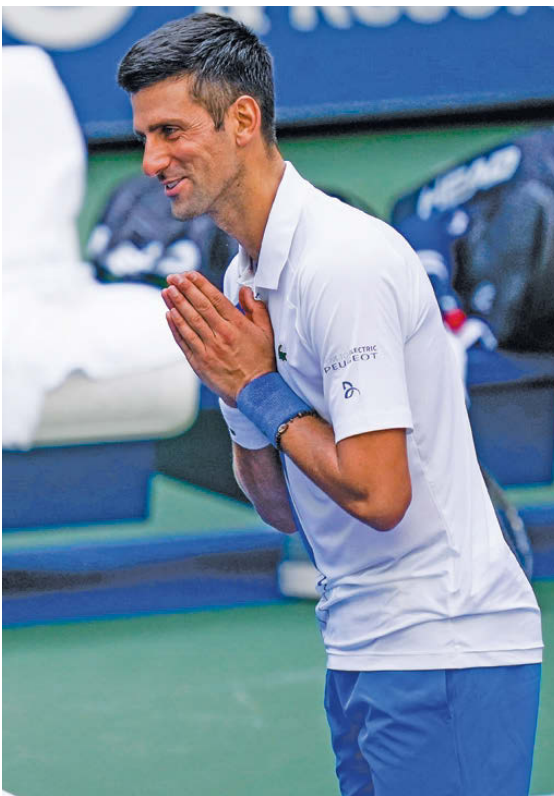
New York, Sept. 7: Novak Djokovic apologised for his US Open disqualification on Sunday, declaring himself "extremely sorry" for the moment of madness which saw him defaulted from the tournament.

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

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

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

"I'm extremely sorry to have caused her such



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

— **NOVAK DJOKOVIC**

stress. So unintended. So wrong."

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

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

Nick trolls Nole with Twitter poll

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Swap me for jokers (Djokovic's nickname) incident. 'Accidentally hitting the ball kid in the throat'. How many years would I be banned for?

— **NICK KYRGIOS**
tennis player

prize money from the tournament.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Osaka powers into quarters

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

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

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

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

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

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

ROGERS, BRADY SCORE UPSETS

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

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

THE RESULTS

Men's singles fourth round: Pablo Carreno-Busta (ESP x20) bt Novak Djokovic (SRB x1) 6-5 default; Denis Shapovalov (CAN x12) bt David Goffin (BEL x7) 6-7 (0/7), 6-3, 6-4, 6-3; Borna Coric (CRO x27) bt Jordan Thompson (AUS) 7-5, 6-1, 6-3; Alexander Zverev (GER x5) bt Alejandro Davidovich (ESP) 6-2, 6-2, 6-1.

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

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

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

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

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

BUTTLER TO SKIP FINAL T20 AGAINST OZ

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

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

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

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

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

'Calm' Kohli eyes better season

Dubai, Sept. 7: Virat Kohli has been able to "disconnect" from the underwhelming seasons that he and Royal Challengers Bangalore have endured in the IPL and there is a welcome "sense of calm" as he prepares to lead the side this year, something he last felt in 2016.

Despite the presence of champion players like Kohli and AB de Villiers, RCB, in the last three seasons, has failed to even qualify for the play-offs. The team last played the final in 2016, a season in which Kohli struck an unprecedented four hundreds.

"The 2016 IPL, we all loved to be a part of (it). Since then, this is the most balanced I have felt about (the) squad," the Indian skipper said on RCB's Youtube show 'Bold Diaries', sharing his thoughts on the upcoming starting

NEESHAM LOOKS TO MAKE IT COUNT IN IPL

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

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

"I did not know what I needed to do to succeed. It was a challenge back then," he added.

Neesham was bought by KKR for the 2015 edition but could not take part due to an injury. "This time I have come with a steadier head and knowledge under the belt and hopefully I can pass that knowledge to some of the younger guys in the squad." — *PTI*

September 19 in Abu Dhabi. Kohli said that both he and AB de Villiers feel that this could be the

"breakthrough season" when tables will turn for the franchise which has flattered to deceive on