



RUMBLINGS OF
REBELLION IN
KARNATAKA BJP



THE RETURN
OF JACINDA



P7

PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

ANGRY TRUMP
ATTACKS POLLS,
PRESS, DR FAUCI

'WHEN DHONI
GOOFED UP
ONCE AGAIN'



P12

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 34 and 15 degree Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 85% Min: 27%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 33.8°C (+1) Min: 13.7°C (-4)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

06:26 hrs 17:46 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

12:16 hrs 21:45 hrs

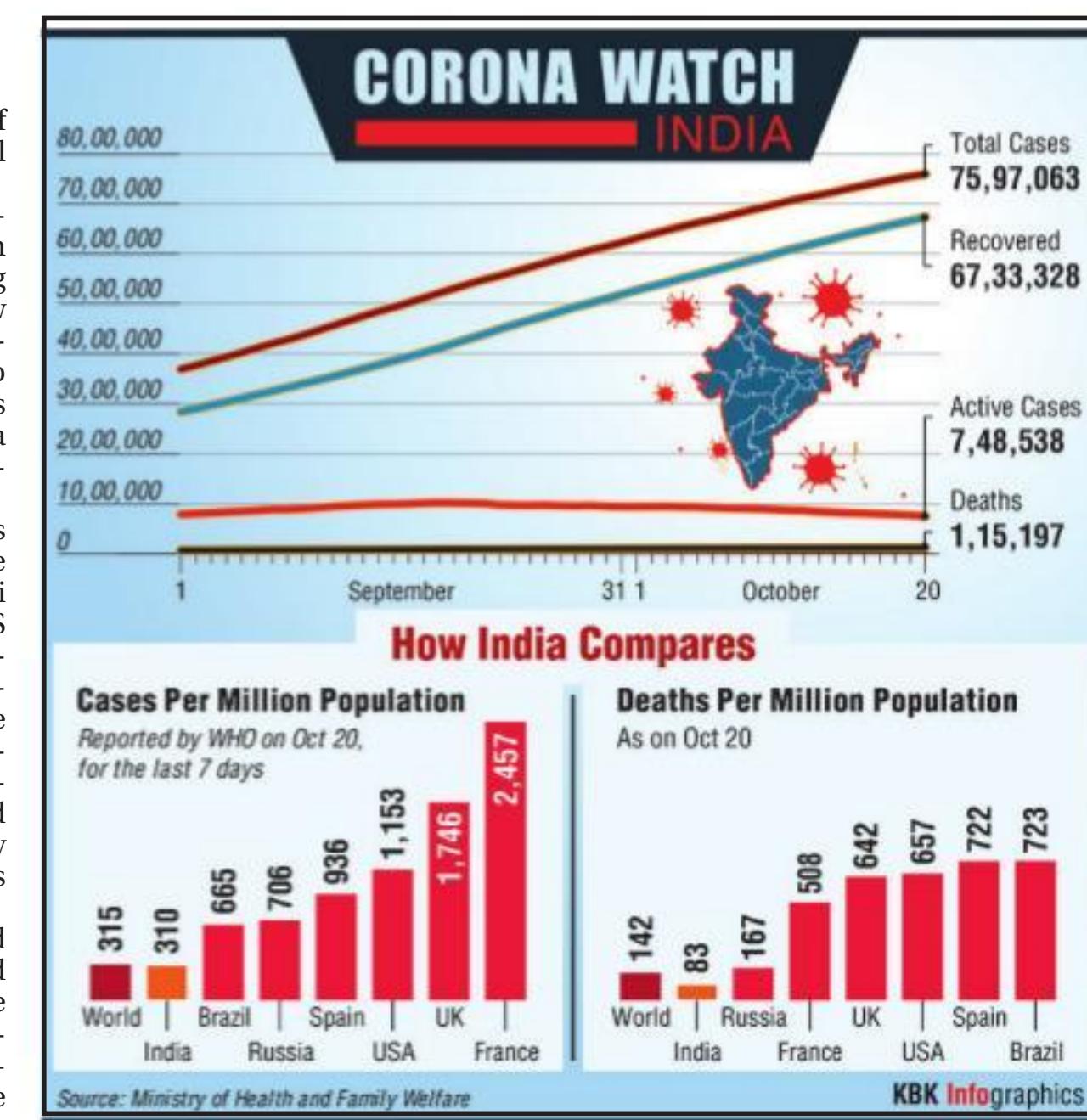
THUMBNAILS



Flood-affected residents search for their belongings in a flooded housing colony following heavy rains on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Tuesday. ■ AFP

IMD forecasts wet Durga Puja: A low pressure area, the third in a month, formed over the Bay of Bengal on Tuesday and it is expected to bring heavy rains in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal and in the north-eastern states in the next three days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. The low-pressure area is likely to cause rains in Kolkata and other parts of Bengal during the Durga Puja.

Captured Chinese soldier: The Indian Army will take another "few days" to release the Chinese soldier who was apprehended after he strayed into Indian territory in the Demchok sector of eastern Ladakh on Monday. Sources said there was a laid-down protocol and due process which was followed in such cases. However, the spying angle has been almost ruled out. "Corporal Wang Ya Long is fine after receiving medical assistance. He is also being questioned by Chinese language experts," they added. ■ P5



In festival season, PM calls for caution

In address to nation, Modi asks people to follow Covid-19 guidelines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

With the onset of the festival season, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a strong appeal to people to follow Covid-19 guidelines, saying this is not the time to be careless as the virus is still around and even a small negligence can dampen the festive spirit.

In his seventh address to the nation following the Covid-19 outbreak, Modi cited examples of the US and several European countries to note that the coronavirus cases there have seen a sudden and worrisome rise after witnessing a fall, as he cautioned citizens against any laxity until an effective cure is found.

He said pictures and videos have often emerged showing that many people have either stopped following precautions like wearing masks or have become negligent.

"This is absolutely not right. Those who have become negligent and are moving around without masks are putting themselves and their families, including children and elderly, at risk," the prime minister said in his televised speech.

He noted that people have been getting on with their lives after the lockdown was lifted while economic activities are picking up and crowds are slowly returning to markets in the festive times.

At one point in his

speech, he folded his hands to impress upon people to take precautions like wearing masks, sanitising their hands and maintaining social distance and said he wants to see them safe and their families happy.

"We must keep in mind that lockdown may have ended, but the virus is still there... This is not the time to be negligent, this is not the time to believe that corona is gone or there is no danger from it," he said.

"India is in a stable situation today due to efforts

of every Indian in the last seven-eight months, and we have to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate," he added.

Modi invoked sages like Kabir and the holy scripture of Ramcharitmanas to make his point about not taking a disease lightly until it is fully overcome.

People should continue to be careful and not be callous until a vaccine is found, Modi said.

Countries across the world are working at a war-footing to develop a vaccine, and scientists in India have

also been working hard in this regard.

Modi said the government is making all efforts to ensure that a vaccine, whenever it is launched, reaches every Indian.

"We all must remember, there can be no laxity till a cure is found (Jab tak dawai nahin, tab tak dhilai nahin)," Modi said.

Modi also highlighted India's "success" in saving lives in the fight against the disease compared to resourceful countries like the US, Spain, Brazil and Britain.

New Covid-19 cases dip below 50K for first time in nearly 3 months

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

India on Tuesday saw a large dip in new Covid-19 infection cases with 46,790 new coronavirus cases being reported in the last 24 hours, which was the first time the number has fallen below the 50,000 mark in nearly three months, and significantly less than the 97,894 registered on September 17, the country's highest daily figure till date.

India last recorded fewer than Tuesday's count on July 22 when the new cases were 45,720.

With 587 lives lost in 24 hours, India's death toll reached 1,15,197 while the total caseload touched 75,97,063 cases.

On Tuesday, there were 7,48,538 active infections while 67,33,328 Covid patients had been discharged.

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India's active cases now make up less than 10 percent of the total caseload.

Monday, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 9,61,177.

Meanwhile, the Union health ministry said that there has been no scarcity of medical oxygen in the last 10 months as daily production capacity was enhanced to 6,862 metric tonnes by September and projected to further increase to 7,191 metric tonnes by the end of October.

Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said the Centre has begun the process of installing oxygen generation plants in 246 hospitals in 18 states and Union territories in the first phase, out of which 67 were at various stages of completion.

Maharashtra continues to be the worst-hit with a total of 16,01,365 cases, including 42,240 deaths.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India conducted 10,32,795 sample tests on

Capital adds 41 Covid deaths, toll hits 6,081

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

Delhi today recorded 41 coronavirus (Covid-19) fatalities, which took its Covid toll to 6,081, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The city had yesterday logged 31 Covid deaths.

Delhi last reported 3,579 coronavirus infections, which pushed its caseload to 3,36,750. These fresh cases were detected out of 56,593 tests conducted the previous day, the health bulletin said.

The positivity rate was 6.32 per cent. The Covid patients in the national capital who recovered during the past 24 hours, numbered 2,186.

SEE P2

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FACT FILE	
TOTAL CASES	75,97,063
ACTIVE CASES	7,48,538
NEW CASES	46,790
NEW RECOVERIES	69,720
TOTAL DEATHS	1,15,197
UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8.00 A.M. TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2020	

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) held on Tuesday that environmental clearance was granted to the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project in Telangana "ex post facto" in violation of legal requirements, and has formed a committee to assess the damage caused as also to suggest restoration measures.

It directed the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) to constitute the 7-member expert committee and suggest relief and rehabilitation measures to be adopted.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said the stand that the project executed prior to the grant of environmental clearance (EC) is unrelated to



bench said. "We are also unable to agree that the state did not proceed with the irrigation component in the project till the clearances were granted and only constructed components relating to supply of drinking water," it said.

The tribunal held that environmental clearance was granted to the lift irrigation project "ex post facto" (having retrospective effect) in violation of legal requirement.

All activities are clearly part of the irrigation project which cannot be separated from other objectives. It is difficult to accept that all such activities are only for drinking purpose, the bench said.

It said the project had serious implication in terms of environment and it was never exclusively a water supply project.

At one point in his

from the President to raise Punjab's concerns on the farm laws and seek his intervention to protect farmers. He later led all MLAs to the Punjab Raj Bhawan to submit to Governor VPS Badnore the resolution passed by the House.

The CM informed the House that he had sought time

MOTHER GODDESS



An artist giving final touches to an idol of Goddess Durga at Kalibari in New Delhi, ahead of the Durga Puja festival on Tuesday. ■ SUBRATA DUTTA

NGT: Kaleshwaram project got green nod in violation of law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

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other things. These legislations seek to protect the state's farmers and agriculture by restoring various safeguards aimed at preventing damage apprehended by the farming community as a result of the Central legislations, an official spokesperson said.

Besides ensuring MSP, these Bills provide for imprisonment of not less than three years and fine for sale or purchase of wheat or paddy under a farming agreement below MSP, exemption of farmers from attachment of land up to 2.5 acres and prevention of hoarding and black-marketing of agricultural produce, among

other things. These legislations seek to protect the state's farmers and agriculture by restoring various safeguards aimed at preventing damage apprehended by the farming community as a result of the Central legislations, an official spokesperson said.

Replies to questions raised by a Shiromani Akali Dal member on the future of the state amendment Bills, Amarinder said the Bills would have to go to the Governor who may or may not approve them. Thereafter, they would also need to go to the President, who may also approve or reject them. However, he said, the state government will continue to fight the Central laws legally.

SEE ALSO PAGE 3

Over 50 pc farmers oppose farm laws, but one-third of them have no info: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

Amid a political furore over the three new farm laws, a survey has found that more than half of the country's peasantry oppose these, but one-third of them did not know details of the legislations. Similarly, of the 35 per cent respondents supporting the agri laws, almost 18 per cent were not informed about them.

The survey found that out of the 52 per cent who oppo-

sed them 36 per cent did not know the details of the legislations. The new farm laws promise, among other things, freedom to farmers to sell their produce in the open market.

This face-to-face survey of 5,022 farmers was conducted between October 3 and 9 across 53 districts in 16 states of the country, according to Gaon Connection, the organisation that did the survey.

As per the



I am pleased to announce that we now have 4,000 MBBS seats for Bengal's vibrant medical students with the initiation of the first MBBS batch in Purulia Govt MCH consisting of 100 seats & the addition of 150 MBBS seats in Gouri Devi Medical College

MAMATA BANERJEE
WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Talent not linked to money: CM on Delhi govt school students' performance in NEET & JEE

PTI
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said many students of Delhi government schools from a humble economic background have qualified in the NEET and JEE, and asserted that talent is not tied to money.

He said money will not be a problem for the successful students in getting higher education as the Delhi government has arranged for scholarships and loans of up to Rs 10 lakh for them.

A total of 569 students of Delhi government schools have qualified in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to medical colleges, while 443 have cleared the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), with 53 of them being eligible for a direct admission to IITs, the chief minister said.

Of the 569 students who have qualified in the NEET, 379 (67 per cent) are girls, he added.

There are 37 students who have secured ranks in the top 10,000 (category ranks) in the NEET. Twenty-nine students from a Delhi government school in Moladband, 24 from a Yamuna Vihar school and 23 from a Noor Nagar school have qualified in the NEET, he said.

Forty-eight students of Delhi government schools have scored over 520 marks out of 720 in the NEET, with Tamanna Goel bagging the 11th rank.

Goel's father is jobless while her mother works as a domestic help in neighbourhood houses, Kejriwal said. The father of Khush Garg, who has scored 680 marks, is a small shopkeeper, he added.

Vidhi Gupta from SKV, GT Road, Shahdara, whose father works in a small private firm, has scored 691 marks with an all-India rank of 212.

In the JEE, five students of RPVV, Paschim Vihar have qualified for the IITs. Ayush Bansal, whose father works at a bookshop, has bagged the 189th rank in the JEE, the chief minister said.

Nikhil, who got the 678th rank, has been offered aerospace engineering in IIT-Bombay and his father repairs cycles. Garvit Batra bagged the 1,228th rank and his father is an airconditioner mechanic, Kejriwal said.

The chief minister said it is his firm belief that good education can eradicate poverty from the country in one generation.

The success stories of these students, coming from such a humble background, will inspire many more children to do well, he said.

"I am apprising you about

these students and their background because talent is not determined by money. If given an equal opportunity and the right to quality education, children from lower-middle class families have the ability to achieve greater heights," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said.

He said the performance is a testament to how Delhi government schools are undergoing a revolutionary change and students from poor families studying in these schools are paving the way to success for themselves.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also holds the education portfolio, said students of the Delhi government schools have made the city proud with their performance in the advanced JEE and NEET.

Many of these students will be the first doctor or engineer in their families, he said.

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT (Order 5, Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure)

In the Court of Ms. Vandana Jain Addl. District Judge-07 South-East, Saket Court, New Delhi PC No. 33/2019 Ajay Chaudhary Versus State & Ors.

To : Sh. Bishwajeet Singh, s/o Late Mahadev Rajinder Singh, v/s 54 East Friends Colony, New Delhi-110065.

Also at : r/o 36, Silver Oaks Avenue, DLF City, Phase-I, Sikandarpur Ghosi (68) Gurugram, Haryana-122002.

2. Sh. Bhavani Pratap C. Singh.

3. Sh. Sumit Singh.

Both Legal Heirs of Late Smt. Vijaya Kumari through their Power of Attorney Hold Smt. Anita Singh, w/o Sh. Bishwajeet Singh, r/o 36, Silver Oaks Avenue, DLF City, Phase-I, Sikandarpur Ghosi (68) Gurugram, Haryana-122002.

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons, it is hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on or before 05-11-2020, the day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex-parte.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court on this 16-10-2020.

Addl. District Judge-07 South-East, Saket Court, New Delhi Seal of the Court

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT (Order 5 Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure)

In the Court of Sh. Girish Kathpalia Principal District & Sessions Judge (Q.S)

Court No. 201, 3rd Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi Case Reg. No. : TPC/53/2019 To :

M/s. Meghraj Barbilas Cinema Enterprises – Plaintiff

versus M/s. Aartee Traders – Defendant

To : 1. M/s. Aartee Traders, a Partnership Firm Dis-tributors

2. Sh. Sobhraj Jaisinghani Partner M/s. Aartee Traders, both r/o 1498, Ram Gali, Bhaijanpura Place, Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

3. Sh. Nand Lal Jaisinghani 5. Sh. Prakash Kumar Jaisinghani

6. Sh. Pawan Kumar Jaisinghani

R/o Partner Robin Talkies, Malka Gani, Subz Mandi, Delhi-110007.

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons, it is hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on the 21-12-2020 the day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex-parte.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court on this 17-10-2020.

Principal District & Sessions Judge (H.Q.S) Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi Seal of the Court

IN THE COURT OF SHEFALI BARNALA TANDAN Administrative Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central)

Room No. 323, Third Floor Tis Hazari Court, Delhi Petition No. SC/77/2020 N.D.O.H. : 21-11-2020 Prem Chand Jaluthria Versus

The State

1. Prem Chand Jaluthria, s/o Sh. Nanak Chand Jaluthria

2. Aditya Jaluthria, s/o Sh. Prem Chand Jaluthria

3. Ms. Priyanshi Jaluthria, d/o Sh. Prem Chand Jaluthria

All r/o Flat No. P-15, Block P, New MIG Flats, Prasad Nagar, Phase-2, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005.

– Petitioners FOR SUCCESSFUL CERTIFICATION UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925

To : All Concerned.

Whereas in the abovenoted petition the applicant/petitioner has applied for Succession Certificate before the Hon'ble Court Under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 in respect of the debt and securities amount of

Rs. 3,00,000/-

– Plaintiff

versus M/s. Aartee Traders

– Defendant

To : 1. M/s. Aartee Traders, a Partnership Firm Dis-tributors

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NARENDRA MODI
PRIME MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2020

03

Ready to be dismissed, but won't let farmers suffer: Capt CM warns of disruption of the state's peace and of threat to national security due to the Centre's farm laws; Punjab becomes the first state in the country to formally reject them

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 20 OCTOBER

Asserting that he is prepared to "resign or be dismissed rather than bow to injustice towards Punjab's farmers", Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Tuesday warned of possible disruption of the state's peace and of threat to national security as a result of the Centre's "anti-farmers" agriculture laws, pointing out that nobody could "tolerate religious hurt and attack on livelihood".

"I am not afraid of resigning. I am not afraid of my government being dismissed. But I will not let the farmers suffer or be ruined," said the CM, pointing out that he had chosen to quit at the time of the Operation Blue Star instead of accepting or endorsing the assault on the Sikh ethos.

Cautioning the Centre against allowing the situation to get out of hand, Capt Amarinder said if its controversial farm laws are not revoked, angry youths could come out on the streets to join the farmers, leading to chaos.

The way things are currently going on at present, the situation has the potential to disturb the peaceful atmosphere in Punjab, the CM warned, observing that this is what had happened in the 1980s and 90s. Both China and Pakistan will collude and try to take advantage of any disruption of the state's peace, which would pose a serious threat to national security, he cautioned.

Capt Amarinder said he was uneasy and upset over the situation and wanted to understand the Centre's decision to inflict such sufferings on the



Punjab CM Capt Amarinder Singh addressing reporters outside Punjab Raj Bhavan in Chandigarh after meeting Governor VPS Badnore on Tuesday.

farmers amid the Covid pandemic crisis. He said this in the Assembly while presenting his government's Bills to negotiate the Union government's farm laws, on the second day of the special session of the House.

"In the name of farming laws, we have actually enacted trade laws. It is not farmers who will have access to a national market, but traders. Hence, the use of term 'trade area' in the so-called farmers' legislations is also very telling," said the CM while presenting

his government's four Bills for consideration of the House. The Assembly unanimously passed the resolution and the Bills. Punjab thus became the first state in the country to formally reject the Centre's farm laws.

Later, in a show of strength, Captain Amarinder, flanked by the leaders of the Punjab Congress, Aam Aadmi Party and Shiromani Akali Dal, expressed hope that the Governor will listen to the voice of Punjab, but said his government was all set to take legal recourse

if Governor VPS Badnore does not sign the amendment Bills passed in the Assembly to negotiate the Centre's agri laws and "save the farmers and agriculture".

Asked about the possibility of the Centre imposing the President's Rule in Punjab to scuttle the attempts to negotiate the farm laws, the CM said, "Let's wait and see... we will move step by step."

However, if the situation came to such a pass, the Centre would not need to dismiss him as he was carrying his res-

ignation in his pocket and would give it willingly, rather than compromising on the interests of Punjab and its farmers, Capt Amarinder told reporters.

He said his government will be bringing more pro-farm and pro-poor Bills in the House tomorrow. He was addressing reporters outside the Punjab Raj Bhavan here after meeting the Governor and handing over to him copies of the resolution and the state Bills which the Assembly had earlier passed unanimously.

Shayara Bano appointed Uttarakhand Women Commission vice chairperson

SIT set up to probe paper leak in HPRTC exam

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 20 OCTOBER

The Himachal Pradesh Police on Tuesday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the paper leak in the HP Road Transport Corporation (HPRTC) examination for recruitment of conductors.

Director General of Police Sanjan Kundu said a Special Investigation Team had been constituted to investigate the matter and it will be headed by Bimal Gupta DIG (Crime).

The SIT will also include Superintendent of Police Kangra Vimukt Ranjan, SP Shimla Mohit Chawla, SP Cyber Crime Sandeep Dhawal, Additional SP Sandeep Bhardwaj, Additional SP Solan Ashok Kumar, Deputy SP Hamirpur Renu Kumari and Deputy SP Mandi Karan Singh Guleria as mem-

bers.

"The SIT members have been selected from different districts as the investigation has statewide ramifications."

It will ascertain the involvement of any organized gang or group behind the whole episode and the SIT shall also probe any irregularities/lapses in conduct of examination," Kundu added.

So far, three persons Lucky Sharma, Sunny Sharma of Shimla district and Manoj Kumar of Kangra district had been arrested in paper leak case.

The paper leak in conductors' recruitment had come to light after an examiner at an examination centre in Shimla had caught one accused while sending photos of question paper through his mobile phone.

But the accused had managed to flee from the spot and was arrested by the police later.

His interrogation had revealed that such leak had also taken place at another examination centre in Kangra district after which the accused involved in the case was arrested.

The case had taken political angle as state Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore had raised questions on the preparedness of the state government on conducting the examination and had termed it as a cruel joke with the unemployed youth of the state.

It is worthwhile to mention here that HP Staff Selection Commission had conducted examination on 18 October in 304 centres across the state to fill 568 posts of conductors in HPRTC.

Shayara Bano appointed Uttarakhand Women Commission vice chairperson

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 20 OCTOBER

The campaigner against triple talaq, Shayara Bano was today appointed as vice chairperson of the Uttarakhand Women Commission.

The BJP-ruled Uttarakhand government today released the list of three vice chairpersons inducted into the state women commission. Besides Shayara Bano, Jyoti Shah from Ranikhet and Puspa Paswan from Chamoli were appointed to the vice chairperson's post in the women panel.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said, "Filling the post of vice chairpersons in the state women commission will help in solving problems related to women in the hill state."

Earlier this month, Shayara Bano from Kashipur had



Shayara Bano joining the BJP in Dehradun on 10 October.

joined the BJP. She had joined the saffron party at a function held in Dehradun on 10 October in the presence of Uttarakhand BJP president Bansidhar Bhagat.

In Himachal administrative reshuffle, 7 DCs shifted

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 20 OCTOBER

In a major administrative reshuffle on Monday evening, the Himachal Pradesh government shifted seven Deputy Commissioners and 15 other IAS officers.

The government has shifted the Deputy Commissioner, Shimla as well as Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Shimla.

As per government notification, Member Secretary, Pollution Control Board, Aditya Negi has been appointed new DC, Shimla.

He replaced Amit Kashyap,

who has been posted as Labour Commissioner and Director of Employment with additional charge of Managing Director of General Industries Corporation. Special Secretary Health to the Government of Himachal Pradesh, Nipun Jindal has been posted as Member Secretary Pollution Control Board in place of Aditya Negi.

Shimla MC Commissioner, who was also holding the charge of Chief Executive Officer-cum Managing Director, Smart City Limited, Shimla, Pankaj Rai has been appointed the Deputy Commissioner, Shimla.

The high court also expressed displeasure over delay in informing persons about their result of COVID-19 test, which should be conveyed in 24 hours.

A bench of justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad noted that one of the court staff got his test report after four days and said such things should not happen.

The high court was informed by Delhi government counsel Satyakam that the fourth sero surveillance will conclude on October 22 and the report would come out after a fortnight.

The counsel said one of their senior professors who will analyse the sero survey reports is suffering from COVID-19.

The bench directed that the sero survey report be not leaked to the media before the next date of hearing on November 11.

It also sought the stand of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on a new test called Feluda, which is being marketed by TATA sons and is pending approval from ICMR.

Chain Reaction, is a laboratory technique widely used in the diagnosis of genetic diseases and to measure gene expression in research.

The high court was hearing a PIL by advocate Rakesh Malhotra seeking increasing the COVID-19 testing numbers in the national capital and getting speedy results.

The high court had earlier observed that the AAP government was "frittering away" a part of its RT-PCR testing whose numbers were "abysmally low" when compared to the rapid testing figures and had said it made no sense when the daily number of coronavirus positive cases were averaging around 3,500-4,000.

RT/PCR, short for Reverse Transcription Polymerase

HC directs Delhi govt to ensure serosurvey report is not leaked

PTI
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

The Delhi High Court Tuesday directed the AAP government to ensure that the report of the fourth sero surveillance, which is likely to conclude soon, shall not be leaked to the media till the matter is heard by it.

The high court also expressed displeasure over delay in informing persons about their result of COVID-19 test, which should be conveyed in 24 hours.

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Himachal CM recovers from Covid



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 20 OCTOBER

ensured his speedy recovery," he added.

The Chief Minister said that on the advice of the doctors he would remain in home quarantine for next few days and work from his residence.

Thakur also urged the people to strictly follow the guidelines laid down by the Union Ministries of Home and Health and Family Welfare to check the spread of this virus.

He attended a three-day workshop organised by Horticulture Development Officer Dr Kushal Mehta

and the number of persons infected by Coronavirus had increased to 19,162 in the state with 27 more testing positive for the viral disease in the state.

However, there were only 2,488 active cases in the state as 16,372 persons had been cured of COVID-19 and 267 had died to the infectious disease in the state till date.

The blessings and benevolence of the people of the state have boosted his morale and

the case in point is of the Sudarshana Women Self Help Group (SHG) in Gram Panchayat Samoli in remote Rohru sub division of Shimla district.

The 25 village women in the group are making jams and chutneys from the "C grade apples" available locally, selling them across the country and are earning good profits. Rohru forms part of the apple belt in Shimla district.

"We had attended a three-day workshop organised by Horticulture Development Officer Dr Kushal Mehta sometime back, wherein we were trained in making quality products from apples. We were taught the minute details about the fruit and various stages of fruit processing. With those tips, we started making apple jam and chutney for sale. This has added to our household income and women are

happy about it," said Sudarshana, who heads the SHG in Samoli. She said the apple jams and chutneys made by the rural women are available in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Delhi. The products from Samoli Panchayats would soon be available in many other cities in the country.

"The apple chutneys are

being sold from Rs 400-800 per kilogram," she said. Elated by the response, the women are also keen to expand the sale of pickle, chips and sauce made from apples now. The provision of interest free loans by NABARD is also helping the women improve their household economy through small ventures.

Horticulture Development

Officer, Rohru, Kushal Mehta said looking into the success of the Sudarshana SHG, the department plans to organise more such workshops for rural women in other gram Panchayats in Rohru subdivision. "This will build the capacity of women in different areas and they can benefit economically from this, like the women in Samoli," he said.

He said the Nodal Officer Dr Dev Raj Kayath and then Deputy Commissioner, Shimla, Amit Kashyap also had a role in this empowerment of women. "They stressed on the trainings to make the rural women self-reliant during Covid-19 crisis so that the rural economy is strengthened," he said.

Samoli women SHG on its journey to economic empowerment

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 20 OCTOBER



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A farmer shows a variety of European cucumbers growing at a polyhouse farm on the outskirts of Bangalore on Tuesday. ■APP

Two held for bomb threat to NDPS judge: Two people have been taken into custody in connection with the bomb threat to a special judge hearing the drug case involving celebrities in Karnataka, police sources said on Tuesday. A family feud in Tiptur of Tumakuru district is suspected to be the reason behind the incident. "Two persons have been detained for questioning. They will be brought to Bengaluru," a top police officer told. ■SNS

New cyber crime police station: With an increasing number of cyber - crime cases, the Asansol Durgapur Police Commissionerate (ADPC) has planned to set up a cyber crime police station in Durgapur. So far, there is only one cyber crime unit within ADPC jurisdiction located in Asansol.

TENDER

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, SHIBPUR
Howrah - 711 103
(An Institute of National Importance under MHRD, Govt. of India)

E-PROCUREMENT
Date: 15.10.2020
Advt.No. CE 1618

Quotations are invited for Laser Scanning Vibrometer (1 No) for DST-FIST Sponsored Project at the Department of Civil Engineering. Please visit the website <http://www.iiests.ac.in> and <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Last Date: 17.11.2020 at 6:00 pm. (A. Code DRC-T006/20-21). Dean (R&C)

ODISHA GRAMYA BANK
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
HEAD OFFICE, GANDAMUNDA, PO: KHANDAGIRI, BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Gramya Bank invites applications from reputed vendors for supply and installation of desktops and ancillary peripherals under rate contract at its Head Office, Regional Offices, Branches and other Offices. For details please visit Bank's website: www.odishabank.in Advt No: RFP/ITD/HARDWARE/02/2020-21 dated 21.10.2020. Last Date of Submission of application: 17 Nov. 2020, 15:00 hrs. Address for submission of application: The General Manager, IT Department, Odisha Gramya Bank, Head Office, Gandamunda, PO: Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-751030 (Odisha). General Manager

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), BHUBANESWAR
(A Statutory Body under aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
Engineering Branch (Civil), Siju (Patrapada), Bhubaneswar(Odisha)-751019
www.aiimsbhubaneswar.nic.in

File No.: AIIMS/BBSSR/Engg /S75/NIT-017 /2020-21 Dated : 20 Oct 2020

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar invites e-Tender for the Work(s) for Annual Maintenance of Civil Works of all the buildings of housing complex for the year of 2020-21 at AIIMS, Bhubaneswar (NIT No.: AIIMS/BBSSR/Engg./017/2020-21). The detailed Tender Document along with Last Date & Time of Submission of Tender can be viewed & downloaded from the website www.tenderwizard.com/ AIIMSSBSR & CPP Portal www.eprocure.gov.in. Sd/-
Executive Engineer(Civil) I/C
AIIMS, Bhubaneswar

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	S.N.	28-2020-21-W-V
1. Name of work with its location	1	Pw zone misc p.way works in the section of SSE/P/Way/TKD under ADEN/TKD. Similar nature of work: CTR/TRR/TFR/TR including raising of track, deep screening, distressing of track, pre & post works for track maintenance machine, TRT/PORS/ballast, screening /regulating machines & TTR by T-28.
2. Approx. Cost of work	1	Rs. 89,96,336.43
3. Earent Money	1	(It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway Only. Note: FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no. 201025/CE-ICT/S1 dated: 31.08.2016)
	1	Rs. 1,80,000
4. Completion period of work	1	12 months
5. Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	1	Upto 15.00 hrs. on 13.11.2020 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. on 13.11.2020
6. Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.	1	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No.: 128-W/280/OET/2020-21-W-V/NIT-28 Dt. 19.10.2020 2293/2020
Serving Customers with a Smile

MP BJP minister calls Cong candidate's wife 'mistress'

Bisahulal Singh, a former Congress rebel, is the BJP candidate for the bypoll in Anuppur constituency

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Bhopal, 20 OCTOBER



Senior Madhya Pradesh Cabinet minister Bisahulal Singh also joined the list of politicians who have recently used derogatory and lewd language against women, as he labelled his rival Congress candidate's wife a 'Rakhail' (mistress).

Singh, who was earlier a Congress MLA and minister, had rebelled against then CM Kamal Nath and later joined the BJP. The BJP made him a cabinet minister in the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government.

However, Bisahulal Singh had resigned from his MLA status and so he has now been made the BJP candidate from his Anuppur constituency for the upcoming assembly-by-polls on 3 November for 28 seats in the state. Singh's rival Congress candidate from Anuppur is Vishwanath Singh Kunjam, who has married a second time after his first wife's demise.

Kunjam mentioned this detail in the affidavit he submitted while filing his nomination papers.

Bisahulal Singh commented on that point and told some media persons on Monday evening that Kunjam's second wife was a 'rakhail'.

Singh also raised doubts on Kunjam's marital status with his

second wife. Strongly objecting to Singh's comments, the Congress launched an aggressive attack on him and the BJP.

Congress spokesperson Narendra Saluja today castigated the minister and also questioned where CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan was sitting on a dharna against Bisahulal Singh. Chouhan and other BJP leaders had sat on silent protests (maun dharna) across the state on Monday to protest MP Congress chief Kamal Nath's 'item' comment for Cabinet minister Imarti Devi.

Saluja said the words used by the BJP minister and candidate for a woman have brought out the true character of the BJP leaders. Vishwanath Singh Kunjam also averred that he would lodge a defamation case against Bisahulal Singh. Kunjam said he has duly and legally married his second wife and also has two children from her.

"I did not say anything disrespectful. I respect women. If anyone thinks this is disrespectful, then I regret it," he told reporters on Monday night.

Kamal Nath regrets over 'item' remark, refuses to apologise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Bhopal, 20 OCTOBER

Facing flak for his "item" jibe about Madhya Pradesh minister Imarti Devi, state Congress chief Kamal Nath has expressed regret and claimed that he did not say anything disrespectful.

While Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that he did not appreciate the kind of language Nath used, Nath maintained that he would not apologise.

Nath claimed the word "item" is used in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies, but the BJP tried to "mislead" by making it an issue to divert people's attention as it is sensing defeat in the 3 November bypolls in Madhya Pradesh.

"I did not say anything disrespectful. I respect women. If anyone thinks this is disrespectful, then I regret it," he told reporters on Monday night.

Addressing a poll meeting on Sunday in Gwalior's Dabba town, where the BJP has fielded Imarti Devi, state Congress chief Kamal Nath said a "simple person" unlike his opponent who was an "item".

Nath said, "The BJP is trying to divert the attention from real issues after it realised that it is badly losing. I will not let them succeed." State BJP leaders, led by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, on Monday held a protest against Kamal Nath, while the National Commission for Women sought an explanation from the Congress leader for his remark.

In a letter to Chouhan on Monday night said, "I didn't make any disgraceful remarks but you served lies...the word I said has a lot of meanings. Your party is serving lies and misleading by interpreting the word arbitrarily."

Nath was asked by reporters about Rahul Gandhi expressing disapproval about his controversial comment.

"It is Rahulji's opinion. Whatever wastold to himand in what context I had said that...I have already cleared in what context I said so and there is no need to say anything further," Nath said. "Why should I apologise? I have already said it was not my aim (to disrespect her). If still someone feels that he or she is disrespected, then I have already regretted it yesterday," he said when asked if he would apologise to Imarti Devi.

Speaking in Wayanad, Rahul Gandhi said Nath's comment about Imarti Devi was "unfortunate". "One cannot treat women with disrespect...I don't like personally the type of language that Kamal Nath ji has used. I do not appreciate it. It is unfortunate," Gandhi said.

Sign of desperation? NDA's Bihar campaign focuses solely on Lalu

MANOJ CHAURASIA
PATNA, 20 OCTOBER

For the past 15 years, "development" has been the main theme of the NDA poll campaign. This time, however, the entire NDA—from Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar to all BJP leaders—has focused their campaign on only one issue—"target Lalu Prasad and his family".

The NDA people have been constantly trying hard to project the jailed Lalu as "Gabbbar Singh" in its last ditch attempt to polarise the upper caste votes as the anti-incumbency factor works hard against Nitish and BJP's go-solo move makes the journey further difficult for the CM.

At every election rally, the maximum energy the chief minister and his company devote to is to create fear among the minds of the voters about how the jungle raj will return, the kidnapping industry will flourish and their lives will turn into a hell if they voted for the RJD.

"Pati-Patri ke rajya me tha apharan udyog" (kidnapping industry flourished during husband-wife rule in oblique reference to Lalu Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi), "Pahele log sham hone ke pahele ghara laut jate the" (earlier people would return to homes before dusk), "Naukari ke naam par bhrashtachar ka khel hoga" (Corrupt practices will flourish in the name of jobs in response to Tejashwi Yadav's promise to give 10 lakh jobs to youths once coming to power), "Unke pas na koi vision hain na anubhav" (He, ie, Tejashwi, has neither vision nor experience), and "Aisa kaam kiya tabhi to aaj andar hain, inke aur bhi log andar jayenge (He has been jailed for his wrong-doing and many of his family will follow suit in oblique response to Lalu)"—These are some of the statements the chief minister repeats at his every rally these days.

What is peculiar, the chief

minister has not only launched blistering attacks on Lalu and his wife Rabri Devi but also on his son Tejashwi Yadav who has been projected as opposition Grand Alliance's chief ministerial candidate this time.

The development indeed looks strange given the past record. In the 2005 assembly polls when Nitish was first projected as NDA's CM candidate, he had focussed his campaign on "development". In the 2010 Assembly polls, his campaign remained focussed on "Bihari pride" while in last 2015 polls when he was contesting the elections in alliance with Lalu's RJD, his themes of campaign were again "development" and "Bihari pride" after Prime Minister Narendra Modi questioned his DNA an election rally.

Nitish won all these elections with a comfortable majority but this time both his words and actions tell an entirely different story.

"The choice of words by the CM towards his rivals gives an impression that Nitish Kumar is under tremendous pressure," commented a political expert.

Not only Nitish, even his BJP colleagues have been solely targeting Lalu's family during the poll campaign despite the fact that its hands are full with a number of issues, such as abrogation of Article 370, foundation-laying for Ram temple at Ayodhya, bringing new Citizenship Act and enactment of law to criminalise Triple Talaq.

If that is not enough, the BJP has brought "Jinnah, Kashmir terrorism and Pakistan zindabad" into the poll campaign giving a communal touch to the election to polarise voters along communal lines.

"We never came across such things in the past which reflects desperation in the NDA camp. Perhaps, they still think "targeting Lalu" could again fetch them votes but the idea is not going to help anymore," commented political expert DM Diwakar.

Kalaikunda airbase to play vital role in eastern theatre airspace



SOUMYADIP MULLICK
KOLKATA, 20 OCTOBER

What was set up during World War II and designed to serve as an airbase for the B-24 Liberator American heavyweight bombers, the Kalaikunda airbase in West Bengal will play a key role in thwarting possible attacks by China in the Eastern Theatre airspace of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Located few kilometres from Kolkata, the airbase served as a major airfield in the supply route for the nation-alist Army of China in its fight against the Japanese forces.

Aircraft of both the US Air Force and Royal Air Force flew regularly to China via Chabua, Jorhat and Vijaynagar across the Hump route over Arunachal Pradesh and East Tibet. In the wake of the Indo-China conflict, the Eastern Theatre is increasing its operational preparedness.

"Kalaikunda will play a key role in air operations during a conflict in the Eastern Theatre. It has excellent infrastructure to house several operational units, especially fighter aircraft. It is located far from the border and hence enjoys 'defence-in-depth'. It is currently used for training with friendly air forces from across the world, besides fighter flying training for newly induced combat pilots, as well as armament training for fighter fleets", the former

HC's order leaves youngsters crestfallen

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 20 OCTOBER



Road. "The festival had brought new rays of hope, making us realise that we are still alive and the earlier life with friends and family could be re-lived at least for some time. I had plans of pandal hopping with my sister and her children from today onwards. They have travelled from Delhi to celebrate the puja with us after a long time. But the new order has splashed cold water on our hopes and the celebrations will now be restricted to only dining outside," he added.

Debashmita Gupta, B. Tech student from North Kolkata, refused to stay at home during the festival irrespective of the situation. For her, the festival is an opportunity after three years to spend quality time with her best friend who has recently returned from London. "Our friends' group including my best friend has plans of pandal hopping. I was so excited and hoping to spend time with them after a long time," said the B. Tech student. "The direction has marred our festive spirit. However, no matter what, we will surely go for pandal hopping, even if we get to see the glimpses from a distance," she added.

"Anti-national" Congress is lauding Pakistan when polls on in Bihar:



BJP PRESIDENT J P NADDAA

ACCUSING RAHUL GANDHI OF SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF PAKISTAN AND SEPARATISTS

Necessary, welcome

The order of a division bench of the Calcutta High Court (coram: Sanjib Banerjee, J and Arindrajit Banerjee, J) declaring puja pandals that dot the state as containment zones and placing stringent restrictions on the annual festivity in the state will act as a dampener on revellers. But it is both necessary and welcome. The order has carefully dissected the policing resources available to the state before concluding that these are inadequate for the purpose of crowd-control. Accordingly, it has decreed that no one, except designated organisers and priests, will be allowed closer than 10 metres from the boundary of the pandal in the case of large pujas and five metres in the case of smaller ones.

In thinly-veiled criticism of the State and society, the court has noted: "When students across disciplines, whether in schools or colleges or engaged in higher studies, have been prevented from attending educational institutions for more than six months and several students stand to lose a year, it is rather incongruous that puja festivities would continue as in the previous years. Life has not been normal for the human species since or about March 2020 and it may have been better if restrictions were put in place as to how the Durga Puja festivities would be celebrated this year." Noting that puja pandals have already come up and "there does not appear to have been any curb" on their number, the Court has damned the state with faint praise holding that its measures while "well-intentioned" would remain a "pious wish" without any blueprint for implementation.

In the same vein, the Court says: "This order must not be seen to be a finding against the State for the inadequacy of the measures attempted to be put in place, but only as a supplement to ensure the proper implementation of such measures by the limited police personnel, volunteers and other administrative officials and workers." Holding that neither Kolkata Police nor West Bengal Police have the resources to manage the 34,000 pujas in the state, the court has expressed alarm at the manner in which crowds have thronged market places in the days leading up to the festival and said this cannot be allowed for the four or five days of the Puja. It has asked the state government to ensure public awareness campaigns are carried out across the state to sensitise people to the threats posed by the virus epidemic and asked that arrangements for virtual darshan be put in place.

The stakes are high and estimates of previous years have pegged spending at several thousand crore rupees with a substantial portion of this spent on Pujas organised by politicians, especially of the ruling party. Not surprisingly, therefore, the organisers have sought a review of the High Court order. The State of West Bengal, too, had sought a stay on the order, a plea that the Court rejected with the words, "It is a matter of concern that the State finds the directions onerous."

Punishing hate

The decision of some large advertisers in the country to eschew advertising on media outlets that spew hate and toxicity ought generally to be welcomed. They are entirely within their rights to hold that the moneys they spend should not underwrite such content. This decision should serve as a wake-up call to outlets that have made it their business to garner viewers based on one-sided reportage that is often more an outpouring of the channel's bias than a reflection of facts on the ground.

Clearly the step taken by advertisers is an extreme one, but it must fairly be admitted it has not come without provocation. As television channels especially and their self-regulatory mechanisms failed to put the brakes on toxic coverage, and as it emerged that the claims of reach made by channels were distorted if not manipulated, corporates appear to have rediscovered the merits of their products being advertised on outlets that at least strive for objectivity, even if they don't always achieve it.

More important, it means that some advertisers are prepared to take the space-buying decision out of the hands of anonymous media planners who look only at numbers. Bajaj Auto, Parle and Amul have already decided to base their media choices on the quality of content and it is to be hoped that others will follow in their footsteps. The outspoken Mr Rajiv Bajaj was the first to draw the line, telling a television channel earlier this month that Bajaj Auto would not advertise on three channels for the toxicity and hate they spewed.

This position is entirely consistent with the no-holds-barred approach that has won him many admirers in the country. Amul, too, has said it does not want its products associated with "unsubstantiated news that spreads hate." These can be effective measures and it is to be hoped that they will over time lead to both soul-searching and cleansing. After all, advertisers did compel Facebook to prohibit content that denied or distorted the Holocaust, and around the world, the pushback against toxicity in social media is beginning to have effects.

It is unfortunate though that it took advertisers ~ and not viewers ~ to call out toxic content. It is the viewer ~ or the reader in case of the printed word ~ who must take the lead in punishing such content. This can be done by complaining to the media outlet and to the regulator if that fails. If these measures do not work, it is best to stop subscription, even if the channel is aired free, as some of the most toxic channels are. There is no place for hate in societies such as ours, which with their in-built fault lines are always prone to exploitation by the unscrupulous.

The US Elections

Ultimately, given the bitter Sino-US rivalry, India is assured of US support regardless of who becomes President but past experience shows that in an actual conflict, US support to India would be limited to encouraging words and at the most, materials; the bottom line being that we have to look after our own defences



The present US elections come at a time when we are being mercilessly ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic, our economy is on the downswing and China is behaving aggressively at the border. Other portends are equally discouraging: our neighbours including our all-weather friend Russia are firmly in the Chinese embrace, even Nepal is thumbing its nose at us. The non-aligned movement, so carefully nurtured by us, is moribund. Regional alliances promoted by us, like SAARC, are riven by differences. US support is vital for us in our confrontation with China; the moot question is: "To what extent would the next President of the US support us against China?" The Chinese imbroglio has pushed contentious bilateral issues like the increasing difficulty in getting H1-B visas to the background. Biden has promised a softening of the visa regime but he and his part-Indian running mate Kamala Harris are not sure of Indian votes only because of the portrayal of Biden and Harris as closet Chinese sympathisers, by Trump supporters.

Ignoring election-inspired controversies, Indo-US relations have had a complicated history. The flag of the East India Company inspired the design of the US Flag. Somewhat contrarily, at the time of our freedom struggle, Indian intellectuals and revolutionaries found refuge in the USA. President Franklin D Roosevelt was a whole-hearted votary of Indian freedom; during World War II, Roosevelt proposed that Britain should grant independence to India. Roosevelt stepped back only when Churchill threatened to resign.

In the early years of our Independence, the US supported India with food and money, but we resisted an unequal relationship with the US, preferring to remain non-aligned. Indo-US relations touched rock bottom when Indira Gandhi faced the hostile duo of Nixon and Kissinger and worsened (if that was possible) in the aftermath of the Indo-Pak war of 1971. After the liberalisation of 1991, our ties with the US, have improved steadily, except for a short period after our nuclear test in 1998.

People to people contact with the USA has increased exponentially in recent years; the Indian diaspora in the US that numbered less than 400,000 in 1980

and less than 1.7 million in 2010, is now touching 5 million. Qualitatively also, Indians have done well in the US; Indians have the highest median income amongst all ethnic groups and leading US technology companies like Microsoft, Google and Adobe have Indian-origin CEOs. The vibes between our national leaders are quite strong, PM Modi prides himself on his personal equation with President Trump and vice-versa; both Trump and Modi have organised mega-events for each other. Indeed, some opposition to the candidature of Biden-Harris duo in the Indian diaspora may be due to PM Modi's popularity; many American-Indians endorse Trump for presidency only because of his perceived closeness to PM Modi.

Looking objectively at both Presidential contenders, we must disabuse ourselves of the notion that the US President would support crucial Indian interests under all circumstances.

Howsoever

favourably inclined a US President may seem, all invariably put US interests first. Looking back to 1962, President John F Kennedy openly supported India but actual US support to India was limited to supplies; the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk was sent to the Bay of Bengal only when the Chinese seemed to be getting a decisive upper hand. The Kitty Hawk was recalled as soon as China withdrew. The converse is also true. The Nixon administration sent the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise to support Pakistan in the 1971 war, but as soon as India announced a ceasefire the USS Enterprise steamed back to base.

President Trump, from whom we now expect so much, has been notoriously fickle in his dealings with us. In addition to making the US visa regime incredibly tough, Trump has started a tariff war with India since 2018, calling India 'tariff king.' Trump also terminated India's eligibility for the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), a U.S. trade and development programme offering tariff-free trade, for failure to provide equitable and reasonable market access. Our experience with other

US Presidents has been similar; all were affable and co-operative till US interests were even remotely threatened.

There is another subtext to our relationship with the US. In line with our rising economic and military prowess, our relations with many countries, including the US, have improved dramatically in the last few years. The contraction in our economy, protectionism and our poor score in social indices, may result in many fair-weather friends deserting us. We also must endeavour to improve relations with our neighbours; these have steadily declined due to domestic political issues. The unpalatable truth is that, if the present trend continues, we may see our influence and importance decline, not only with the US but worldwide.

Though,

Trump often trumpets his closeness to PM Modi and his love for the Indian people, he had only negative words to say about India in his first Presidential debate with Biden, in which he accused India of fudging coronavirus figures and contributing to climate change.

Again, disturbingly for the Indian Government, the challenger Biden has released an "Agenda for Muslim-American Communities" as part of his campaign material, denouncing the Indian government's unilateral stripping of the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act. Kamala Harris ~ Biden's vice-presidential nominee ~ despite her part-Indian origin, has often condemned what she calls 'the Indian government's crackdown on civil rights.'

The silver lining is that Biden is not opposed to India, whatever be his differences with the agenda of the present Indian government. In an interview in December 2006, as a Ranking Member in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) Biden had said, "My dream is that in 2020, the two closest nations in the world will be India and the United States." Biden had also co-piloted the crucial resolution that paved the way for the negotiations on the pathbreaking India-US civil nuclear cooperation

agreement. Thereafter, Biden had steadfastly supported the proposed nuclear deal in the US Senate, in the teeth of opposition by fellow Democrats, particularly then Senators Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

In the aftermath of the nuclear test of 1998, as Chairman of SFRC, Joe Biden had written to President George Bush advising him to remove economic sanctions against India. Recently, speaking at an event commemorating the Indian Independence Day, Biden said that he would "stand with India" and his administration would "confront the threats (India) faces in its own region and along its border." In a veiled reference to Pakistan, Biden further said that he would not tolerate cross-border terrorism against India.

Trump's outspokenly beligerent stance towards China and his oft-repeated assertion that Biden is soft on China is more of election-speak. Biden has often said that he is opposed to technology theft by China, its South China Sea claims, and its territorial aggression particularly along the India-China border.

Ultimately, given the bitter Sino-US rivalry, India is assured of US support regardless of who becomes President but past experience shows that in an actual conflict, US support to India would be limited to encouraging words and at the most, materials; the bottom line being that we have to look after our own defences. Since Trump's thinking is more compatible with the philosophy of the present Indian government, with him at the helm, Indo-US relations will continue in the present mode; lots of good words for each other but India getting shortchanged on crucial trade issues.

On the other hand, Biden is overly mindful of civil liberties and is more liberal and leftward in his thinking, therefore, after factoring in the US predilection of acting as the global policeman and conscience-keeper, our day-to-day dealings with a Biden administration may not be very smooth. Finally, we have to remember what Nobel Laureate Gabriel García Márquez said about the US Presidential Elections: "The people of the United States are one of the people I most admire in the world. The only thing I don't understand is why a country that manages to do so well, cannot do better in choosing its president."

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Navigating the risks of re-opening

The decision to begin cruises to nowhere next month is important for both economic and psychological reasons. Coupled with recent announcements about opening air travel bubbles with countries that have managed the Covid-19 pandemic well, this latest move represents another careful step in opening up the economy.

It also signals a nascent return to normalcy in a sector that has been hit hard since the middle of March, when Singapore joined several countries in closing their ports to cruise vessels over fears that they may carry infected passengers. On the psychological front, the short journeys could help release a pent-up desire to travel somewhere and experience something touristy. Of course, that satisfaction would be different since the round-trip cruises would not have ports of call. Nevertheless, the journeys offer Singapore residents - which the cruises are restricted to - a welcome feel of the seas after months of having been deprived of "overseas" travel. Also, unlike the idea of airline flights to nowhere, sea journeys last longer and represent a different version of staycations, which have grown in popularity. These trips are being promoted to help the tourism sector, and to cater to consumers who want to spend a few days away from their homes which have doubled up as their offices. Whatever provides emotional release and helps the economy in the process deserves a fair go in these dismal times.

Elaborate health safeguards have been put in place. All passengers have to be tested for Covid-19 prior to boarding and will have to comply with safe management measures, such as mask-wearing and safe distancing. Tours will operate at a reduced capacity.

THE STRAITS TIMES

ity of 50 per cent, crew will be tested, the presence of fresh air must be ensured throughout the ship, and there must be emergency response plans for incidents related to Covid-19. The contingency plans, in the event of an infection or outbreak, include isolating infected passengers and their close contacts, ceasing on-board activities, and having the ship return to Singapore. These plans draw on the hard-learnt lessons of cruises that became incubators of Covid-19 in the early months of this year, before the nature of the disease and the steps needed to contain it on board became clear.

Clearly, no one wants these cruises to become a fresh source of contagion. In one view, a sea cruise is a safe bubble, safer than even staycations. But others have expressed concern over the thought of being on board the same ship with the same people for a few days. Given that two cruise lines will be part of the pilot scheme, how well they, their crew and passengers navigate through the safety restrictions will provide a useful gauge of the viability of these cruises to nowhere in general. Indeed, the eventual resumption of cruises to somewhere will benefit from this initiative.

IN MEMORIAM

BANERJEE JOYDEV — Passed away on October 21, 2010 in Germany, son of late Hirannoy, Deoghar. Leaving behind Rosemary (wife), Alexander and Markus (sons), Sabine (daughter), brother and relatives.

GREAT LOSS

SIR, In the passing of Kishore Bhimani recently, the cricket world has lost one of the finest ever commentators whose deep knowledge of the game and style of commentary with impeccable English language were outstanding. Bhimani was a leading voice in the 1980s and 90s. His columns in *The Statesman* were the most sought after among cricket lovers. He was on air during the final moments of the famous Tied Test between India and Australia at Chepauk, Chennai in 1986. Incidentally, during this Test I had the rare opportunity to interact with Mr. Bhimani at the pavilion terrace. His interest during our conversation grew when he came to know that I was working with a press. He was keen to know about the vibrant culture and tradition of Chennai city, especially of the renowned Kanchipuram silk sarees. He thanked me profusely me when I explained to him about these sarees and the spirit of Chennai and its cultural history.

Yours, etc., Ranganathan Sivakumar, Chennai, 20 October.



it otherwise would have.

Yours, etc., Vandana, Chandigarh, 20 October.

LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

SIR, Apropos Mr Jaydev Jana's brilliant and thoughtful letter 'Highly Exaggerated' (17th October), he has aptly highlighted and condemned the crude and foolish attempts of people to exaggerate the ideological differences between Bapuji and Netaji. Gandhiji and Netaji had enormous respect for each other despite their philosophical differences on certain matters. Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary comrades were truly brave heroes who became martyrs for India's freedom cause without any remorse. Due to the gigantic efforts of all these great patriotic men in their own ways, the mighty British Raj was forced to grant independence to India.

People, especially those with limited knowledge, should not denigrate the pristine images of these great men. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing indeed.

Yours, etc., Santwona Mohanty, Bhubaneswar, 17th October.

Of a patriarchal premise

SIR, The recent advertisement showing a Muslim mother-in-law performing a South Indian ceremony for her pregnant daughter-in-law evoked controversy, with some people accusing the advertiser of promoting 'love jihad'.

The response to this advertisement and even the concept of 'love jihad' rests on the patriarchal premise of women lacking personhood and agency. That Hindu women have married Muslim men since time immemorial in India, a country which is the biggest symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity in the world, is beside the point for those crying 'love jihad'.

Instead, what is at stake for them is the project of the Hindu nation, not the rights of women. Tradition and religion are fixed to the unchanging obedience of the woman to community demands, making her the sole source of authenticity, nation-making and freedom. The reproduction of tradition relies on

women marrying within not only religious but also caste lines. The woman who therefore chooses to marry a man from another faith defies expectations of the reproduction of the Hindu nation. While the trolls crying 'love jihad' deny women's personhood and agency, those upholding this advertisement proclaim a woman's right to choose her spouse.

While many see the trolls as bullying the advertiser into submission, this outcry reveals the real fears of the Hindu right. After all, in their worldview, one does not want young impressionable women to even imagine an inter-faith marriage, let alone a happy one. One does not want to trouble the status quo in Indian families, by presenting young women with ideas of rights. In a country where inter-caste marriages were a strict no-no, we see increasing acceptance of such marriages, specially in urban India. It is not far-fetched to imagine that inter-faith

marriages, too, will come to gain more acceptance over time. This disproportionate response to a short 43-second advertisement celebrating an inter-faith marriage speaks volumes of the fear this arouses.

India has seen many films featuring inter-faith love and advertisements that have in the past been criticised, but not to this extent, with threats received by the advertiser's stores and their personnel. Paradoxically, the very retraction of the advertisement has resulted in it gaining more attention than

The return of Jacinda

ATANU BISWAS

In 2017, the best thing that happened to New Zealand's centre-left Labour Party in a long time was the elevation of 37-year-old Jacinda Ardern as the new leader. Although Ardern's appeal was dismissed as "stardust" by a rival in 2017 election, within just seven weeks, she transformed Labour's moribund poll position through a phenomenon dubbed "Jacinda-mania" that gripped the country. Three years on, the just-concluded Parliament election in New Zealand exhibited that the wave of Jacinda-mania on which she rose to power continues. Or a much stronger second wave might have emerged in course of time – a remarkable achievement indeed!

Yes, there's no doubt that Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's government's successful Covid-19 strategy ensured her Labour Party a landslide re-election by securing 49.15 per cent of the vote in comparison to the 26.79 per cent bagged by its primary challenger, the conservative National Party. Labour secured 64 out of 120 seats in Parliament in the process of sweeping to its largest electoral victory since 1946. Ever since New Zealand implemented a Mixed Member Proportional electoral system 24 years ago, a single party has never won an outright majority of seats in the Parliament before. In fact, in 2017, Jacinda ascended to power when her Labour Party secured 36.89 per cent vote share and 46 seats, and she had to form a minority government with the New Zealand First Party and the Greens.

"This has been a really tough time for New Zealand – we've had a terrorist attack, a natural disaster and a global pandemic," Ardern acknowledged earlier. However, her empathetic approach to issues and connect with voters is being cited as the primary reason for such a landslide electoral victory. Ardern won plaudits at home also internationally for her compassionate response after a lone terrorist shot dead 51 Muslim worshippers in two Christchurch mosques in March 2019. Ardern wore a hijab as she met the Muslim community the day after the attack and told them the country was "united in grief". An empathetic Ardern, who would bring the country together, was unequivocal that the gunman was a terrorist – but stressed that he did not represent the people of New Zealand. "You may have chosen us, but we utterly reject and condemn you," she told the gunman.



Nandini, in Tagore's drama 'Rakta Karabi' ('Red Oleanders'), thought that 'terrorism' is the business of some people ("bhoy dekhabar byabas ekhankar manusher"). We suddenly discover that Nandini is not an abstraction. In an unprecedented and much-acclaimed approach, Ardern has refused to name the gunman in public, and denied him notoriety. And, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her response to the Christchurch mosque attacks.

She quickly announced a change to the country's gun laws, banning the sale of all semi-automatic weapons and assault rifles. This is in stark contrast to the United States, where lawmakers and activists have been struggling to address gun violence despite numerous mass shootings. Then, in December 2019, a volcano erupted on the privately owned White Island, or Whakaari, which killed 21, and Ardern again led the country in mourning.

Ardern's continued popularity in the international arena was not very helpful in her re-election bid though. She did face sharp criticism during her first term for the broken election promises on KiwiBuild houses, which were aiming at improving

housing affordability. Again, child poverty is a key issue in New Zealand where about one in eight children live in material hardship, according to StatsNZ. The proportions are almost a quarter and 28.6 per cent within the Maori community and Pacific children, respectively. The Ardern government also faced immense criticism for its inadequate effort in battling child poverty, despite election promises.

Also, despite promising a transformational term in 2017, plans for a capital gains tax that would have addressed the growing rich-poor divide were scrapped. The progress on climate change has also been incremental. Some critics also scoffed at the "woke" policies that Ardern backs on social and racial justice. Again, the decision to ban offshore oil exploration angered some people – the opposition went on describing it as "economic vandalism".

In fact, by February 2020 – just seven months prior to the originally scheduled date of election in September – the Labour Party was trailing the National Party in the polls – National was enjoying 46 per cent support, with Labour at 41 per cent.

And then came the pandemic to change the world. It gave an unexpected chance to Ardern to revive her poll prospects, and she grabbed the opportunity in the best possible style. As the pandemic began, Jacinda Ardern acted quickly and extremely successfully with her oft-repeated slogan "be strong, be kind".

"Jacinda Ardern can be best compared with the three Scandinavian women prime ministers who are from the centre-left," said Helen Clark, a former New Zealand prime minister for whom Ardern worked after university. "All of them have led good responses to the pandemic, putting health security first and communicating in an empathetic way with the public in each of their countries." Ardern's management of the Covid-19 outbreak has insulated the island nation of 5 million from the deadly virus, and understandably it became the major issue in this election. In fact, an election during or immediately after the pandemic – anywhere on the globe – is bound to become a referendum on the Covid-management of the incumbent. And, thus coronavirus might have immensely helped Ardern in her re-election.

After being appointed Labour leader in 2017, when a television presenter asked her whether she planned to have children, Ardern thought it was "totally unacceptable in 2017 to say that women should have to answer that question in the workplace". In fact, she went on to give birth to a baby daughter in June 2018, eight months after becoming prime minister – thus becoming only the second elected leader to give birth while in office after Benazir Bhutto. While many took her pregnancy and maternity leave as symbolising progress for women, she told the Financial Times, "I don't want to appear to be superwoman because we should not expect women to be super-women."

Whether she aspired to it or not, Ardern has undoubtedly emerged as a superwoman, through her compassionate leadership and her achievements. In her victory speech, Ardern said, "This has not been an ordinary election, and it's not an ordinary time. It's been full of uncertainty and anxiety, and we set out to be an antidote to that."

The writer is Professor of statistics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Viceroy's announcement that the Indian railhead is at last to be pushed up from Jamrud to Landi Khan at the head of the Khyber Pass will probably cause a considerable fluttering of the diplomatic and military doves. That the existing, but never operated, rope-way up the pass is utterly useless is the opinion of the military authorities on whom it was forced by Simla with a view to the temporary and petty economy so dear to its heart. It represents a million or two of good money literally thrown away. According to the last estimate – the name of the estimates, rough or detailed, which have been prepared for a Khyber railway is Legion – the cost of a narrow gauge railroad up the 25 miles from Jamrud to the Frontier would be about £3,000,000. It would be even more invaluable than the new double tracked roadway for the purpose of quieting the Afridis and might ultimately advance the process of carrying civilisation to the frontier area and Afghanistan. The permanent occupation of central Waziristan, also announced by the Viceroy, should operate in the same direction. After the expenditure of blood and money during the past year it is inconceivable that the old charter of the Mahsuds as the licensed bullies and marauders of a large frontier zone should ever be restored to them.

NEWS ITEMS

SIR GEORGE LLOYD AT NASIK

The Governor and Lady Lloyd, with staff, are on tour in Nasik. Replying to an address of welcome by the Nasik municipality, the Governor, after emphasising Nasik's importance as a pilgrimage town and touching on local problems, announced that the orders of the Government laying down principles which will govern the grant of Government aid towards sanitary improvements are to issue shortly. The householders of Nasik, the Governor pointed out, had reaped a rich harvest from the frequent influx of pilgrims but still the Municipality had retained an even rate of house tax and had not introduced a graded scale. The citizens of the town must first give proof, if they wished to entitle themselves to a greater share of provincial revenue, that they were willing to bear a proper share of the burden.

"GOSHA" LADIES AND POWERS - OF - ATTORNEY

In pursuance of a resolution moved in the Legislative Council that in cases of emergency sub-magistrates be authorised to register documents in the houses of gosha ladies on payment of reasonable fees (it being represented that the Government of the Straits Settlements and of the Federated Malay States had refused to recognise powers-of-attorney executed in this Presidency which were attested by sub-registrars, and would not accept them unless attested by sub-magistrates), Government have issued necessary instructions for the attestation of powers-of-attorney, for use in the Straits Settlements or in the Malay States, at the houses of gosha ladies by the sub-magistrates within whose jurisdiction they reside.

POLICE AND PUBLIC

Judgment has been delivered in the case in which Inspector Dyer, of the Bombay City Police, stood charged with causing hurt to a Public Works Department masonry, before Mr. Justice Setalvad and a special jury at the Criminal Sessions of the Bombay High Court. The prosecution alleged that Inspector Dyer while conducting enquiries into a case of theft had assaulted complainant, with a stick, causing a fracture of a rib, in order to extort confession. His lordship in his charge to the jury pointed out that there was direct conflict between the evidences deduced from complainant and his associates and the three police witnesses. The jury in a verdict found accused guilty. The judge sentenced accused to 15 days simple imprisonment, and a fine of Rs 200.

GOLD BULLION

Information available in Bombay shows that the demand for gold bullion is on a gigantic scale. At current prices the monthly Government sale of gold comes to nearly £6,000,000 sterling, and in addition to that large orders are going to the different parts of the world. According to some estimates India's consumption of gold during the last few months is £9,000,000 per month. The bazaar is buying gold freely because now only two more Government sales are remaining and the market belief is that it will not be possible thereafter to get large blocks of gold. The price of ready silver is Rs 109.8, and as the price of silver in London is high a point may be reached soon at which it will be profitable to export rupees.

Election turbulence in America

MALEEHAI LODHI

In one of the most consequential elections in America's recent history, the presidential contest between Donald Trump and Joe Biden has been mired in fierce contention and acrimony. Apart from the charged environment in which the campaign is taking place, legal challenges to voting procedures have been mounting in many states — a portent of the political turbulence that may lie ahead.

Just two weeks away, the election is being viewed with rising concern in the US and beyond over whether its outcome will produce an orderly transfer of power or become bogged down in long drawn legal battles, strife and even violence. The world watches with dismay and bewilderment at the spectacle of American democracy and institutions being undermined in the election tussle. With the country deeply polarised, political consensus over the integrity of the electoral process has eroded to such an extent that it may risk delegitimising the election outcome itself.

So far, the Democratic contender Joe Biden is leading in all the national polls. But the race is still close in the battleground or swing states which have greater political weight given America's electoral college method of electing the president. A key question is whether in this election too,

winning candidate will secure more electoral college votes but lose the popular vote. This is what transpired in the previous election when Hilary Clinton won the popular vote but Trump received the requisite electoral college votes to be declared the winner.

Unprecedented uncertainty characterises the environment in which the election is taking place. The coronavirus pandemic has injected many unknowns into the election and how it would impact polling especially voter turnout. Record use of postal ballots rather than in-person votes is being forecast, and already being witnessed in the early voting process. But the uncertainty this has triggered is whether the election infrastructure in many states has the capacity and resources to deal with millions of mail-in votes. That would also mean the electoral verdict could take days, even longer, to compute so that the outcome may not emerge on election night.

This points to a danger being widely discussed in American political circles — of an aspirant declaring himself the winner on polling day when postal votes have yet to be fully counted, which could be decisive to the outcome. Trump has constantly questioned postal ballots assuming they would advantage the Democrats. Describing mail-in votes as a

"corrupt disaster", he has suggested they would be used fraudulently to favour Biden.

Perhaps the greatest election uncertainty has been fuelled by Trump's assertions that he may not accept the result if he loses and raising doubts about the election's integrity. Although he started alleging foul play months ago, Democrats too have been questioning the election's credibility, accusing Republican-run states of trying to suppress the vote. Meanwhile legal teams of both parties have been stepping up challenges to election rules across the country.

A record number of legal fights are in progress especially in battleground states. As a report in the Wall Street Journal pointed out, "In some key states, lawsuits that could affect turnout and outcomes in races across the ballot are making their way through the court hierarchy and could land at the US Supreme Court." Exacerbating this situation have been deliberate cuts in federal funding for the US Postal Service with Trump acknowledging unabashedly that he is doing this to restrict mail-in votes. Democrats have predictably accused him of voter suppression.

Against this fraught backdrop the election outcome might well be disputed. Several possibilities are being speculated by American elec-

tion analysts. If the result is a decisive victory for any candidate that would arguably minimise chances of a challenge. But if the result is narrow one, legal battles may ensue and could go to the US Supreme Court, leaving the country in limbo until the dispute is resolved. While the election dispute in Florida went to the Supreme Court in the 2000 presidential race between George W. Bush and Al Gore, the latter accepted the verdict and conceded defeat. It is far from certain how it could play out this time.

A significant disconnect

between the popular and the electoral college vote may also serve to delegitimise the election for supporters of the candidate who wins the popular vote by a large margin but loses in the electoral college. This will not be the first time for the popular and electoral college vote to vary but in the prevailing climate it could have a different political impact.

A grimmer scenario is also possible, as indicated by Trump's assertions, which have fuelled much speculation in the country's media. In this, Biden wins by a handsome margin but Trump refuses to concede and challenges the outcome, alleging voter fraud. He has made ominous statements calling for 'election squads' to monitor the vote to "watch all the thieving, stealing and robbing". In the first presidential debate Trump

urged a far-right group and his supporters to be ready, ostensibly to prevent ballot fraud. This is heightening tensions and more dangerously leading to attempts by right-wing militia groups to intimidate voters.

Actions by right-wing vigilantes and white supremist groups — encouraged by Trump's stance — can provoke election chaos. This acquires greater significance in view of the fact that American security agencies now see armed white supremist groups as among the most lethal threats to the country. In Congressional testimony last month, the FBI director warned that "racially motivated violent extremism," principally from white supremacists, represented "the majority of domestic terrorism threats".

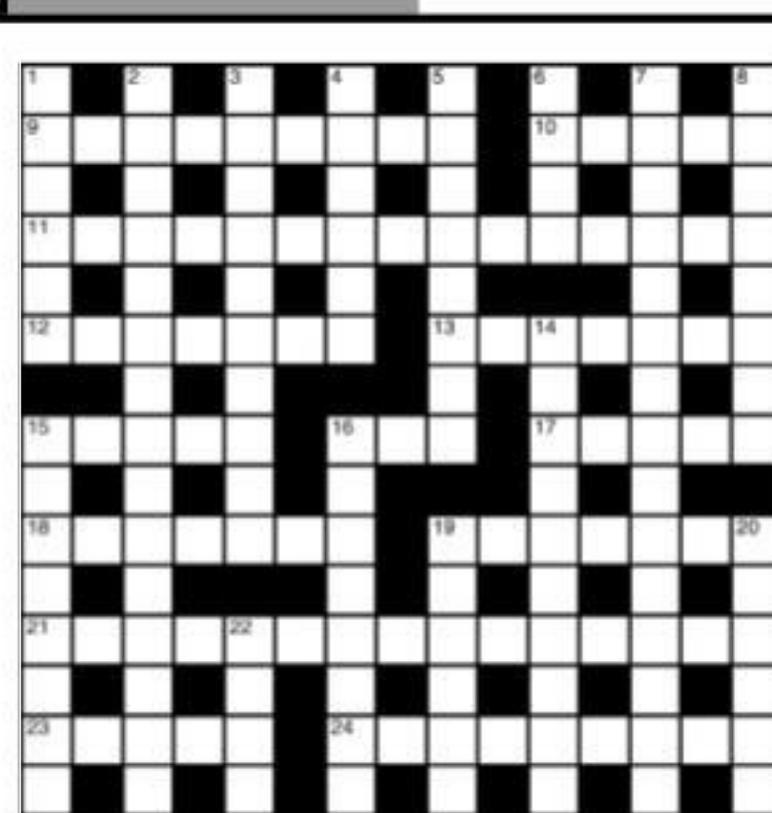
All this adds up to an election and its aftermath fraught with the risk of America's descent into prolonged turmoil and instability — a situation succinctly summed up by Frank Bruni in a New York Times op-ed: "This country, already uncivil, is on the precipice of being ungovernable, because its institutions are being so profoundly degraded, because its partisanship is so all-consuming, and because Trump, who rode those trends to power, is now turbocharging them to drive America into the ground."

The implications for the world of protracted instability in the US are considerable.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28110

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 9 Destroy monarch with a heartless order (9)
- 10 Fish cake on tray for starter (5)
- 11 This for the luck of the draw? (9,6)
- 12 Law read that changes unfair treatment (3,4)
- 13 Men procure nothing for Rosalind's lover (7)
- 15 People who judge severely criticise Spanish article (5)
- 16 Old man given year to settle up (3)
- 17 Stay drunk with knight becoming aggressive (5)
- 18 Shutters for museums? (7)
- 19 Given meal in turn – bill to follow

DOWN

- 21 Clans hid as winds swirled in Hawaii once (8,7)
- 23 Dance record slows in middle (5)
- 24 Theatre individuals twice interrupted by singular replies (9)
- 25 Actually (2,5)
- 26 Clans hid as winds swirled in Hawaii once (8,7)
- 27 Possible outcome of congress in Minsk? (7,8)
- 28 Greed shown where corporation man banks pounds (8)
- 29 He wrote line about good companion (10)
- 30 Fence one with blue and white exterior (8)
- 31 One bearing message whose view is one-sided? (8)
- 32 Stride being broken is most ironic (6)
- 33 Oscar and Elizabeth taking in small hound (6)
- 34 Seek hand of daughter in club (4)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



We believe that the worst is behind us and we are cautiously optimistic on demand recovery

SANJIV MEHTA
CMD, HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LTD

THUMBNAILS

Siemens Healthineers
Investment: Siemens Healthineers on Tuesday announced plans to invest Rs 1,300 crore over the next five years in an innovation hub in Bengaluru to advance the digitalisation of healthcare and better serve the needs of emerging markets. The investment is part of Siemens Healthineers' strategy 2025, in which India plays an important role as a growth market for the company, according to a statement.

SNS

Ather Energy: Hero MotoCorp-backed EV maker Ather Energy on Tuesday announced an "assured" buyback scheme, the first of its kind in the domestic EV space, for its 450X e-scooter model, which is set to hit the road by Diwali. Besides, the Bengaluru-based firm also revised downward the price of its Ather 450 Plus e-scooter by Rs 9,000 to Rs 1,39,990 from Rs 14,49 lakh and said it will expand its scooter leasing options to all its operational cities in the wake of larger acceptance in Chennai and Bengaluru.

PTI

SpiceJet flight: Budget carrier SpiceJet on Tuesday announced the launch of 62 new flights, including four international services to Muscat from Delhi and Ahmedabad and back, starting Thursday under the air bubble agreement with Oman. All these new services will be operated with a mix of its Boeing 737 and Bombardier Q400 aircraft on all these routes, it said.

PTI

Itel achievement: Smartphone maker Itel has achieved the milestone of registering over 6 crore consumers within four years of its operations in India, the company said. This important milestone reinstates Itel's success story in India, which has been driven by its customer-centric approach, innovative and affordable product portfolio, robust distribution network along with localised marketing communication approach, the company said in a statement.

SNS

Samsung offer: Samsung has announced exciting offers on a wide range of TVs and digital appliances during the Flipkart Big Billion Days and Amazon Great Indian Festival. Adding joy to the festive season, these exciting offers across product categories come with strong discounts, assured gifts, attractive finance schemes, exchange offers and low EMIs, along with cashback of up to Rs 2,000, the company said in a statement.

PTI

Wipro deal: IT services major Wipro on Tuesday said it has bagged an application management (AMIS) and services integration and management (SIAM) contract from Fortum, a clean-energy company headquartered in Espoo, Finland. No financial details of the deal were disclosed.

PTI

Govt's move to raise steel consumption

Steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan asks CII to identify areas of steel usage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

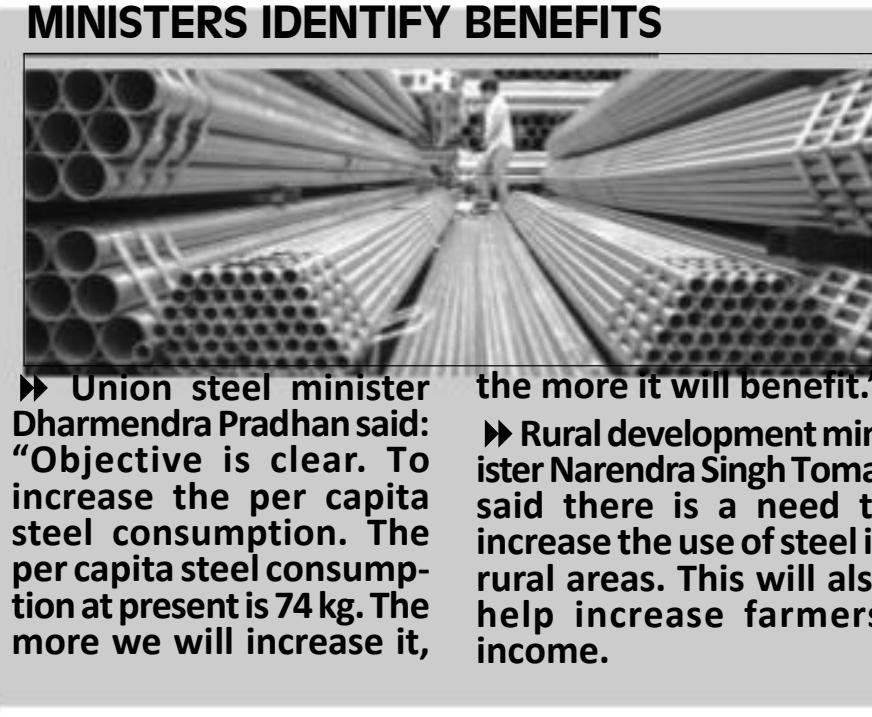
Union steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan today asked industry body CII to submit a report on how to enhance per capita steel consumption in India.

The minister has given 30 days time to engage with various ministries, including steel, departments and stakeholders, and submit the report.

"Objective is clear. To increase the per capita steel consumption. The per capita steel consumption at present is 74 kg. The more we will increase, the more it will benefit," he said while speaking at "Aatmanirbhar Bharat: Fostering Usage of Steel in Rural Development Sector" conference organised by CII.

The conference was organised to identify the avenues of steel usage in sectors like agriculture, rural development, dairy and food processing.

Steel is among the eight core sector industries of the



► Union steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan said: "Objective is clear. To increase the per capita steel consumption. The per capita steel consumption at present is 74 kg. The more we will increase, the more it will benefit."

Indian economy. Steel demand is positively correlated with economic growth.

Speaking further, Pradhan said steel should be linked with all respective sectors to see where the metal can find application. By 2022, as part of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, there will be a house for everyone. Emphasis is being laid on roads in the rural areas. Private business is coming in the Railways, he noted.

"Also, for the first time, in

the more it will benefit."

► Rural development minister Narendra Singh Tomar said there is a need to increase the use of steel in rural areas. This will also help increase farmers' income.

(the field of) agriculture, a plan has been made to pump in a huge investment amount in contract farming model."

The minister said increasing per capita consumption will also create new job opportunities. It will increase the revenue collection of states.

"CII together with the steel ministry, other ministries like agri, food processing etc, departments must submit a report to the steel ministry within a month," he said.

Rural development minister Narendra Singh Tomar said there is a need to increase the use of steel in rural areas. This will also help increase farmers' income.

Tomar further spoke about certain areas where steel will find application in a huge amount, thereby increasing the usage of steel in the country.

In the PM Gramin Awas Yojana, about 46.90 lakh metric tons steel has been used and another 43.80 lakh metric tons will be required in the remaining part of the ambitious project.

Steel will also be used in construction of roads and bridges under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. For the approved work in phase I and II of the project, about 102 lakh metric tons steel will be required.

"The per capita steel consumption in rural areas as compared to the urban is at just 19.1 kg. I expect with collective efforts the outcome of this webinar will be utilised to identify the areas of steel usage," he said.

Centre bans sale of gas, CBM to self

NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

The government has banned natural gas and coal-bed methane (CBM) producers from buying their own produce in the newly notified gas marketing freedom guidelines.

The government on 15 October notified the natural gas marketing reforms that give producers the freedom to discover the market price of gas through a standard e-bidding process.

The notification, which follows the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approving gas reforms, also gives them the liberty to market or sell the gas produced to anyone including affiliates.

However, the producer or any member of its gas field consortium cannot bid and buy the fuel, the notified guidelines said. "Sale to affiliates will be allowed if affiliates participate in the open competitive process," it said. "However, the contractor or its constituents shall not be eligible to participate in the bidding process."

"Seller and buyer will not be the same entity," it added.

This, the notification said, not just applies to conventional natural gas but also to CBM.

Gadkari lays foundation of first multi-modal logistics park in Assam

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NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

among others.

Gadkari said his ministry has envisaged developing 35 multi-modal logistics parks in the country and work on preparing DPR and feasibility report is underway. He said, special purpose vehicles will be formed for all these MMLPs, and professionally qualified CEOs will be appointed for each.

Gadkari said works worth Rs 280 crore for the MMLP project along Brahmaputra have already been awarded, including Rs 171 crore for road construction, Rs 87 crore for erecting the structure, and Rs 23 crore for rail lines. The park will be connected to air, road, rail and waterways.

The minister said that the distance of 154 km between Jogighopa and Guwahati will be covered by making a 4-lane road on this stretch, a 3-km rail line will connect Jogighopa station to the MMLP, another 3-km rail link will connect it to the inland water terminal, and the road to newly developed Rupsi airport will be upgraded to 4 lanes for easier connectivity.

Sales of manufacturing cos contracted 41.1% in Q1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 20 OCTOBER

Aggregate sales of private sector manufacturing companies recorded a sharp contraction of 41.1 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of fiscal 2020-21, reflecting the impact of the pandemic-induced lockdown, said an RBI analysis today.

The data on the performance of the private corporate sector during the first quarter of 2020-21 has been drawn from abridged quarterly financial results of 2,536 listed non-government non-financial (NGNF) companies, the RBI said.

Aggregate sales of 1,619 manufacturing companies recorded a sharp contraction of 41.1 per cent (Y-o-Y) in Q1 2020-21 following 15.6

per cent decline in Q4 2019-20, reflecting the impact of the pandemic-induced lockdown," it said. The contraction was broad-based and varied across industries ~ only pharmaceutical companies recorded higher sales on both annual and sequential basis.

Non-IT services companies also registered a sharp contraction of 41 per cent in their nominal sales. The contraction was across services except for telecommunication companies, the RBI said.

On the other hand, the sales growth of IT sector companies remained in positive terrain but moderated to 3.2 per cent in the April-June quarter of the fiscal on annual basis.

It further said lower business operations led to decline in the operating profits of man-

ufacturing and non-IT services companies, while operating profits of IT companies, on the other hand, increased by 9.4 per cent during the first quarter.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the Securities and Exchange Board of India had extended the deadline for submission of financial results for Q1 2020-21 by listed companies to 15 September 2020.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank has also released the results of the 2019-20 round of the survey of Foreign Liabilities and Assets of the Mutual Fund (MF) Companies. Foreign liabilities of MF companies declined by 15.7 per cent during 2019-20 and stood at \$9.6 billion in March 2020, mainly consisting of units issued to non-residents.

HUL's biz returns to pre-Covid level

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

Indian economy had seen an unprecedented 23.9 per cent contraction during April-June as the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus pummelled demand and investment.

While addressing a post earning call, HUL chief financial officer Srinivas Phatak said: "The worst is behind us and the business is clearly picking up momentum. And therefore, I think what we want to call out is cautious optimism." HUL got a major boost in its Q2 topline with the inclusion of GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare's health

care and beauty and personal care segments were almost near the pre-Covid levels.

HUL, the maker of popular brands such as Rin, Dove, Lux, Lifebuoy, said the worst is behind and is cautiously optimistic on demand recovery.

"... during the quarter, on a reported basis, our growth is 16 per cent which is including Horlicks. If you remove Horlicks and just talk about our



► Consolidated net profit rose by 8.6 per cent to Rs 1,974 crore in July-September quarter while revenue from the sale of products was up by 13.7 per cent at Rs 11,510 crore

► Food and refreshment business saw nearly 83 per cent jump while home care and beauty and personal care segments were almost near the pre-Covid levels, the company said.

base business on a like-for-like basis, excluding M&A, our growth is 3 per cent," said Phatak.

It is actually a significant

step-up on a sequential basis in growth, he added.

HUL chairman and managing director Sanjiv Mehta said: "Our operations and service levels are now back to pre-Covid levels and we have accelerated the pace of digitising our operations under the 'Re-imagine HUL' agenda."

"there is very clearly an improvement that is happening between the June quarter and the September quarter," he said.

The economic outlook has improved given the various initiatives taken by the government and the Reserve Bank of India.

"In our sector, rural markets have been resilient but the demand in urban India especially in metropolitan cities has been muted. We believe that the worst is behind us and we are cautiously optimistic on demand recovery," Mehta added.

Mercedes-Benz to start local assembly of AMG models

NEW DELHI, 20 OCTOBER

German luxury car maker Mercedes-Benz today said it will start local assembly of its performance vehicle range AMG in India.

The first Mercedes-AMG product to roll out of the assembly line from Mercedes-Benz India's plant at Chakan in Pune will be the AMG GLC 43 4MATIC Coupé, the company said in a statement.

Mercedes-Benz India managing director and CEO Martin Schwenk said: "The decision to locally produce AMG in India underlines Mercedes-Benz's clear roadmap for the Indian market and our long-term commitment to our Indian customers. We want AMG to be more accessible to the potential customers and play a bigger role in our overall portfolio we offer in India."

He further said this decision is an important milestone towards strengthening the company's AMG ambitions in India further.

The AMG brand over the years has become synonymous with performance motoring in India and remains highly aspirational, Schwenk said.

Mercedes-Benz's performance sub-brand AMG has a wide portfolio of performance limousines, performance SUVs, SUV Coupés, and sports cars in India. The AMG brand has a dedicated retail presence through the AMG Performance Centres located across Indian metros.

On the decision to start with the local assembly of the AMG GLC 43 4MATIC Coupé, he said it is an important model in the company's portfolio having the distinction of being one of the highest selling AMG models in India.

Tanishq ad created a 'movement': Ad maker

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 20 OCTOBER

harmony is the centre of our fabric'.

Nevertheless, on withdrawing the advertisement, he termed Tanishq as a "brave" company that considered safety of employees in the face of the controversy.

The \$10-billion Tata Group chose to withdraw the 55-second Tanishq advertisement, which shows a Muslim mother-in-law caring for her pregnant Hindu daughter-in-law, in the wake of a furore online and displeasure among certain groups for alleged communal tones.

"People are going out there and telling us that we will not let this film get deleted, they are sharing the film on their own even though it has been removed. Or there is a move-



ment where people are buying Tanishq and showing us the bills," Akali said.

Despite the advertisement being withdrawn, many people came in support of the campaign and made their

in any country," he said, pointing out that this is contrary to the behavioural phenomenon called "spiral of silence".

Spiral of silence refers to a large part of the majority staying silent because this is a way of life for them but there is a vocal minority which keeps speaking, he said.

Making it clear that the intent behind the campaign was just to show cultural realities which gel well with a brand's promise, and not political at all, Akali said.

Stating that the society sided with Tanishq because the message resonated with it, he said more people have seen the message than if it was

not removed.

It was a simple film showing how a pregnant daughter-in-law is cared for in our society where multiple communities thrive, he added.

He said the advertisement which ran into the controversy was part of a broader campaign called "Ekavam", wherein the jewellery brand has tied up with 1,000 craftsmen across 15 cultures of India to launch a collection.

On the Tata Group company withdrawing the advertisement, Akali backed Tanishq terming the client as a "brave" company which took the stance of employee safety in the face of the controversy.

"I would have taken exactly the same decision if I would

have been in the client's shoes. Nothing is more important than the safety of an employee. It is a brave client and the client took a stance for the safety of its employees," he said.

However, he declined to elaborate on the difficulties encountered since the controversy erupted.

The past week since the controversy seems longer than seven days, but the love received from across the world is "beautiful, fantastic and overwhelming", Akali said.

He said an online group has been created where over 200 people have come up with their own stories of inter-faith marriage and attempts are being made to document these experiences as a book as well.

PTI



...You can hold me responsible for anything, any death that has occurred in the execution of the drug war...

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE
SAVING HE WAS READY TO FACE CHARGES THAT COULD LAND HIM IN JAIL

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2020

09

Nagorno-Karabakh fighting continues despite truce efforts

According to Nagorno-Karabakh officials, 773 of their troops, 30 civilians have been killed since 27 Sept

ASSOCIATED PRESS
YEREVAN, 20 OCTOBER

Armenian and Azerbaijani reported more fighting on Tuesday over the separatist territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, where clashes have continued for over three weeks despite two attempts at establishing a cease-fire.

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said the hostilities carried on overnight and accused Armenian forces of shelling the Terter and the Agdam regions of Azerbaijan in the morning.

Armenian Defense Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanian reported intensive fierce battles on Tuesday morning in the southern areas

of the conflict zone, and alleged that Azerbaijani forces were using aviation and artillery in the northern sector. The two countries announced a cease-fire on Saturday in a bid to halt the fighting that has killed hundreds since 27 September, when clashes resumed in the west of Nagorno-Karabakh after a decade-old conflict.

The agreement just like a cease-fire deal brokered by Russia a week earlier was almost immediately challenged by mutual claims of violations and the fighting resumed unabated. Nagorno-Karabakh lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia



wounded.

The deadly fighting prompted calls for cessation of hostilities from around the globe and raised concerns of a wider conflict involving Turkey, which has publicly supported Azerbaijan, and Russia, which has a security pact with Armenia.

On 9 October, Moscow hosted the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan. After more than 10 hours of talks, they announced a cease-fire deal, which was violated minutes after it took force.

The new truce announced on Saturday followed Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's calls with his counterparts from Armenia and Azerbaijan, in which he strongly urged them to abide by the Moscow deal. Despite the agreement, both sides have reported new attacks.

The Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers are scheduled to meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Washington on Friday.

Last week Pompeo said Washington was making diplomatic efforts to help achieve a sustainable settlement to the conflict and called on both countries to implement their agreed-upon commitments to a cease-fire.

Russia, the US and France co-chair the so-called Minsk Group, set up by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the 1990s to mediate the conflict.

Taiwan, China trade accusations after staffers fight in Fiji

TAIPEI (TAIWAN), 20 OCTOBER

China and Taiwan traded accusations Monday over a violent altercation that broke out between Chinese diplomats and Taiwan government employees at a recent Taiwan National Day reception in Fiji.

Both China and Taiwan confirmed the 8 October incident but each disputed the other's claim of what precipitated the fight, which resulted in one Taiwanese staffer being sent to a hospital with a head injury. One of the Chinese diplomats also was injured.

The confrontation, an extreme example of the tensions between the rival governments, erupted when Taiwanese at the gathering tried to stop Chinese diplomats from taking photos of guests at the reception marking Taiwan's national day and disrupting the event, according to a statement from Taiwan's Foreign Ministry.

We strongly condemn the violence against our diplomat in Fiji by China's uncivilized 'wolf warriors,' Taiwan's Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said Twitter late on Monday.

As a sovereign state, we'll continue celebrating #TaiwanNationalDay everywhere, every year. Taiwan is a force for good in the world & we won't be intimidated.

China's embassy in Fiji said in a statement released Monday that Taiwan's account was inconsistent with the facts."

Turkey evacuates large military post in northwest Syria

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIRUT, 20 OCTOBER

Turkish troops in northwestern Syria have been evacuating one of their largest military bases in the area, which was surrounded by Syrian government troops for months, activists said Tuesday.

There was no immediate comment from Turkish officials. Activists and opposition media platforms reported the military evacuation, posting footage and photos of Turkish trucks and equipment driving north of Morek.

Turkish TV station Haber Turk quoted unnamed officials saying that Turkey is moving

the base to an area farther north in the northwestern province of Idlib still controlled by Syrian opposition forces backed by Ankara. There was no immediate government confirmation of that report.

It was not immediately clear whether the withdrawal is part of a deal to reposition Turkish observation points inside the opposition-held enclave or is aimed at reducing Turkey's military presence in the area. As part of an earlier cease-fire deal, Turkey deployed troops to man 12 observation points in the northwest to separate government forces and Syrian opposition fighters and monitor the truce negotiated with Russia.

But the cease-fire failed to curtail government advances, including the one that encircled the Turkish base in Morek late last year.

The shrinking enclave at the edge of northwestern Syria, along the border with Turkey, is the last area controlled by Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been displaced within the enclave during repeated military operations. Many of the residents are already displaced from other parts of Syria and sought refuge from government troops there.

STUDENT PROTEST



Students during a rally against a controversial new law which critics fear will favour investors at the expense of labour rights and the environment, in Jakarta on Tuesday. ■ AFP

Thai Cabinet approves Parliament session to debate protests

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BANGKOK, 20 OCTOBER

Thailand's Cabinet on Tuesday approved a request to recall Parliament for a special session to deal with the political pressures from ongoing anti-government protests.

The Cabinet at its weekly meeting approved the request, which calls for a non-voting session on October 26-27.

The request for the session came from House speaker Chuan Leekpai, who said Monday that both government and opposition parties supported it.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha had already said earlier that he supports the move. There is a deadlock between the government and the student-led protesters, who want Prayuth to step down, the constitution to be amended to make it more democratic, and reforms to the monarchy to have it conform to democratic norms.

The protesters charge that Prayuth, an army commander who led a 2014 coup, was returned to power unfairly in last year's general election because laws had been changed to favor a pro-military party.

The protesters say a constitution written and passed under military rule is undemocratic.

But their more recent demand for checks and balances on the monarchy has deeply angered conservative Thais and broken a taboo, since the monarchy is considered sacrosanct and tough laws protect it from insult mean its role is not usually discussed openly.

The government has sought to weaken the protesters' resolve over the past week by arresting their leaders, declaring a state of emergency for Bangkok that makes all rallies illegal, and trying to physically impede their gatherings, including by closing mass transit stations.

However, when it sent riot police backed by water cannons to break up a rally in Bangkok on Friday, it only drew widespread criticism for the use of force, and failed to discourage the protesters, who have continued to gather in large numbers every day. Protests have also spread to other provinces.

Police announced Monday that they were seeking to impose censorship on media reporting of the protests, citing what they called distorted information that could cause unrest and confusion in society.

From 'role models' to sex workers: Kenya's child labour rises

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NAIROBI, 20 OCTOBER

The teenage girls cannot remember how many men they have had to sleep with in the seven months since COVID-19 closed their schools, or how many of those men used protection.

Painfully, they recall times when they were sexually assaulted and then beaten up when they asked to be paid - as little as USD 1 - to help feed their families as jobs evaporated during the pandemic.

From their rented room in Kenya's capital, the girls say the risk of getting infected with the coronavirus or HIV does not weigh heavily on them in a time when survival is paramount.

If you get USD 5 in these

streets, that is gold, says a 16-year-old, seated on the small bed she shares with the 17-year-old and 18-year-old she calls her best friends forever. They split the USD 20 rent in a building where every room is home to fellow sex workers.

According to UNICEF, the U.N. children's agency, recent gains in the fight against child labor are at risk because of the pandemic. The world could see the first rise in the number of working children since 2000. The U.N. warns that millions of children may be forced into exploitative and hazardous jobs, and school closures exacerbate the problem.

Mary Mugure, a former sex worker, launched Night Nurse to rescue girls who followed her path. She says since schools in Kenya closed in March, up to 1,000 schoolgirls have become sex workers in the three Nairobi neighborhoods she monitors. Most are trying to help their parents with household bills. The youngest, Mugure says, is 11.

Each of the three girls sharing a room was raised with several siblings by a single mother. They saw their mothers' sources of income vanish when Kenya's government clamped down to prevent the spread of the virus.

Two of their mothers had been washing clothes for people who lived near their low-income neighbourhood of Dandora. But as soon as the first local virus case was confirmed, nobody wanted them in their homes, the girls say. The third mother was selling

potatoes by the roadside, a business that collapsed because of a new curfew.

As eldest children, the girls say they took it upon themselves to help their mothers feed their families.

The girls had been spending their free time as part of a popular dance group, and they were paid for gigs. But when public gatherings were restricted, that income ended. Now I can get my mom (USD 1.84) every day and that helps her to feed the others, one of the girls says.

Elsewhere in Nairobi, single mother Florence Mumbua and her three children - ages 7, 10 and 12 - crack rocks at a quarry in the sweltering heat.

The work is back-breaking and hazardous, but the 34-year-old Mumbua says she was

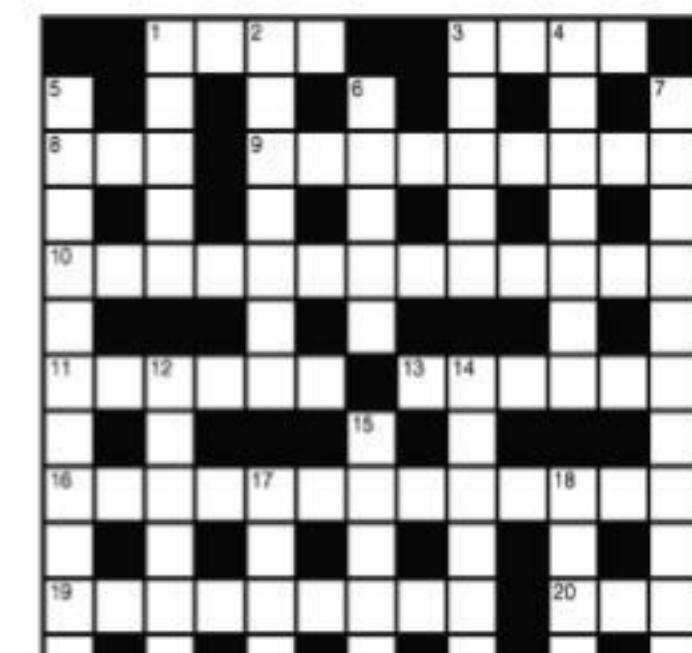
left without a choice after she lost her cleaning job at a private school when pandemic restrictions were imposed.

I have to work with (the children) because they need to eat and yet I make little money, she says. When we work as a team, we can make enough money for our lunch, breakfast and dinner. In Dandora, 15-year-old Dominic Munyoki and 17-year-old Mohamed Nassur rummage through Kenya's largest landfill, scavenging for scrap metal to sell.

According to a U.S. Department of Labor report last year, Kenya has made moderate advancement in eliminating the worst forms of child labor, such as sexual exploitation, but there is still work to be done.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Stink (4)
3 Weak (4)
8 Little devil (3)
9 Presentation aid (4,5)
10 Painstaking (13)
11 Pardon (6)
13 Paper handkerchief (6)
16 Fear of spiders (13)
19 Censure (9)
20 Way of (3)
21 Retained (4)
22 Covetousness (4)

DOWN
1 Become mature (5)
2 Belongings (7)
3 Lawful (5)
4 Areas of grassland (7)
5 Variance of factors (11)
6 Doomed (5)
7 Put in a secret place (informal) (7,4)
12 Communion goblet (7)
14 Cruel (7)
15 Poisonous (5)
17 Lifting apparatus (5)
18 Drink (informal) (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- VidyaSagar Institute for Mental and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur 23717473, 23325320

RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800112511
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- Haryana Roadways 23861262, 09910383383, 18001803838, 43513186; Indigo Airlines 23717473, 23325320

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

SCRABBLE® BRAND



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION BY JUDD

R	U	T	I	E	R	RACK 1 = 71
G	N	A	W	I	N	RACK 2 = 74
C	U	E	T			RACK 3 = 7
L	U	M	S			RACK 4 = 19
F	O	R				TOTAL = 171

JUDD'S TOTAL

FAIR SCORE 109-115

PAR SCORE 85-95

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

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Instructions: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in your rack. Add points of each word, using scoring table. If a word contains a double letter, add double points. If a word contains a triple letter, add triple points. Letters in words can be used as any letter in other words. All words must be found in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merriam-Webster, Inc.) or the Official Scrabble Tile Dictionary (J.W. Spear & Sons Limited, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc.).

Yesterdays Solution: 109-115

Par Score: 85-95

Fair Score: 109-115

Four Rack Total: 171



We are backing our best and brightest scientists and researchers in their hunt for a safe and effective vaccine...

UK BUSINESS SECRETARY ALOK SHARMA

ON THE LAUNCH OF 'HUMAN CHALLENGE' TRIALS TO SPEED UP COVID-19 VACCINE HUNT

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	31	26 R
HONG KONG	29	22 H
TOKYO	20	13 S
LONDON	16	12 R
DUBAI	36	22 S
SAN FRANCISCO	23	13 H
NEW YORK	23	17 H
MOSCOW	4	2 R

S= sunny, CL= clear, H=hazy, R= rainy...

THUMBNAILS

A police officer wearing a face mask, walks past red telephone boxes in Manchester, northwest England on Tuesday. **AP**

Guinea's opposition leader claims election victory: Guinea's opposition candidate Cellou Dalein Diallo declared himself the winner of the West African country's presidential election Monday before the official results have been announced, setting up a tense showdown with the incumbent leader of a decade. Diallo said his declaration was based on information gathered at polling stations by his party, the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea. He did not give any figures to back up his claim. **AP**

Founder of UAE state-run WAM news agency passes away: Ibrahim al-Abed, the founder of the United Arab Emirates' state-run WAM news agency and a pioneering media figure as the oil-rich nation grew into a regional power, died Tuesday. He was 78. Al-Abed long served as the head of the country's National Media Council, a government regulatory body. **AP**

Israel to start human trial of Covid vaccine candidate by Oct-end: The human trial of Israel's Covid-19 vaccine candidate 'Brilife' will begin by the end of this month, with the Defence Minister terming it a "very significant moment", "source of national pride" that could bring great news for the country and the world. **PTI**

Angry Trump attacks polls, media, Dr Fauci

Trump, on third day of a western campaign swing, faces intense pressure to turn around flagging campaign two weeks away from polling day

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TUCSON (US), 20 OCTOBER

US President Donald Trump gestures at the end of a rally at Tucson International Airport in Tucson, Arizona on Tuesday. **AP**

or three weeks ago," referring to the days when he was hospitalised with Covid-19. But he said he felt better now than at any point in 2016. We're in the best shape we've ever been, he said.

"I'm not running scared," Trump told reporters before taking off for Tucson, Arizona, for his fifth rally in three days. "I think I'm running angry. I'm running happy and I'm running very confident cause I've done a great job."

His aggressive travel comes as Trump plays defense in states he won four years ago, though the president insisted he was confident as he executed a packed schedule despite the pandemic. "We're going to win," he told campaign staff on a morning conference call from Las Vegas. He went on to acknowledge that he "wouldn't have told you that may be two

"People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots," Trump said of the govern-

ment's top infectious disease expert. "Every time he goes on television, there's always a bomb. But there's a bigger bomb if you fire him. But Fauci's a disaster."

At a rally in Prescott, Arizona, Trump assailed Biden for pledging to heed the advice of scientific experts, saying dismissively that his rival wants to listen to Dr. Fauci. The doctor is both respected and popular, and Trump's rejection of scientific advice on the pandemic has already drawn bipartisan condemnation.

At his rally, Trump also ramped up his attacks on the news media, singling out NBC's Kristen Welker, the moderator

Trump plans to debate Biden despite 'unfair' rule changes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 20 OCTOBER

US President Donald Trump has confirmed his participation in the presidential debate with his Democratic challenger Joe Biden later this week, even as he raised objections about "unfair" changes in the debate rules by CPD.

In a letter to CPD on Monday, Trump, 74, and Biden, 77, are slated to face their final presidential debate at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee on 22 October.

The non-partisan Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) on Monday announced new rules under which it will mute microphones for two minutes of the rival speakers so as to give them uninterrupted opening remarks.

"I'll participate, I just think it is very unfair," Trump

told reporters aboard Air Force One on Monday.

"I will participate, but it's very unfair that they changed the topics and it is very unfair that again we have an anchor who is totally biased," the president said, responding to a question on changes in the debate rules by CPD.

In a letter to CPD on Monday, Trump 2020 campaign manager Bill Stepien expressed concern over the announced topics for what was always believed to be the Foreign Policy Debate in the series of events agreed to by both the Trump and the Biden campaigns many months ago.

"The topics announced by moderator Kristen Welker (fighting COVID-19, American families, race in America, climate change, national security, and leadership)

are serious and worthy of discussion, but only a few of them even touch on foreign policy, he said, asserting that almost all of the topics were discussed at length during the first debate "won" by Trump.

Under the new rules, Trump and Biden will each have two minutes of uninterrupted time to speak at the beginning of every 15-minute segment of the debate.

"The only candidate whose microphone will be open during these two-minute periods is the candidate who has the floor under the rules," the commission said in a statement on Monday. "For the balance of each segment, which by design is intended to be dedicated to open discussion, both candidates' microphones will be open," it said.

The commission said both

campaigns have agreed to the two-minute, uninterrupted rule. The decision to mute microphones comes after a chaotic first presidential debate that saw the two candidates interrupting each other repeatedly.

The 29 September debate, moderated by Fox News anchor Chris Wallace, was widely criticised for its off-the-rails nature.

The second presidential debate set for October 15 was cancelled after Trump refused to do a virtual face-off with his Democratic challenger despite concerns over his Covid-19 diagnosis. The presidential rivals separately held competing town halls last week instead.

The third and final debate will be moderated by NBC News correspondent Kristen Welker.

days reflecting on the prospect that he could lose.

Sudan to be removed from terrorist list: President Donald Trump on Monday said Sudan will be removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism if it follows through on its pledge to pay \$335 million to American terror victims and their families

US Justice Dept files landmark antitrust case against Google

WASHINGTON, 20 OCTOBER

The US Justice Department on Tuesday sued Google for antitrust violations, alleging that it abused its dominance in online search and advertising to stifle competition and harm consumers.

The lawsuit marks the government's most significant act to protect competition since its groundbreaking case against Microsoft more than 20 years ago. It could be an opening salvo ahead of other major government antitrust actions, given ongoing investigations of major tech companies including Apple, Amazon and Facebook at both the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission.

"Google is the gateway to the internet and a search advertising behemoth," US Deputy Attorney General Jeff Rosen told reporters. It has maintained its monopoly power through exclusionary practices that are harmful to competition. Antitrust cases in the technology industry have to move quickly, he said.

Otherwise we could lose the next wave of innovation. The Justice Department isn't seeking specific changes in Google's structure or other remedies at this point, but isn't ruling out seeking additional relief, officials said. Lawmakers and consumer advocates have long accused Google, whose corporate parent Alphabet Inc. has a market value just over \$1 trillion, of abusing its dominance in online search and advertising to stifle competition and profit.

Google responded immediately via tweet: Today's lawsuit by the Department of Justice is deeply flawed. People use Google because they choose to ~ not because they're forced to or because they can't find alternatives. **AP**

UK sets deadline for Manchester to accept virus restrictions

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, 20 OCTOBER

The British government has given the city of Manchester a noon Tuesday deadline to agree to tighter coronavirus measures, as Prime Minister Boris Johnson struggles to impose his plan for localised restrictions on restive regions.

Johnson's government is resisting a recommendation from its scientific advisors to have a short circuit-breaker lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Instead it has adopted a three-tier system for England, with areas classed as medium, high or very high virus risk. In the top tier, pubs have to close and people are barred from mixing with members of other households.

So far only the Liverpool and Lancashire regions of northwest England have been placed in Tier 3, the highest level. Nearby Greater Manchester, with a population of almost 3 million, has been holding out for more support for workers and businesses for a month.

We're trying to respond to a pandemic on the cheap, that's how it feels, said Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham.

Burnham said if Johnson's Conservative government imposed the measures on the city, we would obviously have to accept that decision, in the end it's the government's

Argentina passes 1 million cases as virus hits Latin America

ASSOCIATED PRESS
USHUAIA (ARGENTINA), 20 OCTOBER

At the edge of Argentina in a city known as The End of the World, many thought they might be spared from the worst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Sitting far from the South American nation's bustling capital, health workers in Ushuaia were initially able to contain a small outbreak among foreigners hoping to catch boats to the Antarctic at the start of the crisis.

But as Argentina passed 1 million virus cases Monday, it is now smaller cities like Ushuaia that are seeing some of the most notable upticks. Doctors have had to quadrup-

ple the number of beds for Covid-19 patients over the last month. At least 60% of those tested recently are coming back positive for the virus.

We were the example of the country, said Dr Carlos Guglielmi, director of the Ushuaia Regional Hospital. Evidently someone arrived with the coronavirus. Across Latin America, three other nations are expected to reach the 1 million case milestone in the coming weeks: Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

The grim mark comes as Latin America continues to register some of the world's highest daily case counts. And though some nations have seen important declines, overall there has been little relief, with cases dropping in one

municipality only to escalate in another.

The trajectory is showing that the pandemic is likely to leave no corner of Latin America unscathed.

The second wave is arriving without ever having finished the first, said Dr Luis Jorge Hernandez, a public health professor at the University of the Andes in Colombia.

Argentina has seen cases spiral despite instituting one

of the world's longest lockdowns. Colombia's major cities have seen a dip, but smaller areas like the department of Caldas in the coffee region are only now reaching a peak. Peru's overall numbers have dropped, but officials recently reported 12 regions are spiking back up. Mexico, likewise, has seen a rise in a quarter of all states over the last week. The result is that rather than a second virus wave like that being seen in Europe, epidemiologists anticipate a more sustained, plateau-like trend.

Our countries are still getting out of the first wave, said Dr Marcos Espinal, director of the Pan American Health Organization's Department of Communicable Diseases. A

great part of the population remains exposed and community transmission continues.

The virus' cruel path through Latin America is a consequence of weak public health systems, social factors like poverty and poor government decisions early on that resulted in flawed or limited testing and little contact tracing. Today the region is home to half the 10 countries with the highest total cases around the globe.

Argentina initially registered low virus case numbers but now has one of the highest rates of new daily infections per capita, according to Our World in Data, a non-profit online scientific publication based at the University of Oxford.

professionals.

"We need high-skilled innovators now more than ever, and the administration's attempt to rush these rules forward without properly considering their impact on thousands of people on the frontlines of developing vaccines and treatments and making critical supplies, as well as saving lives in our hospitals, could have devastating consequences at a critical moment in our history," said NAM senior vice president and general counsel Linda Kelly.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. It is most sought-after among Indian IT

professionals.

The lawsuit filed by the US Chambers of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and several other organisations in the Northern District of Columbia on Monday alleges that "harmful and haphazard rules on H-1B visas" if left in place, would affect hundreds of thousands of American-based workers and disrupt manufacturers' ability to hire and retain critical high-skilled talent.

The rules being implemented by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Labor undermine high-skilled immigration in the US and a company's ability to retain and recruit the

very best talent, said US Chamber CEO Thomas J Donohue.

If these rules are allowed to stand, they will devastate companies across various industries, he said.

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visa programme unworkable for hundreds of thousands of American-based workers who are essential to the recovery and renewal of the industry and the economy, Kelly said.

Seventeen individuals and organisations, including universities and businesses, in their lawsuit, have challenged the US Department of Labour's recent rule on wages related to H-1B visas.

The lawsuits filed in the US District Court for the District of Columbia on Monday alleged that the poorly-drafted and improperly-issued rule did not comply with the procedural rules for rule-making and is substantively "arbitrary", incorrect and irrational.

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(REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE)

Lawsuit challenges Trump administration's new H-1B visa rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 20 OCTOBER

Several individuals and organisations, including the US Chambers of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, have filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration's recent rules related to the H-1B visa, terming them "arbitrary" and "haphazard" regulations that will undermine high skilled immigration into America.

Early this month, the Trump administration announced new restrictions on H-1B non-immigrant visa programme which it said is aimed at protecting American workers, restoring integrity and to better guarantee that H-1B peti-

tion are approved only for qualified beneficiaries and petitioners, a move which is likely to affect thousands of Indian IT professionals.

The interim final rule announced by the Department of Homeland Security will narrow the definition of specialty occupation as Congress intended by closing the overbroad definition that allowed companies to game the system.

It will also require companies to make "real" offers to real employees, by closing loopholes and preventing the displacement of the American workers. And finally, the new rules would enhance the department's ability to enforce compliance through worksite inspections and monitor com-

pliance before, during and after an H-1B petition is approved.

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Se

The worker ant has evolved to become the weightlifting champion of the natural world

S ANANTHANARAYANAN

The flightless ant is a unique evolutionary adaptation of giving up one faculty to enable another.

The ant belongs to the insect order, *Hymenoptera*, a word built of the Greek *hymen* or membrane, and *pteron* or wing. And indeed, most of the members of the order, bees and wasps, have translucent wings. Honey bees, some wasps, and ants, which evolved from a line of wasps, are *eusocial* insects, or insects that collect food at a central place, with a large number of female workers acting in collaboration, for the benefit of the swarm, and the queen and male members.

The ant, however, stands out, in that the female ant has no wings. But then, the female ant has phenomenal strength to lift and carry food or prey over a distance, or to scamper for cover if there is danger. Christian Peeters, Roberto A Keller, Adam Khalife, Georg Fischer, Julian Katzke, Alexander Blanke and Evan P Economo, from Sorbonne, Universities of Lisbon and Cologne and the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, Japan, write in the journal, *Frontiers in Zoology*, a study of how the worker ant is different from the queen and males, who stay in the nest. They document how the body structure of the worker has evolved, to use the space that is freed by not having wings, to accommodate powerful muscles for other purposes.

The differentiating feature of *Hymenoptera* is the method of reproduction. Among ants, it is the queen that lays eggs, and the eggs may be fertilised or unfertilised. The fertilised eggs, which have two chromosomes, develop into the female, worker ants. The unfertilised eggs, with a single chromosome, turn into males. It would appear odd that the females yield their interest of propagating themselves to the queen to do all the reproducing. But it turns out that as females are borne of a union where the mother makes twice the genetic contribution that the father makes, the sisters share three-quarters of the genes, in place of only half that would be carried forward if they mated in the normal way.

The way of cooperative reproduction thus seems to mirror the leg-



inary cooperation that ants show in the way they work for the colony and nest. We see that evolution, which functions not at the level of the workers, but of the queen, has acted not on the queens, but on worker ants to make them more efficient. This showcases how natural selection can bring about genetic modification by affecting the fitness, not of the one that procreates, but of the genetically passive collaborator.

Peeters and his colleagues write that the success of ants as one of the most abundant animal groups, is generally explained as the result of how ants share the load and act in cohesion while foraging and within the nest. "However, the principal innovation of ants relative to their wasp ancestors was the evolution of a new physical form – a wingless worker caste optimised for ground labour," they say in the paper. "Ant reproductives (queens and males) need to fly when they are young, but workers are freed from the need to find mates and disperse. Instead, ant workers are famous for their abilities to lift and carry objects, suggesting adaptations for enhanced foraging on six legs," the paper says.

In the body of the winged ants, the queen and drones, the paper says,

the thorax, or the portion between the neck and abdomen, bears the wings and the legs, and supports the head and abdomen. The thorax is thus subject to conflicting forces. In the case of the wingless worker ant, the load of the wings is no longer carried. There is hence a change in the sizes of the back and front of the thorax – the flight muscles are eliminated, and the neck muscles become bulkier. These features have been studied since over a century but what effect elimination of the wings has had on the shape and structure of the ant frame has not been investigated, the paper says.

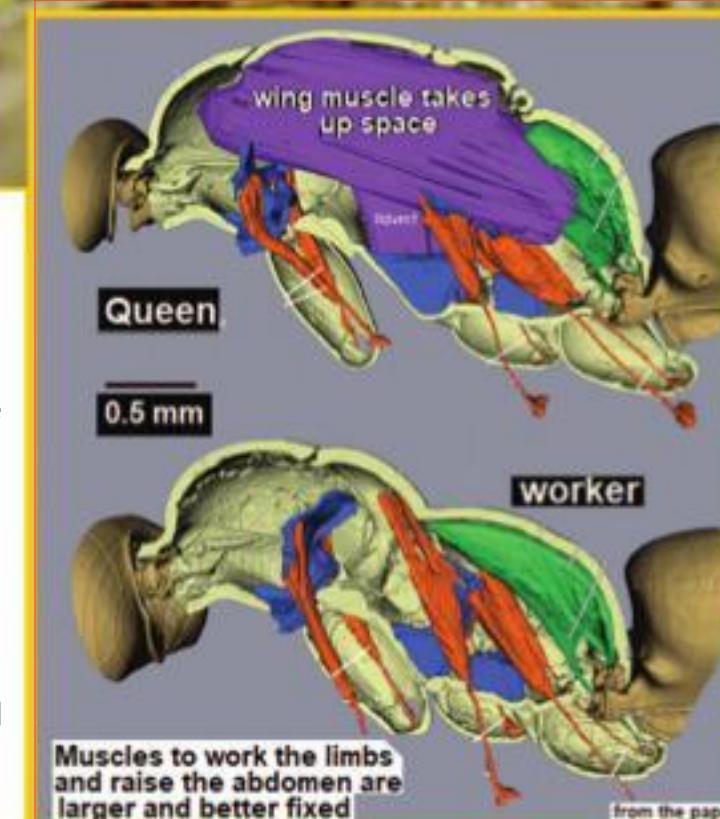
The current study considered two species of ants, one where the workers are not widely separated from the queens, and likely to represent the ancestral condition, and the other, where there is pronounced difference. Unlike past studies, the current work had a sensitive apparatus and micro-CT scans were carried out using a 3D X-ray microscope.

The results of the study identified five major changes in the worker thorax, involving the skeleton, muscles of the neck, legs and connection to the abdomen. Taken together, these changes "represent the evolution of an enhanced power core for more effective foraging on six legs," the paper says.

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ANT FACTS

- Ants can carry a burden more than 50 times their own weight.
- They communicate, the presence or the way to food or danger, by chemical signals.
- There are more than 10,000 known species of ants.
- It is estimated that there are more than 10 quadrillion (ten thousand million million) ants alive at any moment.



paper

tionary loss of the flying engine typical of insects allowed for a remodelling of the thoracic skeleton and associated muscles to power earthbound activities," the paper says. "All worker castes in *Hymenoptera* evolved specialisations for tasks complementary to the queen caste, but the chasm is much less dramatic in social bees and wasps, because the workers need to fly. Our insights in the adaptations of a thorax rearranged for strength on six legs reveal that ants maximised the merits of having queen and worker castes, allowing for much greater divergence in body size compared to social bees and wasps."

The writer can be contacted at response@simplescience.in

PLASTIC, PLASTIC EVERYWHERE

It breaks down into tiny particles, clogging not only the ocean but also the air we breathe

STEVE ALLEN & DEONIE ALLEN

The rise in the use of plastics has created a substantial increase in plastic waste. Of the 8.4 billion tonnes of plastic produced since the 1950s, around 6.3 billion tonnes have already become waste. With only nine per cent of plastic waste having been recycled, it raises the question – where did it all go?

Unfortunately, much of this waste is finding its way into the environment where it breaks down into very small particles – and there are frightening amounts of it. We do not yet know the full implications of that, but we do know small particles of anything can be harmful to human and ecosystem health. Such environmental plastic not only contains many harmful chemicals, it also picks up anything it comes in contact with such as DDT, heavy metals, mercury and many other pollutants.

As keen paraglider pilots and offshore sailors, we spend a lot of time in places that should be pristine. But having witnessed plastic litter in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, 1,500 nautical miles from land and in the air when flying, we could see that plastic was becoming a problem. Being pilots, we have a good understanding of weather and how air moves. We thought that if plastic pollution is in the air in cities, it is very likely that it will be blown to other areas.

So, we began our research into microplastic pollution in the French Pyrenees, choosing a sampling site as far away from towns and cities as possible. We used an existing weather sta-

tion that was already catching rain and snow for mercury and other chemical pollutant research.

During the sampling period, the area, 1,400 metres above sea level, was uninhabited and blanketed in snow. It should have been pristine. The rain and snow samples we captured were filtered, leaving just the solid material, which was rinsed off into test tubes with mild acid to remove any organic material.

We then took our samples to the lab in the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. There we used a technique called Raman spectroscopy, named after Indian Nobel Laureate CV Raman, to identify any plastic particles.

We fully expected to find microplastics in our samples but being more than 100 kms away from any towns, which we thought might be a source, we did not expect to find much – an average of 365 particles, per square metre, per day. It was our first proof of atmospheric transport of microplastic. The next logical objective was to look at where it was coming from.

Recent research has shown that up to 30 million metric tonnes of plastic is entering the oceans via rivers each year. We should naturally be concerned with what effect that will have on marine life which we rely on for our food but also our oxygen production.

The ocean has traditionally been seen as a resting place for plastic pollution. Once it goes in, it was thought that it would stay trapped in the ocean currents or sink into the ocean's bottom. However, the ocean ejects



seven giga tonnes of material each year in the form of salt and algae, so we decided to research whether plastic could also be ejected into the atmosphere through a mechanism known as "bubble burst ejection".

"Bubble burst ejection" has been well studied since about the 1980s and is known to eject a great deal of material. When a wave breaks, it pushes air into the water. The air forms bubbles and rises to the surface. As it does so it collects hydrophobic material on its surface. Once the bubble reaches air, it shatters ejecting nano-sized spray. That still leaves a hollow in the water, which fills rapidly. When the sides come together, it forms a jet of water, which ejects micro-sized matter up to 30 cm into the air where the wind can pick up the material along with the water.

Like when you drink soda water, the bubble ejection lifts the liquid up to your nose. You can see this on a beach in the form of sea spray or mist. Now imagine that on a global scale, on every beach with an

onshore wind.

For this study we chose a research site on the French Atlantic coast, a location well known for large waves and violent storms.

As this research was completely new, we employed two different but well-established atmospheric sampling techniques. The first being a simple vacuum pump with a glass fibre filter to extract any particles at about the same rate as human respiration during exercise (50 litres/minute). We wanted to measure what a human on the beach would be exposed to under normal conditions, like going for a run.

The second technique used a machine commonly known among scientists as a "cloud catcher", which uses a large fan to draw air over layers of Teflon filaments. The water droplets stick to the filaments and drain into a glass bottle.

We found onshore and offshore winds carrying microplastics but on the last day of sampling, the wind dropped to zero and a sea mist from the surf covered the beach. During

that sampling time we found 19 microplastic particles per cubic metre of air.

Considering a human breathes around 16 cubic metres of air every eight hours, we are inhaling a lot of microplastics in what we normally think is pure sea breeze. By taking the estimated marine boundary layer, air mass and a five kms length of beach, we found 136,000 metric tonnes could be blowing ashore every year. Not an insignificant amount and probably a conservative estimate.

It is clear that plastic pollution is becoming a serious issue. As yet, we do not have a lot of evidence that it will cause harm, but more research is being published every day pointing to worrisome human and ecosystem health problems. Might there be a threshold where it causes an irreversible effect? If so, will we reach that threshold before we know what level that is?

The writers are respectively, lecturer and Leverhulme Trust Research Fellow in civil and environmental engineering, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

PLUS POINTS

Record migration



A tireless bird "designed like a jet fighter" has been tracked flying more than 12,000 kilometres from Alaska to New Zealand, setting a record for non-stop avian migration.

The bar-tailed godwit set off from southwest Alaska on 16 September and arrived at a bay east of Auckland just 11 days later. The male bird, fitted with a transmitter and monitored by researchers, was tracked hurtling across the Pacific Ocean at speeds more than 88 kms per hour during its immense journey.

"What these birds do is really unimaginable," said University of Groningen professor Theunis Piersma, who leads the Global Flyway Network, a collaboration of scientists who track extreme migratory journeys.

The record-breaking godwit, known as 4BBRW after the blue, red and white rings attached to its legs, was one of four to set off together from their nesting grounds in the Alaskan tundra. They first flew hundreds of kilometres to mudflats, still in Alaska, where they feasted on shellfish, worms and seaweed to prepare for migration.

The birds require so much fuel to cross the world that they can double in size and consist of almost half fat following their pre-flight meal. They are able to shrink internal organs including their stomach and liver to lighten the load. "By the time they arrive in New Zealand, the tank is really empty; then they are half as heavy again," Piersma told Dutch newspaper Trouw.

Satellite data put the length of 4BBRW's epic flight at just under 12,874 kms, although the scientists believe that once rounding errors are taken into account the journey will have been a little over 12,000 kms. The other three birds were not tagged. Strong easterly winds are thought to have lengthened its journey by pushing the group off course.

The previous record for non-stop flight by a bird was 11,667 kms, set by a bar-tailed godwit known as E7 in 2007. It remains a mystery how the birds are able to navigate such long distances.

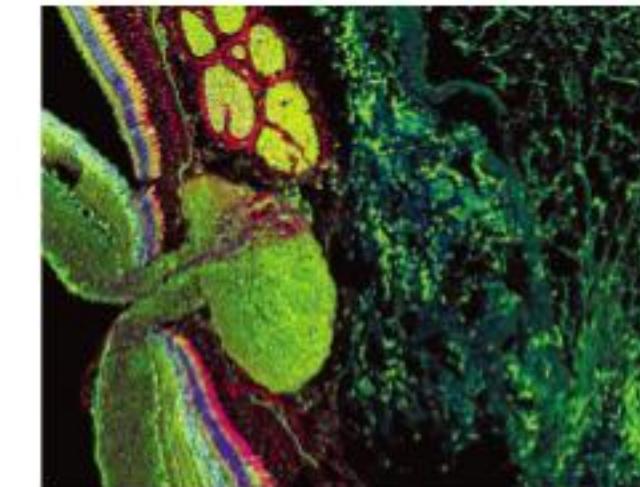
"They seem to have some capability of knowing where they are on the globe. We can't really explain it, but they seem to have an onboard map," Jesse Conklin, from the Global Flyway Network, told The Guardian.

The birds are not thought to sleep while they are in the journey, during which they are almost constantly flapping their wings, although they can doze for days upon reaching New Zealand.

"They have an incredibly efficient fuel-to-energy rate," Conklin said. "They have a lot of things going for them. They are designed like a jet fighter. Long, pointed wings and a really sleek design which gives them a lot of aerodynamic potential."

—THE INDEPENDENT

Unique eye



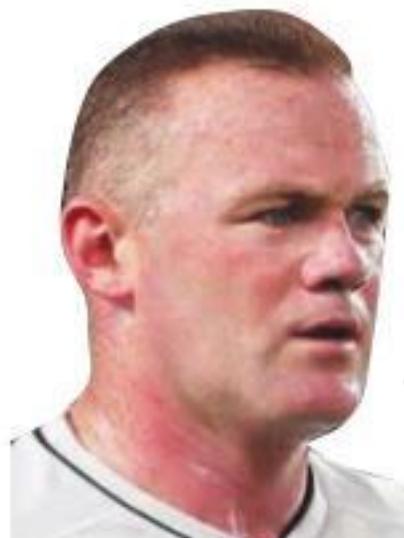
The picture above is of the eye of a rainbow trout, with the retina connected to the optic nerve and surrounded by a bed of capillaries.

Seeing is a metabolically expensive process, requiring lots of oxygen usually delivered by red blood cells in the blood flowing through the capillaries. Unlike for the human eyeball, the bed of capillaries in the rainbow trout are found outside of the eyeball. The distance between the capillaries and retinal tissue can potentially limit oxygen delivery to the eyes of the fish. So how does it get the oxygen it needs to help it see?

Scientists have managed to shed light on the question, identifying a mechanism which acidifies the blood as it nears the eyes of the fish. The acidification, carried out by proton-secreting enzymes in the capillaries, promotes oxygen release from the red blood cells. This boosts the retina's oxygen supply by more than 10 times, ultimately enhancing the fish's ability to process visual input.

The findings by an international team of scientists from Denmark, the US, Canada and Italy were published recently in the scientific journal *eLife*.

—THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN



For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

FOUL!

Wayne Rooney (in photo, left) was "angry and disappointed" with a friend who had visited him despite being told to take a Covid-19 test and later testing positive. Rooney, player-coach at Derby, was in action during the club's 0-1 home defeat by Watford on Friday, a day after the friend had visited him at his home.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Indian duo: Medium-pacer Manpreet Gony and wicket-keeper-batsman Manvinder Bisla are the two Indians players who will be featuring in the inaugural edition of the Lanka Premier League beginning next month. On Monday, they were picked by Colombo Kings.

Biopic Row: Indian actor Vijay Sethupathi has reportedly walked out of '800', a biopic of Sri Lankan cricketer Muttiah Muralitharan. In a statement, Muralitharan requested Vijay Sethupathi to opt out of the biopic after severe backlash on social media.

Surgery performed: Sri Lankan cricketer Dhananjaya de Silva has been discharged from hospital after surgery. Sources said that the 29-year-old had undergone "a long overdue operation" at the weekend. The surgery was necessitated by a "growth in the hand."

Grand Slam: The Indian judo team will be participating in the Budapest Grand Slam, a platform for Olympic qualification – between 23 October and 25 October 25. This will be the Indians' first tournament since the nationwide lockdown was imposed.

Big opportunity: Forward Dilpreet Singh has stated that the current phase - where the Indian hockey team are preparing for the Tokyo Olympics – is very crucial for youngsters. "With the Olympics postponed to 2021, a huge opportunity has emerged for them," he said.

Federer arena: A push to rename Basel's main sport arena after local tennis superstar Roger Federer fell through on Monday as it failed to garner enough signatures. Hampered by the coronavirus pandemic, his fans fell 1,800 signatures short of the 3,000 required.

Trio out: Manchester United will be without Harry Maguire, Mason Greenwood and Edinson Cavani for the Champions League trip to Paris Saint-Germain. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said at his Press conference in Paris the trio had not travelled with the squad.

Rajput skips Pakistan tour: Zimbabwe cricket coach Lalchand Rajput has not travelled with the team for a tour of Pakistan after the Indian embassy in Harare requested his exemption from the limited-overs series. A statement from Zimbabwe Cricket said that Rajput won't be a part of the tour following the request from the Indian embassy. In Rajput's absence, bowling coach Douglas Hondo would take charge of the team during the tour.



Chetan Shivram wins INRC Round 2: Team Akshara's Chetan Shivram rode on his overnight lead to emerge triumphant in the Rally of Coimbatore, Round 2 of the Champions Yacht Club FMSI Indian National Rally Championship 2019, in Coimbatore on an action-packed Sunday. Going into the second and final day with a mere four second lead over Suhem Kabeer (Privateer) and a 19-second lead over Younis Ilyas (Race Concepts), Chetan Shivram (with brother Dilip Sharan by his side) showed nerves of steel to win the overall INRC title as well as his INRC 3 category.

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FOUL!

KKR look to make amends vs RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ABU DHABI, 20 OCTOBER

Kolkata Knight Riders have finally found their mojo with the late inclusion of tearaway pacer Lockie Ferguson and they would look to avenge their first leg rout by the star-studded Royal Challengers Bangalore when the two sides clash in the IPL here on Wednesday.

It needed KKR nine games, and a change of captaincy, to realise the true potential of the World Cup star pacers for runners-up New Zealand, and when the Eoin Morgan-led side finally brought him in, he blew away Sunrisers Hyderabad with his relentless pace and variations. Ferguson made all the difference to KKR's yet another ordinary show, returning with sensational figures of 3/15 (four overs) and 2/2 from three balls in Super-Overs.

The imposing bowler, who returned with just two wickets from five games for KKR last season, was on the go from his first ball when he claimed his Kiwi skipper Kane Williamson, brilliantly mixing up his raw pace with slow deliveries to nail the opposition.

CSK vs RR: Match begins at 7.30 pm IST.



Impact of late, AB de Villiers' incredible assault of 73 not out from 33 balls, which had led to an 82-run defeat not many days ago, will be still fresh in their minds. It will be interesting to see how Morgan uses Ferguson against the likes of De Villiers, RCB skipper Virat Kohli and opener Aaron Finch.

Ferguson's inclusion gave the much-needed impetus to the side, but KKR are still struggling with their star all-rounder Andre Russell who capped yet another flop show with the bat. Their go-to man in the last edition, Russell, has just 92 runs from nine matches at an average of 11.50. The opposition bowlers seem to have found out his weakness for short deliveries. If his abysmal

form was not enough, the Jamaican has also picked up some niggles on the field and it would not be a bad play to give him a breather.

In spin, it remains to be seen whether they bring in Sunil Narine, whose action has been cleared. Kuldeep Yadav, who too was included against SRH after being benched for eight matches, looked decent along with their regular spinner Varun Chakravarthy.

RCB, on the other hand, are ahead of KKR by two points and occupy the third place in the table after their seven-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals. De Villiers has been in ominous form for them and single-handedly won the game with an unbeaten 55 from 22 balls in their 178-run chase against the Royals.