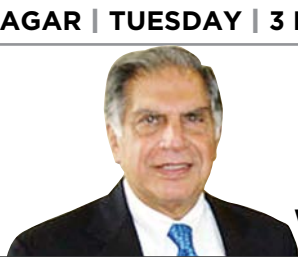


DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KARIMNAGAR | TUESDAY | 3 NOVEMBER 2020



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SC stays EC action on Kamal Nath



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Tata Steel lets staff work from anywhere

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Sindhu scares fans with 'retire' tweet



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WEATHER

Max: 32.8°C
Min: 17.5°C
RH: 50%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Mist likely. Max/Min temperature 32/19 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES
(+35,301)

DEATHS
(+404)

82,62,4781,23,025

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+922)

(+7)

TS: 2,40,9701,348

(+1,916)

(+13)

AP: 8,27,8826,719

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

4,70,72,539

DEATHS

12,08,367

COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES

213

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Nija Ashwauja Bahula Tadiya till 3.23 am (Wednesday)
Star: Rohini till 2.28 am
Varjyam: 5.35 pm to 7.21 pm
Durmuhurtam: 8.35 am to 9.21 am; 10.44 pm to 11.34 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm

HUIJI CALENDAR

Rabbi-ul Awwal 16, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.14 am
Zohar: 12.10 pm
Asar: 4.09 pm
Maghrib: 5.51 pm
Isha: 6.59 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.15 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.43 PM
MOONSET 8.18 AM
MOONRISE 7.45 PM

COUNTER POINT

No more slip of the tongue. They have tattooed the party's name on his hand!

SHORT TAKES

Maya's u-turn on backing BJP

Lucknow: Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asserted on Monday that her party would never enter into an alliance with the BJP in elections, highlighting that the ideology of the two parties were "opposite". Her clarification came amid speculation over her last week's statement that the BSP would vote for the BJP or any other party's candidate to ensure defeat of the Samajwadi Party contenders in future elections, including those of the Uttar Pradesh legislative council and the Rajya Sabha. She alleged that the SP and the Congress were misusing her statement so that the Muslims distance themselves from the BSP.

SC: Speed up Tablighi cases

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the trial courts to expedite hearing in the pending cases against foreign Tablighi Jamaat members for alleged visa violations. A bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna listed the pleas filed against blacklisting of foreign members of Tablighi Jamaat for attending the Nizamuddin Markaz congregation in the national capital for further hearing on November 20 and asked the lower courts to expeditiously deal with their cases.

AP to get ₹2,300 crore for Polavaram without riders

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

In a major and immediate relief to the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh, the Union finance ministry on Monday agreed to release ₹2,300 crore for the ongoing Polavaram multipurpose irrigation project without imposing riders. Earlier, the finance ministry insisted that the Jal Shakti ministry approve the project cost at ₹29,000 crore as estimated in the financial year 2013-2014 as against the revised estimate of ₹48,000 crore. The precondition for releasing the funds, if agreed by the Jal Shakti ministry, would have put a heavy financial burden on the state government as it

● **THE STATE** government has also got a shot-in-the-arm with the Polavaram Project Authority (PPA) observing that the project could be completed only at the revised estimate.

could have had to bear the differential amount. "We are happy to note that the Union finance ministry has removed a conditional clause for releasing ₹2,300 crore and asked the Jal Shakti ministry to sort out the issue by the time the next instalment is due," a senior water resources official of Andhra Pradesh told *Deccan Chronicle*. The Jagan Mohan Reddy government has also got a

shot-in-the-arm with the Polavaram Project Authority (PPA), a nodal agency, observing that the project could be completed only at the revised estimate. The PPA met here on Monday under the chairmanship of Chandrasekhar Iyer to discuss the finance ministry's proposal to the Jal Shakti ministry to approve the project cost to avail funds. Significantly, the PPA also fixed April 2022 as the deadline for completing the project. An expert committee, which recently visited the project site, has prepared a monthly schedule of works to be completed to meet the deadline.

■ **Page 2: AP wants R&R included in project cost**

Probe into Dharani glitch

VIKRAM SHARMA | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

A massive investigation is underway to probe "suspicious cyber activity" that hit Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's pet project — Dharani portal — causing the system to malfunction on the very first day of its launch on October 29. Among the angles under investigation, experts are

looking into a possible phishing attack or hacking.

To make matters worse, technical experts in the government discovered at least four other apps on Google playstore that are similar to Dharani, which ended up causing huge confusion among the people.

This promoted senior government officials to write to Google with a

request that those apps be removed immediately. The Chief Minister had launched the Dharani portal — the integrated land record management system — amid much fanfare at the tahsildar office in Mudu Chintalapalli village of Medchal-Malkajgiri district on October 29.

■ **Page 2: CS burns midnight oil in his office**

MFG SECTOR SEES FASTEST GROWTH IN A DECADE

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

With rising demand and output amidst Covid-19 disruptions, India's factory activity, measured by the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), expanded to 58.9 in October—nearly a 13-year high and the fastest pace in over a decade. However, on the employment front, the numbers remain a concern, as companies cut more jobs, a private survey showed on Monday. Even though the economy shrank at a record 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, the latest PMI survey shows that Asia's third-largest economy is signalling a fast pace of recovery with several economic indicators turning positive. "Rising from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, the PMI pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade, with companies raising output to the greatest extent in 13 years amid robust sales growth. The reading was the highest since May 2010 and above the 50-level separating growth from contraction for the third month.

■ **Full report on Page 7**

Masks get fashionable



Women wearing designer masks pose for photographs as they prepare to celebrate Karwa Chauth festival in Bhopal on Monday. — PTI

US poll campaign draws to a close

Washington, Nov. 2: The US Presidential campaign entered its final day on Monday with a last-minute scramble for votes by incumbent Donald Trump and his challenger Joe Biden, drawing to a close an extraordinary race that has put a pandemic-stricken country on edge.

While campaigning will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday,

● **WHILE CAMPAIGNING** will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday, many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and legal challenges.

many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and possible legal challenges.

Those factors, along with an unprecedented convergence of social justice protests, coronavirus precautions and Trump's fear-mongering campaign, have led to apprehension over whether unrest could erupt. Taking no chances, businesses in some cities have boarded up windows, while across the country the harsh political climate has led to fierce debate. As proof of how much

Americans have been galvanised — and perhaps frightened by the pandemic — a record of more than 93 million people have cast early ballots, according to the nonpartisan US Elections Project.

As the hours count down on Monday and with polls showing him behind, Trump and Biden continue their final rallies.

■ **Full coverage on Page 5**

EASY | RIDE APSRTC and TSRTC divide operating routes for their buses equally

Relief for Telugus as RTCs clinch a deal

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

There was respite for road commuters from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, who have been facing tremendous problems, with their state-run transport corporations deciding to resume inter-state bus services.

Hours after arriving at the decision on Monday, buses were pushed into service by evening. As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two,

TSRTC will operate across 1,61,258 km in AP with 826 buses and APSRTC will operate across 1,60,999 km with 638 buses in Telangana.

On the Vijayawada route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across 52,944 km with 273 buses in Andhra Pradesh and APSRTC will operate across 52,524 km with 192 buses in Telangana.

On the Kurnool route and beyond, TSRTC will cover 43,456 km with 213 buses in AP while APSRTC will do so across 43,202 km with

146 buses in Telangana. On Piduguralla/Guntur route via Wadapally, TSRTC will operate across 19,044 km with 67 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 20,238 km with 88 buses in Telangana.

On the Macherla route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across 14,158 km with 66 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 16,060 km with 61 buses in Telangana.

On the Nuzvid, Tiruvur, Bhadrachalam-Vijayawada route and beyond, TSRTC will operate across

12,453 km with 48 buses in AP and APSRTC will operate across 14,026 km with 65 buses in Telangana.

On the Khammam, Jeelugumilli, Jangareddy-gudem route and beyond, TSRTC will now operate across 9,140 km with 35 buses in Andhra Pradesh and APSRTC will operate across 11,541 km with 58 buses in Telangana.

On the Hyderabad-Srisaillam route, TSRTC will continue operations across 1,904 km with 62 buses in AP and APSRTC will not operate buses on

this route in Telangana.

On the remaining routes such as Sathupally - Eluru (two routes), Bhadrachalam and Kunta via Kallugudem, Sathupally-Vijayawada and others, TSRTC will operate across 8,159 km with 62 buses in Andhra Pradesh, and APSRTC will operate across 3,408 km with 28 buses in Telangana.

However, all routes would not be available as the demand is low. The routes will be increased proportionate to the demand.

Dubbak to elect MLA in hotly-contested bypoll

TRS remains firmly entrenched; Voting begins 7 am today

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

The stage is set for polling on Tuesday in the Dubbak Assembly constituency which witnessed a high-voltage campaign ever since the bypoll was notified by the Election Commission.

The polling is scheduled to take place at 315 polling stations in the constituency from 7 am to 6 pm. The Election Commission has made all arrangements for the conduct of the bypoll in compliance with Covid-19 norms, besides taking tight security measures.

The byelection was necessitated by the death of sitting TRS MLA Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy in August this year. The TRS has fielded his widow Solipeta Sujatha as its candidate. Though 23 candidates are in the fray, the main contest is among the candidates of the TRS, Congress and the BJP.

The Congress has given the ticket to TRS leader Cheruku Srinivas Reddy, who joined the party just ahead of the bypoll, while the BJP has fielded M. Raghunandan Rao who lost the previous election in Dubbak. The results of

BJP leaders in city under house arrest

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

The Telangana police have put under house arrest all key BJP leaders, including state unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar following reports that they are planning protests at CM's Pragathi Bhavan, DGP office and ruling TRS party headquarters in Banjara Hills.

Security has been enhanced at Pragathi Bhavan and DGP office.

Some of the important leaders have been taken into preventive custody. The process of immobilising BJP leaders started late night on Sunday. Even leaders in districts

have been detained.

While Sanjay Kumar remains confined to the state party headquarters in Hyderabad, MLC N. Ramchander Rao, former ministers Mothkupalli Narasimhulu and D. K. Aruna, and ex-MLA N. V. S. S. Prabhakar are under house arrest.

BJP has charged that TRS government is acting in the most undemocratic manner. MLC Ramchander Rao said the party has taken the issue to notice of the Election Commission.

Ex-MLA Prabhakar has demanded that Governor sack K. T. Rama Rao from the cabinet. He wanted DGP to book a case against attempts to divert police attention from bypoll.

that typically a majority of voters in the bypoll opt for the ruling party for the development programmes.

■ **Page 2: Welfare policies to help TRS in bypolls**

DEVELOPMENT IS ONLY AGENDA FOR TRS: KTR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao said on Monday that development is the only agenda of his party, while the BJP and the Congress have 2,800 agendas for 28 states of the country.

Addressing party workers at Telangana Bhavan on Monday on the occasion of several leaders led by BJP spokesperson Ravula Sridhar Reddy joining the ruling party, Rama Rao accused the BJP of trying to create a communal divide in the state. However, he said there is no place for communal agenda in Telangana, where secularism is blended in its soil.

He said efforts are being made to tarnish the image of Telangana only for the sake of political advantage.

■ **Page 2: Every time oppn says TRS will lose: KTR**

57 teachers test positive as AP schools reopen

DC CORRESPONDENTS TIRUPATI/VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 2

Even as the Covid infection continues to threaten, bringing students back to the classrooms appears to be unsafe as the first day of reopening since March, saw some teachers and students testing positive for coronavirus on Monday.

As per the data, six students, including three each from Nellore and Chittoor districts, tested positive when the medical department conducted random tests. Similarly, about 57 teachers in Chittoor and a watchman and a mid-day meals helper in Nellore district also tested positive.

It may be recalled that there was strong criticism from various sections on the decision to reopen the schools while the virus rages. Monday's incidents prove them right and this has created ripples among parents and officials. The education department officials have, however, said that it is possible the children or teachers were infected elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the fear of getting infected with Covid-19 seems to have

● **THE FEAR** of getting infected with Covid-19 seems to have had its impact on the turnout of students from Classes 9 and 10 and Intermediate second year in both government and private institutions.

had its impact on the turnout of students from Classes 9 and 10 and Intermediate second year in both government and private institutions.

As schools and colleges reopened on Monday after seven months closure, the turnout of students was poor on the first day.

While 43.65 per cent Class 10 students attended schools, only 39.65 per cent students from Class 9 turned out at the schools. In total, out of 10,04,989 students, the attendance registered was 42 per cent.

Among the teachers, out of a total strength of 98,723, 86,656 attended schools for an 87.88 per cent of attendance.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy directed officials to ensure that students are not subject to any undue pressure on catching up with academics in a bid to cover the Covid-19 setback.

SC won't extend ex-judge's security

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to extend the security of former special judge S.K. Yadav who had pronounced the verdict in the Babri Masjid demolition case and acquitted all 32 accused, including BJP veterans L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and Uma Bharti.

A bench, headed by Justice R.F. Nariman and also comprising Justices

Navin Sinha and Krishna Murari, was considering the former judge's request to continue his security in view of the sensitivity of the case decided by him on his last day in office.

"Having perused the letter, we don't consider it appropriate to provide security," the bench said.

On September 30, the special court had acquitted all 32 accused in the case. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

EVERY TIME
OPPN SAYS TRS
WILL LOSE: KTR

From Page 1

The BJP, which had promised to deposit ₹15 lakh in each person's account by bringing black money stashed in Swiss banks, brought black laws that divide the country, Rama Rao added.

"In every election, they campaign as if the TRS is on the verge of losing elections. But Telangana people have been blessing the party despite the misleading propaganda unleashed by the BJP and the Congress. The BJP, in particular, excels in campaigns but fails at the grassroots-level," Rama Rao observed.

The minister said the government is ready to share every detail of what the TRS has done for the state in the past six years.

Rama Rao pointed out that Telangana has contributed ₹2.72 lakh crore to the Centre's exchequer, while it has received only ₹1.29 lakh crore. "While we can keep on giving details like this, when you ask the BJP as to what they have done for the state, there is a big silence."

WELFARE POLICIES
TO HELP TRS
IN BYPOLLS

From Page 1

They were also of the opinion that the state government's social security pensions, "Rythu Bandhu" investment support scheme for farmers, Kalyana Lakshmi, Shaadi Mubarak, Double Bedroom Houses, sheep units distribution could influence the voters towards the TRS.

The Dubbak Assembly constituency is located in the midst of three constituencies which are led by top leaders of the ruling party — Gajwel is represented by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, Siricilla by IT and industries minister K.T. Rama Rao and Siddipet by finance minister T. Harish Rao. With these three Assembly constituencies witnessing a massive development, the observers feel the voters in Dubbak too could gravitate towards the ruling party.

Dubbak had more women voters than men. The total number of voters in the Dubbak Assembly constituency is 1,98,756, which includes 1,00,778 women and 97,978 men.

In the 2014 elections, a majority of women had voted for the TRS and the observers believe that the same voting pattern could continue in the byelection too.

During the 2018 election, Ramalinga Reddy won the seat with a majority of more than 60,000 votes against his nearest rival Congress candidate. The BJP stood in the third position.

As the TRS goes into the Dubbaka byelection with a good track-record of winning such exercises, the fight between the Congress and the BJP has appeared to be confined to the second position. The Congress, though claims to defeat the ruling party, is trying hard to retain its second place in view of the ensuing elections to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. If the Congress loses its second position, it would have to face a difficult situation in the GHMC polls, the observers noted. The Congress is banking on the goodwill of its candidate Srinivas Reddy's late father Mutyam Reddy, a former minister.

Though the Bharatiya BJP is trying hard to at least emerge as the main opposition for the TRS, the political observers feel that the seizure of huge cash from the relatives of the BJP candidate has marred the winning chances of its candidate.

According to political observers, the contentious laws related to agriculture passed by Parliament, the Central government's decision to import maize and a cap on the MSP for paddy could adversely affect the BJP candidate in Dubbak as farmers make up the majority of voters in the segment.

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Oppn furious over cash
distribution to victims

TRS men illegally using CMRF money, allege Cong, BJP

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

Opposition parties are furious over the distribution of cash to the October flood victims, poor, slum-dwellers by TRS activists as the money being distributed is not from the TRS party fund. The parties termed the act as a brazen 'white-collar' robbery in the guise of cash distribution to the flood victims in the city.

"Why are TRS party men distributing the public money from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund?" asked Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka.

For the sake of transparency and accountability, he said the money from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) could be directly deposited into the bank account of flood victims, beneficiaries or any other the poor. "When the Union government can

directly deposit money into the bank accounts of beneficiaries in any nook corner of the country, why can't it be implemented in the city?," the CLP leader added.

The opposition parties called the TRS' distribution of cash to the flood victims a smart act because no political party would oppose it as it could potentially backfire in the upcoming Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) polls. Hence, they claim, the government has handed over the cash distribution work to the ruling party leaders and fear that the move would certainly influence the voting pattern in the civic polls.

TRS minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, however, refuted the allegations made by the opposition parties and said it exhibits their mindsets. Mr Yadav said elected representatives were involved in the cash distribution programme only as the representatives of their division or Assembly constituency and clarified that the money is being distributed by the GHMC officials only. "If they want to distribute, let the fight the election, win and then distribute to the victims of their respective constituency or division. They are just jealous of a noble programme taken up by the TRS," he added.

BJP state president Bandi Sanjay said the real beneficiaries have not got the compensation amount since TRS elected representatives have been swindling the half amount. He also wondered if the compensation of ₹10,000 will serve any purpose when commodities, electronic goods and vehicles were damaged in the floods.

"The TRS is indulging in dirty politics even during the adverse situation in the city. We would wage a war on illegal distribution of cash compensation by

the TRS leaders and ensure the real beneficiaries would be benefitted. How can K.T. Ramarao hand over cash to corporators when he himself on several occasions called them to be corrupt?" Mr Sanjay added.

AICC spokesperson Dasoju Sravan criticised the State Election Commission for allowing the TRS men to distribute cash ahead of the civic polls in the city and sought the postponement of electoral roll preparation for GHMC polls till flood relief compensation distribution was completed.

He also alleged widespread irregularities and discrimination in the distribution of compensation amounts for flood-affected families in Greater Hyderabad. "TRS leaders are committing a brazen 'white-collar' robbery of public money in the name of compensation distribution," said Dasoju Sravan.

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nesses, all with biometric attendance.

He explained that there are four types of registrations - sale deed, gift deed, succession and partition, which will be done under Dharani. Those with smart phones can also book their slots under Dharani.

Somesh Kumar said, "If any problem arises in taking of the fingerprint, then registration can be done through iris of the eyes. Slot booking can also be carried out through payment at banks.

He said based on reports coming from districts, registrations have started at all the places. Computer-generated registration documents are being given to citizens. Any technical issues will be resolved by teams within 2-3 days.

He informed that the Chief Minister will announce a date for registration of non-agricultural lands. Special tribunals will be set up to deal with pending applications, he added.

Dharani portal goes live

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

KCR government's flagship project "Dharani Portal", intended to provide hassle and corruption-free land transactions online, has gone live across the state from Monday.

Chief secretary Somesh Kumar handed over the first registered copies to an individual who had made a gift deed on his wife's name at the tahsildar's office in Shamshabad on Monday. On the occasion, Somesh Kumar said with this, registrations of agricultural properties through Dharani have successfully started all over the state.

The CS had visited the tahsildar office at Shamshabad to oversee registrations of agricultural properties on Monday. Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had launched the Dharani portal on October 29.

Somesh Kumar said 946 members had paid money towards registrations

● **THE CS** said 946 members had paid money towards registrations while 888 members have booked a slot today. He pointed out that slots can also be booked at Mee-Seva centres by paying ₹200. He said the state government will shortly take a decision on pending mutations.

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Explaining the salient features of Dharani, the chief secretary said, "It is the most easy, simple, transparent and corruption-free system. Registrations and mutations are not left to anyone's discretion and done by Aadhaar authentication of buyer, seller, wit-

Cong tells HC to probe
flood relief fund misuseDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

The Congress has urged the Telangana High Court to inquire into alleged "widespread irregularities, discrimination and embezzlement of funds allotted towards compensation for flood-affected families in Greater Hyderabad."

The All India Congress Committee spokesperson Dr Dasoju Sravan, on Monday also demanded that the Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) postpone electoral rolls preparations for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections, until the flood relief compensation distribution is completed.

Speaking to reporters, Dr Sravan said while the TRS government promised ₹10,000 to each of the flood affected families in the GHMC limits, it had

● **THERE HAS** been no official exercise to identify the beneficiaries and those who received the compensation were cherry picked by TRS leaders, he said.

acted in a completely irresponsible and brazen manner with respect to compensation distribution. There has been no official exercise to identify the beneficiaries and those who received the compensation were cherry picked by TRS leaders who handed out cash wearing their party scarves.

"Genuine victims have been left to fend for themselves. Have there been instances in the past where compensation was paid in cash instead of via cheques? How did money, which is supposed to be from the CMRF, get into the hands of ward level TRS leaders? Who are the

officials accountable for this money? Is there any official record of this money?" he asked.

The distribution of money from CMRF was being illegally used for political benefits by ruling TRS Government and seen as 'money making' and vote bank ploy, he said. "This is a new low in TRS loot under CM KCR's rule. Therefore, I have approached the High Court to order for an inquiry on the 'compensation distribution for flood-affected families' and to ensure that money is reached directly to affected families instead of TRS leaders pockets," he said.

He added that his party set up a Flood Relief Control Room at Gandhi Bhavan and asked people to complain about irregularities in compensation distribution buy calling the phone number 040-24601254 between 10 am and 6 pm.

Chief secy burns the midnight oil in his office

From Page 1

Confirming the developments, government sources told *Deccan Chronicle* that though the portal is back on track now, the servers went down within a few hours on the day of its launch causing the portal to malfunction for most part of the day. Top government functionaries, who were left perplexed, went into panic mode and huddled into a series of high-level meetings led by Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar.

It is reliably learnt that Somesh Kumar remained in his office past midnight that day, trying to get the "glitches" rectified even as the powers-that-be remained mighty upset over the developments and reportedly pulled up some of the officials.

Initially, experts within the Telangana State Technological Services were of the view that it could be a phishing attack even as they discussed the possibility of someone hacking into the system. A few other experts held the

view that it could just be connectivity issues but so far failed to point out what the issues could be.

With government functionaries at their wit's end, it was decided that the matter be investigated thoroughly by the cybersecurity experts in the police department. The officials of the Technological services lodged a formal complaint with the Hyderabad police which promptly registered an FIR and took up investigation.

"At the moment, it is difficult to say whether it was phishing or hacking and what could be the purpose of such breaches. So far, there is no proof to suggest whether any information has been stolen. Several experts of TS Technological services are working closely with the cybersecurity experts in the police department. On the face of it, there appears to be some suspicious activity," sources said.

While the system malfunction continues to give sleepless nights to the top

TWO RTCs SPLIT
ALL ROUTES
EQUALLY

From Page 1

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ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

The Election Commission of India (EC) earlier used to publish voters list in Urdu for Hyderabad district and Nizamabad district and Nizamabad constituency. Today, there is a need to update it before the GHMC elections.

The EC under Rule 4 of Registration of Electors Rules normally publishes the electoral rolls in the official language of State or Union Territory apart from in English. However, in an Assembly constituency, where more than 20% of the electorate speaks a language other than the official one, the Commission will issue a direction that the list should be printed in that language also. In such constituencies, the ballot

SEC procures
25K ballot boxes
for GHMC pollsMADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, NOV. 2

State Election Commission (SEC), as part of gearing up for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) polls, has already procured 25,000 ballot boxes and instructed senior officials to identify election staff for deployment in Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Sangareddy districts.

SEC officials say they have asked GHMC to set up over 9,000 polling stations in the 150 divisions within the corporation limits. Besides, SEC is planning to enhance polling stations by 20 per cent depending on voters in all divisions.

The civic body has already identified 1,987 sensitive, 867 hyper sensitive, 382 critical and 36 vulnerable polling stations within the city limits. Polling stations would be monitored through web casting, videography, 1,600 micro observers and deployment of large contingents of police personnel outside the respective polling booths.

Officials said due to polls being held at a short notice, they will not be able to procure voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) machines.

As such, SEC has opted to go for ballot papers, like in Bihar. Paper ballots will also add to safety during the ongoing pandemic.

As per directions issued by SEC, live webcast will be arranged at all polling stations in the 24 Assembly constituencies within GHMC limits in coordination with the IT wing. SEC held a review meeting on Monday with IT officials in this regard. Police authorities will also fix CCTV cameras at all critical polling stations.

Instructions have been given to civic authorities for identifying additional staff in Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri and Sangareddy as reserves for deployment during emergency.

In this context, the SEC called on all eligible voters to check their enrollment in the voters lists at nvsp.in and if not included or corrections need to be made, submit Form 6 at the offices of their respective deputy municipal commissioner in Hyderabad, and in Sangareddy district areas that fall under GHMC limits to the local revenue divisional officer and in Ranga Reddy district, to the Rajendranagar or Kandukur revenue divisional officers.

The draft voters lists will be published on November 7, the SEC said.

EC urged to update Urdu
electoral rolls before pollsKamareddy district),
Boath (Adilabad) and
Mudhole (Nirmal).

Likewise, EC publishes electoral rolls in Telugu in five constituencies of Odisha, four in TN and one in Pondicherry.

Social activist Ahmed Arshad Hussain said Urdu electoral roll was generated through a specially developed software by CDAC. However, there are several mistakes in the spellings of names and there is a need to improve it. He said in Telangana the Urdu electoral list is in Arabic script while in other places it has been published in Urdu script. No revision has been done since 2018. He said the state government had declared Urdu language as the second official language for the entire Telangana.

The EC had in the past prepared electoral rolls in Marathi for Jukkal

(Kamareddy district), Boath (Adilabad) and Mudhole (Nirmal). Likewise, EC publishes electoral rolls in Telugu in five constituencies of Odisha, four in TN and one in Pondicherry.

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The registration and mutation of agriculture lands across the state was stalled for almost a month for enacting the new Revenue Act. Sources said that massive efforts went into designing the portal, which took about three years to take shape.



OTHER STORIES

TASK FORCE POLICE SEIZE GUTKA WORTH ₹3 LAKHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 2

Nizamabad police commissionerate Task Force police raided a house under the II-Town police station limits on Monday and seized gutka worth ₹3 lakhs.

Task Force inspector Shakir Ali and his team on receiving the information, conducted raids and seized the gutka and zarda. They also took into custody Abdul Gani, 45 of Nizamabad.

Following the directives of Nizamabad police commissioner Kartikeya, the seized material and the accused were handed over to the II-Town police station.

FREEDOM FIGHTER TAKUR ESHWAR SINGH NO MORE

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, NOV. 2

Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna paid rich tributes to freedom fighter Takur Eshwar Singh who passed away at his residence in Teachers colony on Monday.

Ramanna recalled his contribution as a freedom fighter and said that Takur Eshwar Singh will be remembered forever by the people of Adilabad.

TD LEADERS VISIT COTTON FIELDS IN CHANDA (T)

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, NOV. 2

A team of Telugu Desam (TD) leaders led by erstwhile Adilabad district president Gullapelli Anand visited the cotton fields in Chanda (T) where pink bollworm attacked the cotton plants and interacted with the distressed farmers on Monday.

Mr Anand said cotton farmers have suffered huge losses this Kharif due to the pick bollworm and demanded that the state government pay compensation of ₹30,000 per acre and MSP for the cotton with moisture content up to 12 per cent.

SKILL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH HELD

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, NOV. 2

Adilabad municipal chairman Jogu Premender formally inaugurated a training programme for youth on Monday.

The programme is part of the skill development programme organised by the youth welfare department at the Youth Training Centre in Adilabad town.

Mr Jogu Premender said that 150 youth would receive training in fashion designing, computers, air condition repairs, cell phone repairing for three months.

On completion of the training, they will receive a certificate. As many as 30 students will receive training in each course. Adilabad is the third training centre in the state.

WIFE, PARAMOUR HELD FOR MURDER OF MAN

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 2

Police arrested three persons, including a woman in a murder case and sent them to judicial remand on Monday.

The arrested are Javvaji Shirisha, 30, resident of Navipet, staying at the All Radio Station in Nizamabad, Sorupaka Phanindra Prasad, 24 and his brother Sorupaka Mahendra Prasad, 20, of Hussainnagar in Sirikonda mandal, presently staying at Aryanagar. Phanindra Prasad and Mahendra Prasad are pursuing their studies in Nizamabad.

Phanindra was in an extra-marital relationship with Shirisha. Javvaji Narayana, 41, husband of Shirisha noticed the intimacy between Phanindra and Shirisha. He tortured Shirisha mentally, and physically to mend her ways, but in vain.

To continue their relationship, Sirisha and Phanindra decided to eliminate Narayana. On October 26, they stabbed Narayana, and on the same night, Phanindra with the help of Mahendra Prasad dumped the body in the Manchippa forest. During investigations, the accused confessed their crime, and the police registered a case.



BJP leaders stage a silent protest outside the party office at Hunter Road in Warangal on Monday.

— DC

BJP condemns arrests of its activists

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, NOV. 2

BJP Warangal Urban district president Rao Padma along with other BJP leaders held prayers at the Bhadrakali temple in Warangal seeking the speedy recovery of the BJP activist Srinivas. He had attempted suicide, protesting the Telangana government's brutal treatment of BJP state president and Karimnagar MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar.

Ms Padma warned, "The KCR government is seeing its last days in Telangana."

Later, at the district party office at Hunter Road, the BJP leaders wore black badges and held a silent protest against the illegal detention of BJP leaders by the TRS government.

She said, "The party strongly condemns the illegal arrests and harassment of BJP workers. How many more years of tears and misery should the people in the state of Telangana experience after achieving a separate state?" She called for a fight for a democratic Telangana.

"It would be a mistake to think that the opposition parties would not react to the actions of the ruling party just because they are in power. Sending BJP activists and leaders to jail in illegal cases and threats is being seen critically. We do not fear baton charges and arrests. The police in the state are guarding the Kalvakuntla family, but have no consideration towards the plight of the people," she said.

She added that if justice is to be done to the poor, the BJP will have to win in the coming elections.



The district unit BJP leaders stage a silent protest against the state government at Telangana Chowk in Karimnagar district on Monday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

BJP's popularity is irking the TRS, says Krishna

DC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, NOV. 2

The leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of district unit president G. Krishna Reddy, staged a silent protest at the Telangana Chowk in Karimnagar district on Monday, against the state government for stifling the voices of the opposition.

Mr Krishna Reddy condemned the comments made against the BJP by the TRS party working president K.T. Rama Rao that the BJP is trying to create law and order problems in the state.

Mr Krishna Reddy said, "Unable to tolerate the popularity that the BJP is getting, he made baseless comments against the party"

The BJP did not have any

■ THE BJP did not have any programme in Hyderabad. Yet, the government made a plot, that the BJP is organising a meeting in Hyderabad, and began arresting some BJP leaders and put few other leaders under house arrest from Sunday night onwards, G. Krishna Reddy added.

programme in Hyderabad. Yet, the government made a plot, that the BJP is organising a meeting in Hyderabad, and began arresting some BJP leaders and put few other leaders under house arrest from Sunday night onwards, he added.

"The state government

itself is creating law and order problems and is trying to blame BJP for it," he alleged.

He said, "With the support of the police and by arresting BJP leaders and party-men in Dubbaka, the state government is trying to create panic among the people. The TRS is ruling like the Nizam's. BJP leaders do not fear such cheap tricks.

However much the state government tries to suppress the BJP, we will bounce back and fight against the anti-people policies."

He added that K.T. Rama Rao and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao already sensed the defeat of the TRS in the Dubbaka by-elections and did not participate in the election campaign. The people are watching the TRS leaders, he warned.

Maoist fear has netas skip meets

Combing ops along Pranahitha, Godavari

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS | DC
ADILABAD, NOV. 2

4 Maoist sympathisers arrested in Mulugu

Following the incident, of a TRS leader killed by Maoists in old Warangal recently, political leaders are avoiding visiting and attending meetings in the interior areas in erstwhile Adilabad district.

Police have also requested political leaders, without informing them not to pay visits to the interior villages.

For the TRS MLAs and ministers who have to visit the interior villages in Komaram Bheem Asifabad and Adilabad district, police have increased their security.

These measures come after reports emerged about the movement of Maoists in the Tribal areas.

Combing operations along the river Pranahitha and the Godavari that share their borders with Maharashtra continue, following the recent encounter, in which two Maoist were killed near Kadamba in Kagaznagar mandal in Komaram Bheem Asifabad district.

Besides politicians, those into the real estate sector are also in fear.

There are several real estate ventures underway in the agency areas. After killing the TRS leader in Mulugu district, the Maoists in the note left at the scene raised questions

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, NOV. 2

The Mulugu police arrested four Maoist sympathisers at Tadvai on Monday. They were travelling to Chhattisgarh to meet top Maoist leaders Haribhushan, Damodar, Rajireddy and Mylarapu Adelu.

According to Mulugu Assistant Superintendent of Police, P. Sai Chaitanya, the Maoist were waiting for their vehicle on the outskirts of the village.

As soon as they saw the police, they tried to flee, but were caught. Police say, "They were taking information and revolutionary literature for the Maoists leaders."

Mr Chaitanya said, "The

four have been fascinated by the Maoist ideology for some time. Under the direction of Maoist leaders, they were collecting party funds, to bring a new democratic revolution against the democratic government, recruit new people into the party, and strengthen tribal and student unions."

The arrested were identified as Dabbakatta Suman, Chanda Mahesh, Tatipamula Ramesh, and Chidam Jangudev all residents of erstwhile Warangal district. The arrested four, also gave the names of several others prepared to join the Maoist party.

Mulugu OSD Shobhan Kumar, Pasara CI Srinivas, RI Kiran Kumar Tadvai SI Venkateswara Rao were present.

on issues including the exploitation of the Adivasis by businessmen, money lenders, land grabbers, and contractors. In the past, there have been incidents, when Maoists attacked contractors and political leaders on the charges of exploiting the Adivasis in erstwhile Adilabad district.

Police are leaving no

stone unturned to try and flush out the Maoists from erstwhile Adilabad district.

Besides keeping a close watch on Maoists sympathisers and their movements, they are raising awareness among the youth and trying to dissuade them from joining the Maoist.

Man, wife held for murder

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, NOV. 2

Nizamabad IV-Town police arrested a couple in a murder case and sent them to judicial remand on Monday.

The two arrested are Puri Umakanth and wife Puri Savitha of Aryanagar. The accused murdered Solman Raju, 26, of Chandrababunagar in Nagaram area on October 31. Nizamabad town circle

inspector B. Satyanarayana said that the deceased Solman Raju worked as a plumber and developed an extramarital relationship with Puri Savitha.

Noticing this, Puri Umakanth warned his wife. Later, with her help, they murdered Solman Raju with an iron rod at their residence in Aryanagar. IV-Town police registered a case and investigation is on.

20-YEAR-OLD ARRESTED FOR RAPING CALF

Hyderabad: A 20-year-old person was arrested after he was booked under IPC Section 377 – unnatural offences – for allegedly raping a calf in Chaitanyapur area.

The accused, identified as Sanjay Verma, "Nomula Siddhiraj, had tied his two cows and two calves along with three buffaloes in an open plot for the night, caught Sanjay sexually assaulting one of the calves," said the cops.

TSICET result announced

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, NOV. 2

The results for the Telangana State Integrated Common Entrance Test (TSICET) for admission to MBA and MCA courses offered by Universities and its affiliated colleges of the state of Telangana was released by the chairman of the Board of

Higher Education Prof T. Papi Reddy and the registrar of Kakatiya University Prof K. Purushotham on Monday.

Mr Reddy said that the admissions to MCA and MBA would begin soon. According to him, 58,392 candidates registered for the examination.

Out of those, 45,975 appeared and 41,506

(90.28%) got qualified. "Out of the qualified, boys were 90.85 percent, girls were 89.71 percent and four transgenders.

The first rank was achieved by B. Subhasri of Hyderabad.

The complete details will be uploaded on the TSICET website and will remain available to the candidates," he said.

Kallur division is a hotspot for Covid-19

RAVINDRA SESHU | DC
KHAMMAM, NOV. 2

The Kallur division in Khammam district has turned out to be a hotspot for the spread of the Coronavirus.

The district medical and health officials, are worried and are sending Covid-19 testing vehicles to remote villages adjacent to the Andhra Pradesh border.

Nearly 50 to 70 Covid-19 cases are being exposed daily in the division, against the 20 cases recorded 15 days ago. The administration is doing 900 Covid-19 tests daily in Kallur division and another 1,000 tests in other mandals.

District medical and health officer B. Malathi said, "We took the spreading of Covid-19 in Kallur division serious and increased testing there. The interaction with the villages in Andhra Pradesh is one of the reasons for the spread of Covid-19 there."

The Covid-19 cases crossed the 550-mark in August and September. On 25 August a total of 551 Covid-19 positive cases were registered, against the 2,513 tests, 482 cases on August 26, 480 cases on August 27, 512 cases on August 28, 532 cases on August 29 against the 2,377

■ NEARLY 50 TO 70 Covid-19 cases are being exposed daily in the division, against the 20 cases recorded 15 days ago. The administration is doing 900 Covid-19 tests daily in Kallur division and another 1,000 tests in other mandals.

tests, 326 cases on August 30 and 536 on August 31.

In the first three days of September, the number of Covid-19 positive cases were 443 on September 1, 589 on September 2 and 511 on September 3.

The trend decreased in October and cases came down to 120 and 130 in the last week of October. Officials were happy, but it was shortlived as the virus began spreading at an alarming pace in Kallur division.

B. Malathi said, "No dengue case has been reported in Khammam since January and there is no other diseases in the district". She appealed to people not to take the Coronavirus lightly as it is still spreading. "Preventive measures like maintaining physical distancing, wearing masks and using sanitisers must be practiced," she said.



CPI party leaders stage a dharna on the national highway between Karimnagar-Hanamkonda at Chenjerla of Manakondur village in Karimnagar district on Monday.

— DECCAN CHRONICLE

Repair NH-563, or face wrath: CPI

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
KARIMNAGAR, NOV. 2

Leaders of the Communist Party of India (CPI) under the district unit staged a dharna and road blockade on Monday, demanding the government to lay a new road between Karimnagar and Hanamkonda.

The national highway number 563 is badly damaged, making it difficult for the people of Chenjerla village of Manakondur mandal in Karimnagar district to travel.

District secretary of the CPI, Ponuganti Kedari alleged that the 70 km travel from Karimnagar to Hanamkonda is a nightmare for people as the road was washed away due to the incessant rains recently and has numerous potholes. Many people have got injured, while some even lost their lives on NH-563.

Farmers also use the Karimnagar-Hanamkonda national highway to transport their produce to the



Police try to get the CPI leaders staging a dharna on the road to move.

— DC

Jammikunta and Enumamula agriculture markets, the biggest in this region.

Pregnant women find it difficult to reach the hospitals for their health check-up as they have to travel through this highway.

On numerous occasions, the ruling party MLAs, MPs and ministers who travel on this pothole-filled highway, made tall promises to sanction national highways for the

district, but have taken no initiative to repair or lay a new road of the existing NH-563.

The CPI party leaders warned, "If the state and the Central governments will not take immediate steps to lay a new road on NH-563, then the CPI will lay siege to the houses of the MLAs, the MPs and the ministers."

There was a traffic jam on either side of the national highway. The people extended support

to them, but the Manakondur police rushed to the spot and cleared the way for the vehicles.

CPI party leaders K. Srujan Kumar, T. Sammaiah, M. Srinivas Reddy, B. Thirupathi, K. Rama Rao, Kasireddy, Surendar Reddy, Manikanta Reddy, B. Ugendar, M. Komuriah, Sadanandam, Srinivas, Murali, Bhumaiha and Mallaiah were present, along with others.

SHORT TAKES

MAYA: BSP-BJP ALLIANCE NOT POSSIBLE

Lucknow, Nov. 2: Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asserted on Monday that her party would never enter into an alliance with the BJP in the assembly or the Lok Sabha elections, highlighting that the ideology of the two parties were “opposite”.

Her clarification came amid speculation over her last week’s statement that the BSP would vote for the BJP or any other party’s candidate to ensure defeat of the Samajwadi Party contenders in future elections, including those of the Uttar Pradesh legislative council and the Rajya Sabha.

Mayawati alleged that the SP and the Congress were misusing her recent statement so that the Muslim community distances itself from the BSP.

“The alliance of the BJP with the BSP is not possible in any polls in the future. The BSP cannot contest with the communal party,” she said in a media briefing.

“Our ideology is of *sarvajana sarva dharma hitay* (benefit of everyone and all religions) and is opposite to the BJP’s ideology,” she said. “The BSP cannot enter into an alliance with those having communal, casteist and capitalist ideology.”

Mayawati said she would rather take *sanyas* (retirement) from politics than ally with such parties.

MODI LIKELY TO WIND UP BIHAR CAMPAIGN TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

As the battle for Bihar enters its final phase, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi are all set to address rallies in the Seemanchal area of the state.

While the Prime Minister will be winding up his election tour of Bihar on Tuesday, Mr. Gandhi will carry on with his campaign and address another couple of rallies the next day as well.

A senior leader of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee said that in all likelihood Mr. Gandhi might conclude his election engagements by holding a joint press conference with RJD leader and Grand Alliance’s CM face, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, on Wednesday.

The Congress leader will address two rallies at Bihariganj in Madhepura and Araria on November 4.

Daughter of Sharad Yadav, Subhashini Rao, and sitting MLA Abidur Rahman are set to take on JD(U)’s Niranjan Kumar Mehta in Bihariganj and Sagufta Ajim in Araria seats respectively.

Bihar Congress leaders are also mobilising their resources to ensure that the rallies of the former Congress president at Korha in Katihar and Kisaniganj on Tuesday are a grand success and work in favour of sitting MLA Poonam Paswan and Izharul Hussain, who are pitted against the BJP’s Kavita Singh and Sweete Singh respectively.

CRUCIAL CONTEST IN MP AS VOTING TO BE HELD TODAY

Bhopal/Lucknow/Ahmedabad, Nov. 2: Voting will be held on Tuesday for by-elections to 54 assembly constituencies in 10 states including 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh where the BJP is locked in a keenly-fought contest with the Congress to save its government.

All eyes are riveted on Madhya Pradesh where the BJP which has 107 MLAs in the assembly, with an effective strength of 229, needs at least eight more MLAs for a simple majority.

The stakes are high for the Congress too as it had sitting MLAs in 27 seats out of 28 in the state.

The saffron party is fielding 31 candidates in MP, Gujarat and Karnataka who had won from the Congress ticket but switched sides and resigned, necessitating the byelections in those states.

In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP, which has a comfortable majority in the Assembly, is locked in a battle of prestige on the seven seats six of which it had won in the last election while one was with the Samajwadi Party.

In Gujarat, the bypolls are being held in eight seats after the Congress MLAs resigned ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls in June this year. Five of them later joined the ruling BJP and are contesting again.



Security personal carrying VVPATs and EVMs leave for polling booths from a distribution centre ahead of the second phase of Bihar assembly elections, in Patna on Monday. — PTI

SC ‘relief’ for Kamal Nath on star campaigner issue

SC issues notice to EC, CJI focuses on issue of the powers of poll panel

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Election Commission’s order taking away the start campaigner status of the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath for the Congress in the ongoing bypolls to the state assembly for which campaigning ended on Sunday.

The court issued notice to the Election Commission.

Putting on hold the poll panel’s decision denuding Kamal Nath of his status as star campaigner for the Congress in Madhya Pradesh bypolls, Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde heading a bench also comprising Justice A. S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramasubramanian sought reply from the poll

panel while questioning its powers to decide as to who will be the leader of a party during electioneering. Referring to Section 77 of the Representation Act that deals with the expenditure of a candidate or by the leader of a political party campaigning during election, the Chief Justice of India expressed his misgiving whether the poll panel had any such powers which it had exercised in the case of Kamal Nath.

At the outset of the hearing, senior counsel Rakesh Dwivedi told the court that the petition by the former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister has become infructuous as campaigning has already ended and polling is on Tuesday (November 3).

However, the CJI focused on the larger issue of the powers of the poll panel to

take decision ousting a star campaigner from electioneering.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Kamal Nath, asserted that “no notice was issued to us” and the decision was arbitrary.

Kamal Nath has moved the top court challenging the EC’s decision to revoke his status as a star campaigner.

The BJP on Tuesday said the stay on election commission’s order revoking former chief minister Kamal Nath’s star campaigner status by supreme court, cannot be construed as relief to the Congress leader.

BJP spokesman Rajneesh Agrawal said the

the stay order was merely a judicial process and it did not give a clean chit to Mr Nath for his violation of model code of conduct

by terming state women and child development minister Imarti Devi as an ‘item’.

Besides, the stay order is meaningless now considering that the campaigning for the assembly by-elections in the state already came to close on Monday evening.

Shivraj, Nath hit out at each other

Meanwhile, with barely 24 hours left for the crucial assembly by-elections in Madhya Pradesh, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Congress veteran Kamal Nath on Monday indulged in name-calling to show each other in poor light in public.

While Mr Chouhan has refused to withdraw the *papi* (sinner) tag given by him to Mr Nath, the latter literally called him a liar.

“Mr Chouhan calls me a *papi*. Let him explain what sin I have committed? All his (Mr Chouhan’s) assertions that I have not implemented farm loan waiver promises and also held back students’ scholarships when I was chief minister are utter lies. Mr Chouhan is shamelessly dishing out lies”, Mr Nath told reporters here.

He said crop loans of around 27 lakh farmers were written off when he was chief minister. His government was planning to waive farm loans of the rest of the beneficiaries in 2 phases, but it was pulled down. Mr Chouhan, however, stood by his remarks saying that Mr Nath has committed fraud on farmers by going back on his promise to waive their crop loans within ten days of coming to power in the state.

HAM seeks probe into Paswan’s death

Patna, Nov. 2: NDA ally HAM created a flutter on Monday with its leader Jitan Ram Manjhi demanding a judicial inquiry into the death of union minister Ram Vilas Paswan while pointing an accusing finger at Chirag Paswan, prompting the LJP chief to claim it was a “plot” by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to discredit him when election was under way.

Chirag Paswan, in an angry retort to Manjhi, said the former chief minister should ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the issue.

Paswan jr. said Modi used to call him up every day to inquire after his late father when he was sick and hospitalised, sometimes to even inform him about the LJP founder’s condition after talking to doctors attending to him.

“I request the prime minister to order a judicial probe into the death of Ram Vilas Paswan to unravel the dubious role of Chirag Paswan in the matter,” Manjhi said.

HAM spokesman Danish Rizwan also wrote a letter to Modi backing the demand while citing a video of Chirag rehearsing before issuing a video message a day after the death of his father where he was purportedly seen joking with the people present and even talking about the texture of his hair.

Chirag Paswan accused Nitish Kumar of “scripting a plot to settle political scores with him” and instigating the HAM to rake up an emotional issue to blunt the LJP’s campaign to prevent him from becoming the chief minister once again.

Manjhi wanted to know who ordered the hospital to not issue regular health bulletins of Paswan, who was “such a big leader”.

Manjhi also claimed people were prevented from meeting the Dalit leader when he was hospitalised. Chirag had informed people about the death of his father through a tweet on October 8. Manjhi claimed it was being speculated that the LJP leader had died 2-3 days ago.

“When he had telephoned me when my father was in hospital, I told him everything. He

● **CHIRAG PASWAN**, in an angry retort to Manjhi, said the former chief minister should ask Prime Minister about the issue.

● **BOTH THE HAM** and the LJP draw strength from Dalit voters, and Manjhi was not on good terms with Ram Vilas Paswan when the two were partners in the NDA in the 2015 election.

neither called me again nor visited Papa in the hospital,” Chirag Paswan told a press conference.

Ever since his return to the NDA, facilitated by Kumar, Manjhi and his party have been routinely targeting the LJP, which has walked out of the ruling alliance in Bihar and is going solo at the hustings. Chirag has also frequently launched vicious attacks on the chief minister.

Both the HAM and the LJP draw strength from Dalit voters, and Manjhi was not on good terms with Ram Vilas Paswan when the two were partners in the NDA in the 2015 assembly election.

“Kumar, who is now showing concern about my father’s death, never telephoned me to know about his health leave alone visiting him in the hospital,” the LJP president said.

“On the other hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was kind enough and used to telephone me almost twice a day to inquire about Papa’s health and sometimes even tell me what the doctors are saying about his medical condition.”

He recalled Modi had told his first rally of the election in Sasaram that Paswan stood with him till his last breath.

“Indeed he (Modi) was the only person who was sincerely bothered about him till he breathed his last,” the 38-year-old LJP chief, who recently declared himself Modi’s Hanuman, said.

Flanked by BJP and JD(U) rebels like Rajendra Singh and Bhagwan Singh Kushwaha, he claimed while there were smiles on the faces of LJP candidates after the first phase of polls, Kumar was glum. “Nitish will be sent packing after November 10,” he asserted. — PTI

Tejashwi, 4 ministers of Nitish govt in fray as Bihar votes in 2nd phase today



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar addresses a gathering during an election rally, at Alamnagar in Madhepura district on Monday. — PTI

NITISH: WILL RJD DELAY SALARIES TO FULFILL 10-LAKH JOBS PROMISE?

Patna, Nov. 2: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday said providing 10 lakh jobs, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav’s main poll promise, would cost the exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually, and wondered if his rival would shelve other development works or delay salaries to implement his pledge.

Addressing constituents in five assembly segments through a virtual rally called “Nishchay Samwad”, Kumar also said his government has changed the state’s industrial policy and that “we will be able to invite several industries”.

Tejashwi has promised he would sanction 10 lakh government jobs in his

very first cabinet meeting if the ‘Mahagathbandhan’ is voted to power.

“That is impossible, they won’t get the chance to govern,” Kumar said.

“But for what he (Tejashwi) has said, it will cost the state exchequer ₹1.44 lakh crore annually... Should they shelve all other development work?”

He said earlier nobody used to get salaries in time and recalled that several teachers and university professors had told the CM during his Vikas Yatra in 2005 that they did not get salaries in time.

“We fixed that. Now what do they want to do? Again not paying salaries? Will there be no other (development) work?” Kumar said. — PTI



HILLARY CLINTON @HILARYCLINTON

However you're turning out the vote for Biden-Harris over the next four days, thank you for doing it. Future generations will ask what we did to affect the outcome of this pivotal election.



BARACK OBAMA @BARACKOBAMA

You could be the difference between someone making it out to the polls or staying home. And many states could be decided by a handful of votes. Join me and make some calls for Joe.



LADY GAGA (@LADYGAGA)

HEY TIM HEY @realDonaldTrump SO HAPPY IM GLAD TO BE LIVING RENT FREE in your HEAD. #BidenHarris. Heeeeey Donald... #WINNING (also, what is a fracking?)

US on edge as 77% fear violence

Last-minute scramble for votes by Trump and Biden; no clarity on timing of the result

POLL LINGO: NAKED BALLOTS TO A RED MIRAGE

WILMINGTON, Del. (Reuters) - Every U.S. presidential election has its own lingo, like the "hanging chads" on voting cards in Florida that led to a landmark court battle in 2000. Below is some of the jargon used in the days leading up to the Nov. 3 election pitting President Donald Trump against his Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

NAKED BALLOTS

Sixteen states require voters to return mail ballots in a special "secrecy" envelope. Ballots that don't arrive in the envelope will be considered "naked" and might be disqualified. Celebrities including Naomi Campbell, Chris Rock and Sarah Silverman disrobed in a video to promote proper voting procedures, "the least sexy thing a completely naked person can say," according to actor Josh Gad, who also stripped for the video by activist group Represent.Us, which has promoted anti-graft resolutions, says it does not endorse either candidate.

RED MIRAGE/BLUE SHIFT

Fearing crowded polling places amid the Coronavirus pandemic, a record number of Americans, particularly Democrats, cast mail-in ballots this year, and counting them could take days. As a result, initial results on Election Day may show Republicans, indicated by red on election maps, holding large leads in battleground states, which counts mail-in ballots received three days after Nov. 3. As ballots are tallied in the ensuing days, that "red mirage" could fade, giving way to a "blue shift." Experts see a possible "blue mirage" and "red shift" in Florida and North Carolina.

SPOILED BALLOTS

Ballots that are improperly marked can be rejected as spoiled. Trump said in a tweet the phrase "can I change my vote" was trending on Google and urged Americans to submit a new ballot for him. Some states allow voters to request a new absentee ballot but first they have to request their original ballot be marked as spoiled.

DUELLING ELECTORS

The Electoral College allots electors to states based on population, and the candidate who wins the popular vote gets its electors. But legal experts say Trump could try to convince Republican lawmakers in closely contested states to approve the Republican slate of electors based on early vote tallies. As more ballots are counted, Biden might be certified as the winner. The result: Dueling electors and an outcome that could be determined by Congress.

COURT PACKING

Republicans confirmed Amy Coney Barrett as a Supreme Court justice on Oct. 26 to replace the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a hero to many for her advocacy for women's issues. Democrats had argued Ginsburg's seat should be filled after poll. Some have suggested that a Biden Administration could expand the court beyond its traditional nine justices. Biden has said he will establish a bipartisan commission to consider changes to the court system, which he said is "getting out of whack."

POLL WATCHERS

The Republican National Committee is mobilizing thousands of supporters to monitor early voting sites and ballot drop boxes, looking for irregularities such as people dropping off multiple ballots in states where that generally is not allowed. This marks the first presidential election in nearly four decades in which the Republicans can engage in "ballot security" activities without prior review and approval from the Department of Justice.

Washington, Nov. 2: The US presidential campaign enters its final day Monday with a last-minute scramble for votes by Donald Trump and Joe Biden, drawing to a close an extraordinary race that has put a pandemic-stricken country on edge.

But while campaigning will halt and voters will have their say on Tuesday, many questions remain over how soon a result will be known due to a flood of mail-in ballots and possible legal challenges.

About three-quarters of Americans are concerned about riots and violence after election day, according to a new poll by J.L. Partners-Independent.

Almost three out of four voters (72%) describe themselves as "very or very concerned about post-election violence", according to the survey. Concerns are greater among President Trump's supporters - 77% said they fear violence and unrest. Among former Vice President Biden's supporters, 73% described these concerns.

Those factors, along with an unprecedented convergence of social justice protests, Coronavirus precautions and President Trump's fear-mongering campaign, have led to apprehension over whether unrest could erupt.

Taking no chances, businesses in some cities have boarded up windows, while across the country the harsh political climate has led to fierce debate, in some cases even dividing families.

As proof of how much Americans have been galvanized - and perhaps frightened by the pandemic - a record of more than 93 million people have cast early ballots, including in-person and mailed votes, according to the nonpartisan US Elections Project.

— Agencies

Will host meet of democracies: Joe

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has said that if elected, he will convene a global summit of democracies in the first year of his presidency to counter the "rising authoritarianism" in the world and address issues of election security and human rights.

Biden accused President Donald Trump of "embracing" every autocrat in the world which he said has undermined America's credibility. "One of the things that have hurt us so badly, is that this president has embraced every thug and every

autocrat in the world, in ways that have undermined our credibility," he said during a conference call.

"I'll energise the community of democracies to counter the rising authoritarianism we see in the world. In my first year, we're going to host a summit of the democracies to address election security, human rights, etc." Biden said.

Responding to questions on China, he said trade, human rights and security are the three main issues. Criticising President Trump's policies toward China, he said, "Trump caved to Chinese leaders every time. He let them off the hook, started a trade war, etc."

"Trump gave them the green light to put millions of Chinese Uighurs in concentration camps," he said. His campaign has termed the alleged HR violations of Uyghur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region as "genocide" and called for a global effort to make a united stand against the "oppression". — PTI



US President Donald Trump arrives for a Make America Great Again rally at Fayetteville Regional Airport in Fayetteville, North Carolina on Monday. — AFP

Biden names 800 major fundraisers

Washington, Nov. 2: Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has released the names of major fundraisers, including Indian-Americans, who helped him raise at least \$100,000 for his election campaign this year.

The list, released on Sunday, contains the names of 800 major donors, including a few dozen Indian-Americans.

Topping the list of Indian-Americans are well known community leaders Swadesh Chatterjee, Ramesh Kapoor, Shekar N. Narasimhan, R. Rangaswami, Ajay Jain Bhutoria and Frank Islam.

Among other prominent Indian-American bundlers are Neil Makhija, Rahu, Prakash, Deepak Raj, Raj Shah, Rajan Shah, Radhika Shah, Jill and Raj Singh, Nidhi Thakar, Kiran Jain, Sony Kalsi and Bela Bajaria. Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has also been listed as a bundler.

Given that the list of bundlers includes all those

who have raised more than \$100,000, the number of Indian-Americans in far less than those of former presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton campaigns. Some of the traditional Indian-American Democratic donors like hotelier Sant Chatwal are missing from the list. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, the list of "bundlers" includes the who's who of Democratic

politics, including former and current governors, senators, Cabinet secretaries and big names from Hollywood. Film producer Jeffrey Katzenberg, writer and director Lee Daniels, LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman; media mogul Haim Saban and former US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker are on the list, the daily said.

— PTI

FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



93 million Americans have already cast ballots

11 precincts in New Orleans could still be without power on Tuesday

1,100 prominent members of the Asian-American community endorse Joe Biden, Kamala Harris

300 lawsuits already have been filed over the election in dozens of states across the country



127,000

127,000 ballots cast at drive-thru voting places in the Houston area not to be tossed out after the Texas Supreme Court on Sunday denied a Republican-led petition

Idli and any kind of 'Tikka' fav Indian dishes: Kamala

New York, Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has listed Idli with a "really good Sambar" and "any kind of Tikka" as her favourite Indian dishes. Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, Harris, is the first Indian-origin and first Black woman to be picked by a major American political party for the top post. Harris, responding to a question on what her favourite Indian dishes are, said: "So South Indian, it would be Idli with... a really good Sambar, and then North Indian — probably

any kind of Tikka".

The 56-year-old California senator, after being chosen by Democratic Party's presidential candidate Joe Biden as his running mate in August, reflected on her proud Indian heritage during her maiden address to the Indian-American community and recalled how her mother Shyamala Gopalan always wanted to instill in her a "love for good Idli".

She had taken a trip down the memory lane, mentioning her "long walks" in Madras (now Chennai) with her grandfather who would tell her about the

"heroes" responsible for the birth of the world's largest democracy. In a video posted on Twitter on Sunday, Harris answered some questions asked by Instagram users. On what she is doing to take care of her mental health on the campaign trail, she said that she works out every morning, speaks with her kids and loves to cook. Asked what her plan is to ensure a sustainable and eco-friendly future for the coming generations, Harris said Biden and she are prepared to make commitments with timelines to achieve zero emissions by 2050. — PTI

PROLONGED VOTE COUNT: DON READY FOR LEGAL BATTLE

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: US President Donald Trump has denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday and hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle against a vote count that stretched past Election Day. "No, no that was a false report," Trump told reporters on Sunday at the Charlotte airport in North Carolina amidst a news report that he is planning to prematurely declare victory on the election night.

Americans have rushed to vote early, already casting nearly 92 million mail-in ballots that could take days or weeks to be counted in some states — meaning a winner might not be declared in the hours after polls close on Tuesday. Trump indicated that his team was gearing up for a legal battle.

Trump lamented Supreme Court's rulings that allowed for Pennsylvania and North Carolina to count absentee ballots that are postmarked before Election Day but arrive shortly after Tuesday. "I think it is a terrible thing when ballots can be collected after an election. I think it is a terrible thing when people or states are allowed to tabulate ballots for a long period of time after the election is over because it can only lead to one thing," Trump said.

"We are going in the night of — as soon as the election is over — we are going in with our lawyers," he said as he criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states. — PTI

HARRIS SEEKS DECISIVE MANDATE FROM AMERICANS

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Kamala Harris has sought a decisive mandate from Americans so that no amount of legal battle can overturn the poll results.

US President Donald Trump on Sunday denied that he is planning to prematurely declare victory after the presidential polls are over on Tuesday, but hinted that he is gearing up for a legal battle in the counting of mail and absentee votes post the election.

He criticised the decision taken by the Supreme Court to allow ballots to be received after Election Day in several battleground states.

"Well, first of all, we plan to decisively win this election so I don't, I don't think we're going to need to get to that point," 56-year-old Harris told reporters during a day of hectic campaigning with stops in this North Carolinian city and in Georgia.

Over the past few days, polls indicate that the November 3 presidential election is getting tighter, even though Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden continues to maintain substantial lead over Republican incumbent President Donald Trump.

— PTI

ELECTION | EVENT

Drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature

Honking gets new meaning

Fayetteville (US), Nov. 2: Honking has got a new meaning in the US politics with the annoying sound replacing clapping, cheers and even boos in election campaigns, in particularly the drive-in car rallies of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris. Drive-in car rallies have become a signature election event of the Democratic Party which has taken the innovative path

wherein a select group of supporters gather in a parking lot to be addressed by the party's top leadership as part of its efforts to maintain social distancing due to the Coronavirus.

Both Biden, 77, and Harris, 56, ask their supporters sitting in their cars to honk to express their sentiments. In fact, honking in the election rallies of the Democratic Party has replaced all kinds of emotion in election rallies. In the election rallies of Republican incumbent President Donald Trump, thousands of his supporters cheer, clap and

chant slogans like "We Love You" and "Four More years." Most of these drive-in car rallies are very selective in nature and they are not publicised. In their rallies, it's all honking.

The level of honking reflects the sentiments, happiness and anger of their supporters. On Sunday at a drive-in rally attended by less than 100 cars, invited by the local campaign officials, every time Harris supporters got excited with her remarks, they honked. Every time she was critical of Trump, they honked. Every time she spoke about

"Black Lives Matter", they honked. It was once in a while that some of the supporters peeked out of their car windows. Those who were standing outside their cars ensured that they were maintaining social distancing as they clapped.

There were no cheers at all. Same was the case with shouting slogans. Unlike the Trump rallies, which are publicised locally much in advance and people are encouraged to participate, the car drive-in rallies of Biden and Harris are by invitation only.

— PTI



Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden hugs his granddaughter Finnegan Biden during a canvassing kick-off event in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Sunday. — AFP

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

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,757.58	0.36
Nifty 50	11,669.15	0.23
S&P 500*	3,309.28	1.20
Dollar (₹)	74.42	-0.42
Pound Sterling (₹)	95.79	-0.004
Euro (₹)	86.57	0.42
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	51,286.103	0.20
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	37.95	0.01
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.890	0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.838	-0.021

Singh to continue as NTPC chief till July 2025

The NTPC board approved the extension of tenure of chairman and MD Gurdeep Singh till July 31, 2025. Singh's extended term will start from February 4, 2021. Singh had taken over as the CMD of NTPC on February 4, 2016.

Aditya Puri to join Carlyle as senior advisor



Aditya Puri, who retired as HDFC Bank CEO and MD last week, will be guiding global private equity major Carlyle on investment opportunities across Asia as a senior advisor. Puri will advise the Carlyle team and provide guidance on the evolving market landscape and new investment opportunities, Carlyle said. He will also be advising Carlyle's investment professionals and portfolio management teams.

Tax payers generate 4.95 cr e-invoices: Govt

Tax payers generated 4.95 crore e-invoices in the first month of the launch of the service, the ministry of electronics and IT said. Besides e-invoices, 6.41 crore e-way bills were generated in October, which was highest in any month since the launch of the service. "According to NIC, within the first month of introduction itself, more than 495 lakh e-invoices were generated on the NIC portal by 27,400 taxpayers," the ministry said.

Coromandel Intl posts 17% rise in Q2 profit

Coromandel International reported a 17 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit after tax at Rs 589 crore for the September 2020 quarter. Total income was lower at Rs 4,620 crore against Rs 4,867 crore in the year-ago quarter. Standalone net profit after tax for the quarter rose to Rs 582 crore versus Rs 503 crore. Total income stood at Rs 4,605 crore against Rs 4,865 crore.



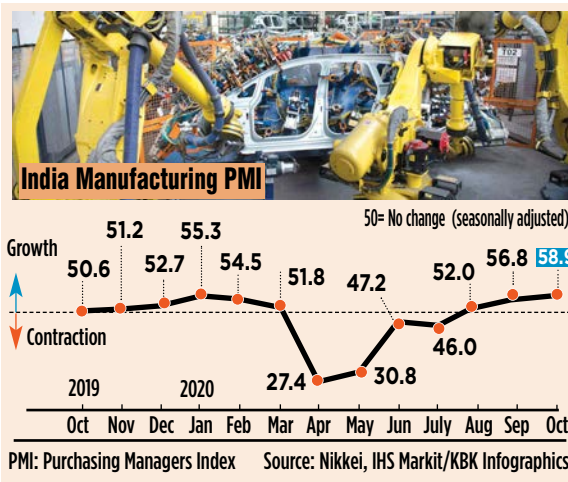
PMI at a 13-year high of 58.9 in Oct. Mfg sees fastest pick-up in decade

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

With rising demand and output amidst Covid-19 disruptions, India's factory activity, measured by the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), expanded to 58.9 in October—nearly a 13-year high and the fastest pace in over a decade. However, on the employment front, the numbers remain a concern, as companies cut more jobs, a private survey showed on Monday.

Even though the economy shrank at a record 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, the latest PMI survey shows that Asia's third-largest economy is signalling a fast pace of recovery with several economic indicators turning positive.

"Rising from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, the headline PMI pointed to the strongest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade, with companies raising output to the greatest extent in 13 years amid robust sales growth. The reading was the highest since May 2010 and above the 50-level separating growth from contraction for the third straight month. While firms purchased additional inputs for use in the production process, payroll numbers were lowered due to government guidelines related to the Covid-19," said the IHS Markit survey. Commenting, Pollyanna



De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit, said, "Levels of new orders and output at Indian manufacturers continued to recover from the Covid-19 induced contractions seen earlier in the year, with the PMI results for October highlighting historically sharp monthly rates of expansion. Companies were convinced that the resurgence in sales will be sustained in coming months, as indicated by a strong upturn in input buying amid restocking efforts."

"Also, confidence towards the year-ahead outlook for production improved as firms hoped that fewer Covid-19 cases and the reopening of other businesses could boost output growth. There was disappointing news on the employment front though, with October seeing another reduction in pay-

roll numbers," said De Lima.

With input and output prices rising at a faster pace last month, overall retail inflation could see a spike. Inflation rose to an eight-month high of 7.34 per cent in September could remain above the RBI's medium-term target of 2-6 per cent in coming months.

In the survey, hopes of an end to Covid-19 cases and the reopening of other sectors in the economy underpinned positive sentiment towards the year-ahead outlook for production. The level of confidence was at a 50-month high.

"Also, confidence towards the year-ahead outlook for production improved as firms hoped that fewer Covid-19 cases and the reopening of other businesses could boost output growth," Lima said.

MSME emergency loans available up to Nov. 30

New Delhi, Nov. 2: The government on Monday extended the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for MSMEs by one month till November 30, as the scheme has so far failed to meet the target of Rs 3 lakh crore.

The scheme was valid till October-end. It was launched as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package announced by finance minister. The scheme was valid till October-end. It was launched as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package announced by finance minister.

The scheme has been extended till November 30 or till such time that an amount of Rs 3 lakh crore is sanctioned under the scheme, whichever is earlier, the finance ministry said in a statement.

The step has been taken in view of the opening up of various sectors in the economy and the expected increase in demand

during the ongoing festive season.

"This extension will provide a further opportunity to such borrowers who have not availed of the scheme so far, to obtain credit under the scheme," it said.

According to data uploaded by member lending institutions on the ECLGS portal, an amount of Rs 2.03 lakh crore has been sanctioned under the scheme to 60.67 lakh borrowers so far, while an amount of Rs 1.48 lakh crore has been disbursed.

Under the scheme, fully guaranteed and collateral-free additional credit to MSMEs, business enterprises, individual loans for business purposes, and Mudra borrowers is provided to the extent of 20 per cent of their credit outstanding as on February 29, 2020.

Borrowers with a credit outstanding up to Rs 50 crore as on February 29, and with an annual turnover of up to Rs 250 crore are eligible under the scheme. —PTI

Reliance Cap in bid to sell stake in arms to cut debt

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL), part of debt-ridden Anil Ambani-promoted Reliance Group, has invited bids for sale of its subsidiaries, including Reliance General Insurance and Reliance Nippon Life Insurance, to repay loans of about Rs 20,000 crore.

According to sources, the process for inviting expression of interest (EOI) for its key assets was launched on October 31, with a view to unlock value of its underlying businesses and targets to make RCL debt free.

EOIs invited for all or part of RCL's stake of subsidiaries Reliance General Insurance, Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company, Reliance Securities, Reliance Financial Limited and Reliance Asset Reconstruction Limited.

The monetisation process is run under the aegis of Committee of Debenture Holders and the Debenture Trustee Vistra ITCL India Ltd, which represents 93 per cent of outstanding debt of RCL, sources said.

The company proposes to exit from its wholly owned Reliance General Insurance Company Limited with paid up capital of Rs 252 crore as of September 30, sources said, adding that 51 per cent stake in Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Company is also for sale. —PTI

Manipal to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India for ₹2,100 cr

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Leading multi-specialty healthcare provider Manipal Hospitals on Monday said it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Columbia Asia Hospitals in India.

According to sources, the acquisition will be for Rs 2,100 crore.

The company intends to acquire 100 per cent stake in Columbia Asia Hospitals Pvt Ltd (Columbia Asia). The transfer of ownership to Manipal Hospitals is expected to be completed post regulatory approvals, the healthcare providers said in a statement.

"We are very pleased to welcome Columbia Asia Hospitals to the Manipal family and proudly acknowledge their outstanding track record of healthcare delivery of a very high standard over the years," Manipal Education and Medical



Group (MEMG) chairman Ranjan Pai said.

"This is the start of an exceptional journey for us and together with Columbia Asia, we are now bigger, stronger and uniquely positioned to meet the growing expectations of the communities we serve across the country," he added.

Together, the combined entity will have a presence of 27 hospitals across 15 cities with over 7,300 beds and a pool of more than 4,000 doctors and over 10,000 employees, the statement said.

Columbia Asia Hospitals commenced operations in India in 2005 in Hebbal, Bengaluru and currently operates 11 hospitals across the country, it added.

"This combination of Columbia Asia and Manipal Hospitals is very exciting because of the strong cultural alignment between the two companies and the opportunity it provides for continued growth," Columbia Pacific Management chairman Dan Baty said.

The acquisition of Columbia Asia offers a geographical and cultural fit, and provides Manipal Hospitals a larger national footprint, the statement said.

The advisor for Manipal Health Enterprise was Allegro Capital and Columbia Pacific was advised by Morgan Stanley, it added.

—PTI

Centre transfers ₹6,000 cr to 16 states, 3 UTs

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, NOV. 2

In an effort to meet the goods and services tax (GST) revenue shortfall, the Centre on Monday transferred loans worth Rs 6,000 crore as the second tranche to 16 states and three Union territories (UTs) under a special borrowing window. With this amount, the government has already facilitated total loans of Rs 12,000 crore till date under the special window to states and UTs to

meet the shortfall in GST compensation cess collections.

"The finance ministry said the "amount was raised at a weighted average yield of 4.42 per cent. This amount will be passed on to the states/UTs at the same interest rate, which is lower than the cost of borrowings for the states and UTs, thus benefitting them."

The 16 states and three UTs that received funds include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa,

Gujarat, Haryana, HP, Karnataka, MP, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand and the UTs of Delhi, J&K and Puducherry.

Twenty-one states and three UTs have opted so far for the special window under Option 1 presented by the Union government. "The loans raised by government are released on a back-to-back basis to states/UTs, in lieu of GST Compensation Cess releases," the ministry said.

Essel sells Devanahalli, Dichpally tollways

Mumbai, Nov. 2: The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) on Monday said it has acquired two assets—Dichpally and Devanahalli tollways—from Essel Group, marking its entry into the roads and highways sector.

The deal size was not disclosed by the fund.

The acquisition is done through the NIIF Master Fund, and the projects will be managed by Athaang Infrastructure, NIIF's proprietary roads platform backed by a team of professionals.

Subhash Chandra's debt-laden Essel Group has



been in talks with NIIF to sell these assets since last year for an estimated Rs 1,500-1,800 crore.

Essel Dichpally Tollway is a 60-km four-lane toll road in Telangana and has been in operation for over seven years, connecting Hyderabad and Nagpur. Essel Devanahalli

BMW LAUNCHES X3 M IN INDIA, PRICES START AT ₹99.9 L

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, NOV. 2

BMW, India's second biggest luxury carmaker, on Monday introduced the first-ever X3 M in India for Rs 99.90 lakh to cash in on the festive season.

The X3 M is the first mid-size SUV with German BMW's M package in India which would be imported into the country.

The X3 M has no direct rivals in India as there is no mid-size SUV available in India at this price point



with such performance in tow.

The BMW X3 M is powered by a new 3.0-litre, 6-cylinder M TwinPower turbo engine, which is the

most powerful straight-six petrol engine in the entire M lineup. The engine manages to churn out 486 PS of power and offers 600 Nm of torque.

The high-revving M engine is paired to an 8-speed M Steptronic transmission and sends power to all wheels with the M xDrive powertrain. The X3 M can clock 0-100 kmph in 4.2 seconds and achieves a top speed of 250 kmph. It offers four driving modes that optimise performance.

AGILE MODEL

Company moves to trust and outcome-based working culture

Work from anywhere, Tata Steel tells staff

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Domestic steel maker Tata Steel on Monday announced a new work model for its employees which allows them to work from home for up to 365 days a year.

The new 'Agile Working Models' policy is effective from Sunday, Tata Steel said in a statement.

Tata Steel said that it is moving towards a "trust and outcome-based working culture" and to give more flexibility to its employees.

Under the new models, effective November 1, even officers who are required to be based out of a particular location can now work from home for unlimited days in a year, it said.

Once the pandemic situation normalises, the policy will enable company's officers to move to a location of choice, giving the employee the flexibility



to operate out of any location in the country, the company said adding the policy will be piloted for a year and based on adaptability and feedback, the policy will be reviewed after one year.

Suresh Dutt Tripathi, vice-president, human resource management, Tata Steel, said that flexible working not only por-

trays an organisation's intent to create a workplace for the upcoming generations but also solidifies its intent to cater to the needs of its diversified workforce across geographies.

The pandemic has helped move away from the traditional thinking of productivity being contingent upon fixed hours of work

within an office environment and bust many of the myths around remote working, he said.

The policy will ensure better work-life balance, will give more flexibility to choose where one lives as the daily work commute shifts out of consideration, provides working opportunities to new parents at their convenience, and ensures continuity of work for persons with disabilities in their respective work enabled environment.

"Flexible working provides greater freedom to choose locations and make essential life decisions such as supporting families, be it ageing parents or spouses with non-transferable jobs. This will help in retaining and enriching our key talent from across the country and attract workforce for location agnostic roles," Tripathi added. —PTI

Its dividend income and profit on sale of investments during the quarter stood at Rs 323 crore as against Rs 2,701 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal.

"In accordance with the directions by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, the Corporation has not received any dividend from its investments in banks and insurance companies during the current financial year so far, it said.

Provisioning, including provisioning for the impact of Covid-19, was Rs 436 crore compared to Rs 754 crore in the year-ago quarter.

The net interest income (NII) for the quarter grew 21 per cent to Rs 3,647 crore compared to Rs 3,021 crore in the previous year. Net interest margin for the quarter stood at 3.3 per cent versus 3.2 per cent.

HDFC shares ended at Rs 2,042.65 apiece, up 6.24 per cent on BSE. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

Watson set to retire from cricket

Dubai: Top Australian all-rounder Shane Watson has decided to call time on his competitive cricket career after Chennai Super Kings' exit from the Indian Premier League. While Watson has not made any official announcement, it has been learnt that after CSK ended their IPL campaign on Sunday with a win over Kings XI Punjab, the senior player told his teammates about the decision to retire from all forms of cricket.

This season, he has scored 299 runs in 11 games. He was a star for Rajasthan Royals during the inaugural edition (472 runs and 17 wickets) and in 2018, his century in the final post his international retirement won it for CSK, who had just come back from a two-year ban. — PTI

Gagan's shooting range in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: India's emerging sporting hub, Odisha, on Monday made its foray into shooting as the state government joined hands with Olympic medallist Gagan Narang to set up a 10m and 50m range at the Kalinga Stadium here. Also associated with the project is the Aditya Birla Group. The facility is called the Odisha Aditya Birla-Gagan Narang Shooting High Performance Centre, adding to the much acclaimed hockey and athletics infrastructure of the state. Further cementing Odisha's reputation as the sports capital of India and providing major boost to infrastructure in the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated three state-of-the-art sports facilities in Hinjilicut, Chatrapur and Bhubaneswar. — PTI

Shooter tests +ve but camp to go on

New Delhi: An athlete training in the national capital's Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range has tested positive for Covid-19, the Sports Authority of India said on Sunday but maintained that it will not hamper the ongoing national camp. Last month, SAI had approved a two-month long coaching camp for the Olympic core group shooters from October 15 to December 14. "An NCOE (National Centre of Excellence) athlete training at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range in the 10 metre range has tested positive for the coronavirus. The athlete who last visited the range on October 28th in the second half of the day, intimated to his coach that his test result had come positive," SAI said in a statement. — PTI

Legend Charlton has dementia

London: Manchester United and England great Bobby Charlton has been diagnosed with dementia. "Everyone at Manchester United is saddened that this terrible disease has afflicted Sir Bobby Charlton and we continue to offer our love and support to Sir Bobby and his family," United said in a statement on Sunday. The announcement came two days after Nobby Stiles, who won the 1966 World Cup and 1968 European Cup as Charlton's teammate, died after his own battle with the illness. In July, Bobby's brother and fellow England World Cup winner Jack also died after being diagnosed with dementia. The 83-year-old Charlton held England's goalscoring record of 49 until it was broken by Wayne Rooney. The striker also took his United record by eclipsing the 249 goals Charlton scored for the club. — AP

Live on TV

CRICKET

IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai Indians from 7.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

Women's Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Melbourne Renegades from 9 am on Sony Six

TENNIS

ATP Paris Masters: Day 2 action from 3.30 pm on Sony Six

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Lokomotiv Moscow vs Atletico Madrid from 11.25 pm on Sony Ten 2; RB Salzburg vs Bayern Munich from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 3; Real Madrid vs Inter Milan from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 2; Manchester City vs Olympiacos from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Six; Atalanta vs Liverpool from 1.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony Ten 1

WIN-WIN GAME

Delhi beat Bangalore but both teams make play-offs

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Delhi Capitals qualified for the Indian Premier League play-offs at number two position with a six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Monday.

RCB also entered the play-offs after DC took more than 17.3 overs to complete their chase.

Invited to bat, Royal Challengers Bangalore scored 152 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs. Young Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with a 41-ball 50.

In reply, DC chased down the target with six balls to spare, courtesy calculative knocks from Shikhar Dhawan (54) and Ajinkya Rahane (60).

Earlier, Padikkal, who looked in good nick during his stay in the middle, smashed five fours and shared a 57-run stand with skipper Virat Kohli (29 off 24) for the third wicket.

The Capital pulled things back brilliantly in the middle overs.

Pacer Anrich Nortje (3/33) was the pick of the bowlers for Delhi Capitals, while Kagiso Rabada (2/30) picked up two wickets and Ravichandran Ashwin (1/18) took the important wicket of Kohli.

Padikkal and Josh Philippe (12) were circumspect in the powerplay overs. Rabada provided the Capitals with the early breakthrough off his very first ball, claiming the wicket of the Australian in the fifth over. — PTI



Ajinkya Rahane of Delhi Capitals plays a shot against Royal Challengers Bangalore in an Indian Premier League match at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Monday. — BCCI

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bangalore: J. Philippe c Shaw b Rabada 12, D Padikkal b Nortje 50, V. Kohli c Stoinis b Ashwin 29, AB de Villiers run out 35, C Morris c Pant b Nortje 0, S Dube c Rahane b Rabada 17. W. Sundar not out 0, I. Udana c Iyer b Nortje 4, S Ahmed not out 1. Extras (B-1, W-3) 4. **Total (for 7 wts in 20 overs) 152.**

ForW: 1-25, 2-82, 3-112, 4-112, 5-145, 6-146, 7-150.

Bowling: Daniel Sams 4-0-40-0, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-18-1, Anrich Nortje 4-0-33-3, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-30-2, Axar Patel 4-0-30-0.

Delhi Capitals: Prithvi Shaw b Mohammed Siraj 9, S. Dhawan c S. Dube b Shahbaz Ahmed 54, Ajinkya Rahane c S. Dube b Washington Sundar 60, Shreyas Iyer c Siraj b Shahbaz Ahmed, R. Pant not out 8, M. Stoinis not out 10. Extras (LB-3, W-3) 6. **Total (for 4 wts in 19 overs) 154.**

ForW: 1-19, 2-107, 3-130, 4-136.

Bowling: Chris Morris 2-0-19-0, Mohammed Siraj 3-0-29-1, Washington Sundar 4-0-24-1, Isuru Udana 2-0-24-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 4-0-29-0, Shahbaz Ahmed 4-0-26-2.

IPL POINTS TABLE

Teams	P	W	L	N/R	Pts	NRR
Mumbai Indians	13	9	4	0	18	+1.296
Delhi Capitals	14	8	6	0	16	-0.109
Royal Challengers Bangalore	14	7	7	0	14	-0.172
Kolkata Knight Riders	14	7	7	0	14	-0.214
Sunrisers Hyderabad	13	6	7	0	12	+0.555
Kings XI Punjab	14	6	8	0	12	-0.162
Chennai Super Kings	14	6	8	0	12	-0.455
Rajasthan Royals	14	6	8	0	12	-0.569

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

'SHORT RUN' CAME BACK TO BITE US, SAYS RAHUL

Abu Dhabi, Nov. 2: Kings XI Punjab skipper K L Rahul believes that the "short run" that played a part in their opening IPL loss to Delhi Capitals massively affected their play-off chances despite a remarkable comeback in the second leg of the tournament.

KXIP finished on 12 points after losing their last game against Chennai Super Kings after winning five games on trot to raise visions of a play-off chance.

"It is disappointing. We had a lot of games in our pockets and we couldn't get over the line and we only have ourselves to blame. That short run game too (against Delhi Capitals on September 20), looks like it has come back to bite us,"

Rahul said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Before that particular match went into Super Over, the TV footage showed that square leg umpire Menon had erred in calling Chris Jordan for a "short run" in the third ball of the 19th over, bowled by Kagiso Rabada.

The TV replays showed that Jordan's bat was inside the crease when he completed the first run, starting from the non-striker's end.

However to KXIP's horror, Menon gestured that Jordan has not completed the run and only one run was added to Mayank Agarwal and the Punjab team's total.

On their loss against CSK, Rahul said that it was all about not batting too well. — PTI

Mumbai stand in between Sunrisers and play-off spot

Sharjah, Nov. 2: Riding high on momentum, resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will back themselves to topple the mighty Mumbai Indians and qualify for the IPL play-offs here on Tuesday.

Thanks to their healthy run-rate, a win against Mumbai Indians should be enough to send Sunrisers into the final four.

After taking a tough call to leave out the dangerous Jonny Bairstow from the playing eleven, Sunrisers have managed to find out the "right" balance.

Wriddhiman Saha has made an instant impact as David Warner's opening partner and the inclusion of Jason Holder has given them an all-round option.

Pacers Holder and Sandeep Sharma were extremely impressive, both upfront and at the death, in the last game against RCB.

NUMBERS GAME

HEAD TO HEAD

OVERALL: ● Matches: 15 ● Hyderabad: 7 ● Mumbai: 7 ● Tied: 1 (Mumbai Indians beat Sunrisers Hyderabad in Super Over after match ended in a tie)

MEETING IN 2019

- MI beat SRH by 40 runs in Hyderabad.
- MI beat SRH via Super Over in Mumbai.

MEETING IN 2020

- Mumbai beat Hyderabad by 34 runs in Sharjah.

FOR THE RECORD

- David Warner with 444 runs at an average of 37.00 in 13 innings of as many matches is the fourth highest run-getter in this IPL.
- Krunal Pandya, who has scored 986 runs at an average of 25.94 in 57 innings of 68 matches, needs 14 runs to become eighth batsman to complete 1,000 runs for MI in IPL.

— S. PERVEZ QAISAR

Add left-arm pacer T. Natarajan and trump card Rashid Khan to their bowling attack, it makes up for a well rounded attack.

Already assured of the top spot in the points table, Mumbai will be expected to

put up another ruthless show against Sunrisers.

The nature of surface in Sharjah has changed drastically with low-scours replacing 200-plus totals, which was the norm at the start of the season. — PTI

MPL to sponsor Team India kit

New Delhi, Nov. 2: Fantasy gaming platform Mobile Premier League's subsidiary arm 'MPL Sports Apparel and Accessories' is the new kit sponsor of the Indian cricket team for a period of three years.

A member of the Apex Council confirmed the development on Monday that BCCI has inked the apparel and merchandise deal with MPL, replacing Nike.

"Yes, Apex Council has passed the sponsorship deal for apparel of Indian team (men, women, A and U19).

"However the rate per match will be ₹65 lakh per game instead of ₹88 lakh that Nike was giving," the senior official said on conditions of anonymity.

It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

"MPL has formed an apparel manufacturing company. They will also pay an amount for merchandise contract. The deal will end in November, 2023," the source added.

● It is learnt that BCCI will also get 10 per cent of the royalty from the sale of merchandise.

While Puma and Adidas had earlier picked up the bid papers for apparel sponsorship, they didn't fill the bid as they felt that the deal needed to be reduced to one third from the original bid.

Nike had a five year deal during which they paid ₹370 crore from 2016 to 2020 with a ₹30 crore royalty.

"No sporting apparel major was ready to pay that kind of money that Nike paid in current economic climate (due to Covid-19).

"One of the major reasons being merchandise items being very costly for common public," the source said.

MPL is currently associated with two IPL franchises (Kolkata Knight Riders and RCB), one CPL franchise (TKR) and the cricket boards of Ireland and the UAE. — PTI

New Beginning



Telangana Minister for Information Technology, Industries and Municipal Administration K. T. Rama Rao and former shuttler Jwala Gutta (right) take a tour of The Jwala Gutta Academy of Excellence at Sujatha School in Nagireddyguda in Moinsabad Mandal near Hyderabad after its inauguration on Monday. Sports Minister V. Srinivas Goud can be partially seen on the right.

Ronaldo returns with double in Juve's win

Milan, Nov. 2: Cristiano Ronaldo came off the bench to score a brace on his return from coronavirus as Juventus got back to winning ways in Serie A with a 4-1 victory against promoted Spezia on Sunday.

The champions ended a run of three consecutive draws to move third in Serie A, four points behind leaders AC Milan, who beat Udinese 2-1 earlier in the day thanks to a spectacular late winner from Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Sassuolo overtook Juventus to reclaim second spot, two points behind Milan, after a 2-0 win over Napoli, their first ever success at the Stadio San Paolo. Ronaldo replaced Paulo Dybala in the 56th minute in Cesena with the match level after Tommaso Pobega had cancelled out Alvaro Morata's opener for Juventus.

But the Portuguese striker put Juve in front just three minutes later.

Adrien Rabiot grabbed a third on 68 minutes, with Ronaldo scoring a second from the penalty spot with 15 minutes to go for his fifth goal in three league games this season.

"Cristiano is back. This is the important thing," said Ronaldo, who had been furious at missing Juventus' Champions League 2-0 defeat in mid-week by Lionel Messi's Barcelona.

IBRAHIMOVIC STUNNER

AC Milan extended their unbeaten streak as Ibrahimovic scored an acrobatic late winner to seal a win over lowly Udinese. The 39-year-old has scored seven goals in four league games having missed the other two after contracting Covid-19. — AFP

BALE IS TOTTENHAM'S MATCH WINNER AGAIN

London, Nov. 2: Gareth Bale soared into the air, connected with the ball and powered it into the net.

It's taken more than seven years but Bale was Tottenham's match-winner again. And they have only required three minutes on the field for the substitute to clinch a 2-1 victory over Brighton on Sunday.

A bit of relief and a lot of happiness, Bale said after being set up by Sergio Reguilon, who also switched from Real Madrid in September.

"It's an incredible feeling, personally. Obviously you wish the fans were here to be able to celebrate," he said after the match. — AP

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