

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | 22 OCTOBER 2019

WEATHER

Max: 28.9°C
Min: 22.2°C
RH: 89%
Rain: 2.2mm
Forecast: Cloudy sky. Thundershower, rain likely. Max/Min 32/22°C



WORLD | 10

Boris denied new Brexit deal vote



SPORTS | 13

India 2 wickets away from 3-0 sweep of SA

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RTC has no money for salaries

Tells Telangana High Court it has only ₹7.49 cr, requires ₹239.68 cr to pay September salaries

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The Telangana state government and the Road Transport Corporation (RTC) management informed the High Court that they are unable to pay September salaries to the RTC staff on strike. The 49,000 striking workers salaries total nearly ₹240 crore, while the RTC has only ₹7 crore.

TSRTC managing director Sunil Sharma said this in an affidavit before the bench led by Justice Abhinand Kumar Shavili, dealing with two petitions of the Telangana Jathiya Mazdoor Union and TSRTC Bahujana Karimika Union pleading for a direction to TSRTC to pay the salaries for September, 2019.

Asked for a response, Mr Sharma said the critical financial position made RTC unable to pay the salaries on the first of every month from its own resources. It depended on government assistance to pay staff wages.

RTC is left with only ₹7.49 crore whereas ₹239.68 crore was required to pay September salaries.

J. Ramchander Rao, additional advocate general representing TSRTC, told the court that the strike prevented the RTC from realising the money. More than ₹125 crore of revenue was lost during the Dasara festival season due to the strike. The RTC could not pay workers.

Chikkudu Prabhakar, counsel for the petitioners, informed the court that employees on strike have been on duty in September in spite of which RTC is not paying them, making them the equivalent of bonded labour.

He added that 75 per cent of buses are being run, generating revenue. He prayed for a direction to RTC to pay from that. Rao countered that it would be used to pay part-time employees who have been working to provide transport facilities as regular employees were on strike. The case was adjourned to 29 October.



Traffic on one of the busiest stretches — Secunderabad to Begumpet — came to a grinding halt on Monday following stepped up security at Pragathi Bhavan, the office-cum-residence of Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu, to thwart Congress dharna in support of the striking RTC drivers. — S. SURENDER REDDY

Advantage TRS in Huzurnagar

Punters strike it rich on bypoll

S.N.C.N. ACHARYULU | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

After promising throughout the campaign to be a cliffhanger, the Huzurnagar byelection finally seems to have tilted on voting day towards S. Saidi Reddy, the candidate of the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS). Despite political analysts portending a clean win for the TRS, punters are still able to inveigle huge amounts on bets about the likely winner of the politically crucial bypoll battle.

According to sources, Mumbai-based bookies are offering an incredible equal amount to punters on their bets either side, be it the TRS or the Congress; with no takers or interest for other candidates, including the meek also-rans of the BJP and TD. Bookies were reportedly offering 95 paisa per rupee to punters for a bet in favour either TRS or Congress.

Estimates put the likely amount of money put on bets only on Huzurnagar in Mumbai circles at about ₹50 crore.

In addition to this, some local politicians and businessmen were placing huge bets amongst close circles and personally

EXIT POLLS SEE BIG WIN FOR BJP

● In Maharashtra, exit polls projected up to 243 seats for the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance and up to 90 for the Congress-NCP in the 288-member Assembly.

● In Haryana, they projected 75 seats for the BJP and 15 for the Congress in the 90-member House.

organised betting games.

The Huzurnagar byelection had created an unusually huge interest in political circles as both the TRS and the Congress had made it a battle of high stakes, making the result a pointer to not only their acceptance and strength, but also a crucial factor to future narrative.

Generally, most bookies conduct their own surveys and base the calculation of odds and the rewards they offer to punters based on these survey findings.

■ Page 6: Exit polls predict a win for TRS

Congress strike hits traffic hard

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Hyderabadis reporting for work on Monday morning were in for a rude shock. Across the city, at several locations, many found themselves stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic. The traffic was largely caused by shortage of TSRTC buses and the reopening of schools and colleges after prolonged Dasara vacations.

The heaviest traffic was reported on the Secunderabad-Panjagutta stretch, where commuters got extended by as much as two hours in some cases.

Bikers were seen resting against cars for some reprieve. Commuters tweeted that the nine-km-long stretch took more than an hour to cover, and they were all in the dark as to why this was happening.

Sai Kumar, commuting from A.S. Rao Nagar to Ameerpet, said he had seen such traffic only during heavy rains. The jam here was the result of protests by

Congress leaders, who had tried to lay siege to the CM's residence, Pragathi Bhavan, near Begumpet. Heavy security was deployed along the road. As a result, traffic crawled at an excruciatingly slow pace.

Murali, a techie in Hitec City, said he left his Neredmet home at 9.30 am. "I was stuck between Paradise and Panjagutta for nearly two hours. It took me another 45 minutes to get to my office," he said. The traffic, coupled with the shortage of TSRTC buses on the road, meant waiting times at bus stops on this stretch got even longer. One Twitter user complained that he had been stuck at Rasoolpura waiting more than an hour for a bus.

The Metro offered little solace. Cabins of trains running on this stretch were packed to the brim, with commuters jostling for space and bodies crushed into the steel walls.

■ Page 2: Begumpet Metro station shut down

Fire in Shine Hospital kills baby

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

A fire in the neonatal ICU (NICU) of Shine children hospital at LB Nagar early Monday killed an infant and injured five others. The babies were low birth-weight and being treated for pneumonia.

Out of a total 42 children at the hospital, six were in ICU.

The fire started at the ICU's refrigerator. D. Manasa's son, a pneumonia patient, had burns all over his body, which was covered completely with soot.



The infant victim

The boy's uncle, D. Sudershan, said his brother Naresh and Manasa had

admitted their baby on Thursday. "It is clearly the negligence of the hospital authorities which caused my nephew's death," he said.

According to Mr Sudershan, there was a short circuit in the NICU, during which time the children were brought out of ICU and kept outside without any incubator support or oxygen.

The hospital staff assured him there was nothing to worry about; when the family spoke of taking the baby away the staff said it was dangerous to shift an infant

in critical condition. "So we dropped the plan to take the baby to another hospital," he said.

The baby's father lodged a complaint with police against the hospital's managing director, Sumeel Kumar, as well as the on-duty Dr Mohan.

The ICU had no smoke detectors or fire alarms, fire officers said in their preliminary investigation. Other parents rushed out with their babies in their arms.

■ Page 4: Hospital lacks fire safety equipment

NATIONAL | SURVEY Stressful traffic conditions lead to diseases

Long commutes result in road rage

PAVAN RAO K. | DC BENGALURU, OCT. 21

It has long been suspected and now it is confirmed that with life becoming increasingly fast-paced in the metropolitan cities, people are suffering from stress during long commutes to work and are becoming prone to road rage.

An 'Age of Rage' national survey conducted by Tata Salt Lite in 10 metros of the country in August this year reveals that over half the people living in cities are prone to road rage due to commuting in stressful traffic conditions.

As many as 56 per cent of the 2,500 respondents surveyed admitted they were

likely to exhibit road rage if they were held up in traffic and were getting late for work and could over-react in their responses to the traffic police and other drivers. Exhibiting a greater degree of rancour, 16 per cent of those surveyed said they "were more likely" to misbehave with other drivers or traffic police and disobey traffic laws.

While most people think of road rage as violent assault, it also includes tailgating, abrupt lane changes, speeding, and verbal threats, according to the survey, which covered Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Pune and Lucknow.

Going by the National Crime Records Bureau, 4,255 incidents of road rage were reported in Bengaluru in 2015 and 50.1 per cent of those involved were injured in such incidents. While the National Family Health Survey — 4 makes no reference to traffic induced stress, it says 10 per cent of men in Bengaluru between the ages of 15 and 49 suffer from hypertension and 5.6 per cent of women in the same group suffer from the disease.

Emphasising that stress-related disorders due to driving are a serious health concern, the survey laments there isn't any focused study in India to monitor commuting stress affecting

an individual's physiology. "It's a serious concern, and more people are succumbing to stress brought on by staying in their vehicles for too long, leading to all sorts of trouble like depression, hypertension, anxiety, rage, diabetes, fatigue, and even heart disease," it adds.

Dr Aviva Pinto Rodrigues, fertility consultant, Nova IVF Fertility, who acknowledges that some day-to-day situations in traffic can be a contributing cause for hypertension, warns that the condition in men can lead to poor semen quality and in women, affect the lining of the uterus, which could potentially affect the healthy implantation of the embryo.

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Big award

UoH scholar Seema Prasad selected for Women in Cognitive Science (WICS) Travel and Networking award



It's good there is a continuous effort to keep illicit liquor away from the state

— V. Srinivas Goud
Excise minister

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Ashwayuja Bahula Navami till 3.30 am (Wednesday)
Star: Pushyami till 4.33 pm
Variyam: 4.36 am to 6.06 am (Wednesday)
Durmuhurtam: 8.32 am to 9.19 am and 10.46 am to 11.36 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
HIJRI CALENDAR
Safar 22, 1441 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.09 am
Zohar: 12.11 pm
Asar: 4.13 pm
Maghrib: 6.56 pm
Isha: 7.03 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.51 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.11 AM
MOONRISE --
MOONSET TODAY 12.35 PM

COUNTER POINT



Are we the real target?

SHORT TAKE

MMTS HIT BY EQUIPMENT FAILURE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

MMTS commuters travelling through the Begumpet station were stranded for 95 minutes on Monday because 14 services were disrupted following power supply failure.

The overhead equipment (OHE), the main source for power to the trains, tripped between Hyderabad and Hussainsagar junctions at around 11.30 am. It was rectified by 1.05 pm. Three services, one from Lingampally to Hyderabad and two from Hyderabad to Lingampally were cancelled while 10 MMTS services were partially cancelled following stoppage of services between Falaknuma and Secunderabad. A Falaknuma to Hyderabad service was diverted to Lingampally.

Railway officials are investigating on why the supply had tripped.

MBT DEMANDS ₹5L IN EX GRATIA FOR HABEEBA

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Majlis Bachao Tahreek spokesperson Amjadullah Khan Khalid has demanded an ex gratia of ₹5 lakh for family members of Habeeba Begum, who was killed on October 16 near NTR statue in Nizamabad after she was hit by an RTC bus.

The MBT leader, who visited Nizamabad and inquired about the incident, said the death was due to an unskilled driver driving the bus that hit Habeeba Begum.

He pointed out that the government has been hiring drivers who are not fully trained to run TSRTC buses because regular RTC employees have been on an indefinite strike now for more than a fortnight.

He said Habeeba Begum belonged to a poor family and her husband is a daily wage earner. He also demanded that the government provide a job to a family member of the deceased, besides a two-bedroom flat.

RTC adds to Monday blues for commuters

Returning from Dasara holidays, students and parents found it hard to rely on the services of RTC

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

It was a chaotic Monday morning for many in Hyderabad. Schools and colleges opened after Dasara vacations, which were prolonged by a week because of the ongoing TSRTC employees' strike. People had to wait for a long time at bus stops.

Confusion prevailed as many students and their parents did not know if they could depend on bus services. At Lakdikapul, students as well as office-

goers spent the better part of an hour craning their necks to see if any bus was approaching. Irshad, a degree college student in Ameerpet, had been waiting at the bus stop for 40 minutes. "I started at Koti. On a normal day, there is never any shortage of buses there. Today, there were only a handful of buses and they were all packed," he said.

Kiran Kumar, an intermediate student, had come from Chikkadapally in a share auto. "I didn't find a single bus on the RTC X

Roads-Indira Park route. Share autos never operate there, but they did today; I paid ₹20 to get here," he said.

Kumar, who works for a private company, said he had been waiting for an hour for a bus to take him to Tolichowki.

To make things worse, a bus stalled right in the middle of the busy Lakdikapul bus bay. Its conductor politely asked some young men standing on the footboard to get down and push the bus.

There were large crowds

at Koti, but there were considerably fewer buses than usual. Several commuters said they did not usually board the bus at Koti and one of them, a mechanic living in Chaderghat, said he thought he had a better chance of getting a bus here. "There were very few buses in my locality. I thought I had a better chance of finding a bus going to Secunderabad from here; I came in an auto," he said.

Others who overheard the conversation nodded in agreement; one of them

said he had come from Malakpet for the same reason. As the day progressed, however, things got better. By late afternoon, far more buses were visible on the road than in the morning. Mr K.S. Khan, TSRTC regional manager for Hyderabad, said services were hit in the morning due to unforeseen circumstances. "At some depots, we had some employees come in and confront the management. Service was affected at Uppal depot when an employee and his family

tried to enter the premises. But by the afternoon, things became more streamlined," he said. Mr Khan claimed that around 54 per cent of its buses were being operated.

A senior TSRTC official from Secunderabad region said around 49 per cent of its buses had been operated through the day. "We send a bus onto the route as soon as a (private) driver turns up for duty. We are struggling to find enough drivers," he admitted. However, even in the evening, there were still

many commuters who had trouble finding a bus. At Koti, Ms Archana picked up her son from school and waited for a bus for nearly 30 minutes. "If a bus doesn't come in another 10 minutes, I will take an auto," she said.

At Secunderabad, on the road going towards Clock Tower, Sai, a degree college student, had waited for almost 40 minutes for a bus that could take him to Bowenpally. When one finally came, it was packed to the brim and he had to stand on the footboard.



A motorist fortunately escaped without any injuries after a TSRTC bus ferrying passengers hit the two wheeler in Secunderabad. The bus had women passenger on the footboard of the bus — S.SURENDER REDDY

Students hang on footboards

KANIZA GARARI & RAJESWARI PARASA | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Engineering colleges, most of which are situated in the periphery of the city, reported low attendance on Monday although they were reopening after a gap of 22 days. Many students could not make it to their respective colleges, particularly those having RTC passes as most temporary conductors refused to entertain passes of any kind.

While many students, worried about the travel pains, preferred to skip college, those who braved and tried to make it did so by risking their very life. The daredevilry was such that many were seen hanging on one leg at the footboards of the overcrowded buses. To the passerby, the scene was scary, to say the least.

Students who travel by college buses found, to their dismay that the carriers did not turn up despite waiting for close to 45 minutes at the regular pick-up points.

Apparently, most college bus drivers have been provided temporary jobs in the TSRTC as a means to keep its show running in spite of the ongoing strike by the regular drivers. The 'hired' drivers are paid a handsome ₹1,750 per shift.

Mr Srinadh C., whose son is studying in a college at Medchal, observed, "Many engineering colleges are around 50 kilometres away from the city. Some students have to travel a distance on RTC buses to reach the pick-up points. The strike has adversely affected all of us. It is unfortunate that children are at home when they have to be engrossed in completing their syllabus."

Most engineering colleges are located in and around Uppal, Gandipet, Kompally and Medak and there are no Metro Rail services on those routes.

On select routes around Medak and Ranga Reddy districts, RTC buses ferry engineering students.

Some of those colleges have an arrangement with the Corporation, which plies extra buses and

caters exclusively to students of those colleges. Unfortunately, these link services are not operating for the past three weeks.

Last month, irate students broke the window panes of a bus belonging to Uppal depot, which did not operate too many buses to their college. To ease their woes, TSRTC added five more buses on the Ghatkesar-Bogaram stretch. As things stand, with the non-availability of drivers, students are deprived of transportation facilities.

Mahesh Raju a third year chemical engineering student, explained, "My team had to submit a project and we had to hire private cabs to go to college. It is so expensive a proposition that we will run out of our pocket money by the time the classes are fully regularised."

Mr Shankar K., who attends an engineering college in Ghatkesar, said, "Most of the students, who cannot afford college bus facility, depend on RTC services for which we have taken annual passes. The strike is making it difficult as we have to shell out extra money to attend classes."

The vicious circle is such that the transport contractor for private buses is facing problems of his own, particularly from the drivers, who are now on contract with TSRTC.

Mr Narsimha Chary, a contractor, said, "I have to send new drivers for college buses as the regular ones have not reported to work. They are not returning saying they are in villages, although we know that they are in the city, taking advantage of the temporary employment being provided by the corporation."

These new drivers were having difficulty with routes, recognising students and bus stops, which is resulting in the students going late.

In a related development, around 60 engineering students were at Pragathi Bhavan, expressing solidarity with the Congress leaders and demanding the government to resolve the RTC crisis, sooner than later.

TRS TRYING TO BUY OUT JAC LEADERS

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Is an act of desperation seeping into the TRS leadership, compelling it to lure JAC leaders away from the ongoing strike that is spearheaded by the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation Workers and Employees Joint Action Committee and help call it off, pronto?

Well that precisely is what is claimed by JAC convener Ashvatthama Reddy, who, on Monday, alleged that two ruling party MLAs (he did not name them) were making telephonic calls to JAC leaders and offering money to ensure that the strike (which is into its 23rd day) is called off.

He made these allegations while addressing the media soon after meeting Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan at Raj Bhavan urging her to impress upon the government the need to come forward for talks with RTC unions in order to resolve the issue amicably.

Stating that they were opposed to the government's move to call for tenders to hire more private buses for the Corporation, he said that the delegation had brought all the issues to the notice of the Governor, including the efforts of ruling party Legislators to lure Union leaders with money power to ostensibly sabotage their movement.

Mr Reddy said that they had also pointed out to the governor on how the state government was hoodwinking the High Court with regard to payment of salaries. He said that although only ₹20 crore was required to clear September salaries to workers, the government had lied to the court about the need for ₹239 crore to pay salaries. He pointed out that the RTC management is not empowered to call for tenders or hire buses without the approval of the Board. He charged that tenders were issued only under pressure from the Chief Minister.

Commuters rush to Metro

MADDEY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

BEGUMPET METRO STATION SHUT DOWN

FROM PAGE 1

Though the metro rush recalled the days of overcrowded city RTC buses, it caused severe inconvenience to the 3.5 lakh patrons during both peak-hour commutes on Monday. Unlike buses, the three-car metro cannot travel an inch without the automated doors closing.

Commuters were subject to extreme discomfort. They jostled, pushed and crowded each other in the jam. The ongoing RTC stir forced the school and college going crowd to take the metro, aggravating the congestion. Metro authorities were sanguine, focusing less on commuter comfort and more on the record footfall.

Nadella Bharat said commuting to Rasoolpura from Miyapur at 9 am was a nightmare. Every train and station was a sea of people. A few commuters tried clinging on the footboard but the automated door was uncooperative. "The train was so congested that we had a tough

time," he said. "I reached office filled with sweat."

While office-goers and the elderly shared their discomfort, college-goers complained the crowding prevented them from socializing. Also, they could not "foot-board".

"The metro was so jam-packed that I couldn't update my Whatsapp status while travelling," said poor K. Sharath Kumar. "My hand could not reach my trouser to take a call." He suffered this torture till Dilskhannagar from LB

nearly an hour. He got to his office in Raidurgam only after another 30 minutes. Many others reported they were upset with having to swipe in late at work, that too on a Monday morning.

Traffic from Panjagutta to Kukatpully too was affected. This stretch is almost always crowded due to highway traffic, and the city traffic only made things worse.

Nagar station. I felt suffocated," said Noufel, going from Uppal to Secunderabad for college.

"Though AC is available in the metro, it hardly made a difference in the extreme congestion. On RTC buses, foot-boarding rescues us. Metro should increase number of cars."

HMRL managing director Mr N.V.S. Reddy said the rush was noticed from morning. The train frequency was increased to every 3.5 minutes from 4.5 minutes during peak

Things were just as bad in other parts of the city as well. Swetha, a resident of Pragathinagar near Kukatpally, said it took her three hours to reach her office in Gachibowli. She tried to derive some humour from her ordeal: "I listened to nine songs with a view of Malaysian Township (near Forum Mall) in my window. I moved only a few metres in this time."

hours and seven minutes during non-peak hours. Additional trains were deployed.

In order to cater the needs of commuters, the Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited has run four additional trains.

The managing director said that the footfall crossed four lakh which has been a new record. He further said that HMRL ran 120 additional trips on Monday and the total trip count was 830 for the day.

Cops detain state Congress leaders for attempted siege

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The call given by the state Congress for a siege of Pragathi Bhavan, the official residence of Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao in support of the striking TSRTC employees, led to some dramatic events on Monday. Some party leaders were put under house arrest and party workers who came to protest were detained by the large number of policemen deployed at Pragathi Bhavan.

Tension prevailed in the surrounding areas as party workers continued to flock in. Malkajgiri MP A. Revanth Reddy surprised everyone by evading the police and reaching Pragathi Bhavan on Monday, where he was taken into custody.

Police had been deployed around the residence of Mr Reddy in Jubilee Hills on Sunday midnight but



Congress MP Revanth Reddy, who was staging a protest in support of striking RTC employees, was arrested after trying to enter Chief Ministers' office on Monday. — DC

they did not find him at his home when they went in and checked. Yet on Monday afternoon, out of the blue, Mr Reddy came out of his residence and surprised the police. Before they could react, he got on to his two-wheeler and reached Pragathi Bhavan in Begumpet along with other party workers. The police deployed

around Pragathi Bhavan immediately took him into custody and shifted him to Kamatiapura police station.

As all this was going on, Sangareddy MLA T. Jayaprakash 'Jagga' Reddy emerged from an autorickshaw and raised a protest. He too was detained by the police and with 35 others taken to the Shahnayathunji police station.



Striking back

BJP leader D.K. Aruna demands that government resolve RTC strike, says 'self-dismissal' only applies to KCR

Celebrations



St Francis Girls High School headmistress Carmelita Thaniyath offers prayers with students as they celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary in Secunderabad on Monday.

Draft road upkeep plan: KTR to babus

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, OCT. 21



K.T. Rama Rao.

Municipal administration minister K.T. Rama Rao on Monday asked Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation officials to draft a comprehensive road maintenance (CRM) programme to improve the maintenance of roads in the city.

Mr Rao was speaking at a Cabinet subcommittee meeting at the GHMC headquarters. He instructed officials to prepare the CRM prior to handing over not only the maintenance of roads, but also of greenery, pavements, and everything pertaining to roads to private players.

Speaking during the meeting Mr Rao said laying of new roads, identifying damaged roads, filling of potholes, preparing estimates and allocating works was done by different wings of the GHMC, which has led to coordination challenges.

He said to address these challenges the GHMC has initiated the CRM programme under which a total of 709 km of Hyderabad roads will be maintained. The CRM programme is aimed at providing better quality roads to citizens, he added.

■ **THE MINISTER** instructed the officials to prepare the CRM prior to handing over not only the maintenance of roads, but also of greenery, pavements, and everything pertaining to roads to private players.

■ **TO ADDRESS** the challenges, the GHMC has initiated the CRM programme under which 709 km of Hyderabad roads will be maintained, he said.

appointed. "The agencies will also take up the necessary digging and re-laying work, for which they will take permissions from HMWS&SB and Transco six months in advance. This will improve road infrastructure maintenance and work standards," Mr Rao said. He said the GHMC will from time to time monitor the quality of the work done by the agencies.

GOV LAYS STRESS ON INNOVATION IN AGRI SECTOR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday inaugurated a two-day regional workshop, 'Youth as Torch Bearers of Business Oriented Agriculture in South India', organised by Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) in collaboration with TAAS (Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences), APAARI (Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions) and ICAR-Naarm.

The Governor underscored the importance of innovations to bolster the agriculture sector and make it a profitable livelihood.

"Indian youth must utilize the opportunities available in the agricultural sector to, in course of time, emerge as torch-bearers of business-oriented agriculture," she said. Addressing the gathering, PJTSAU Vice-Chancellor Praveen Kumar said "There are several corporate players, community-based organizations, farmer cooperatives and processing industries, which all can influence the mindset of youngsters to make profits out of farming while ensuring welfare of communities."

"The linkages between these change agents are localized, thereby denying opportunities for a larger audience to learn, challenges and success stories of young men and women, who made a name for themselves in the agri-business domain," he said.

Road repair delayed by procedural speedbump

MADDEY DEEKSHITH | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The city road repair project has been moving one step forward and two steps back. Though officials from the engineering wing have prepared a plan for annual road maintenance, it requires a government order (GO) to start the project. And that is not forthcoming.

This apart, the government has asked the Hyderabad Road Development Corporation (HRDCL), which was created as a special purpose vehicle

(SPV) to fund the road repair works, to knock on the doors of financial institutions to obtain ₹1,500 crore in loans to carry out the road repairs.

Though the government has passed an oral order regarding the handing over of the roads for annual maintenance, the engineers are firm about getting a government order before the start of work.

According to highly placed sources in the corporation, the civic body has prepared four proposals pertaining to handing over road maintenance to

■ **The government** has given a verbal go-ahead but officials are waiting for government order.

private players. Since the role and responsibilities of the private agencies has been fixed in the proposals, the corporation's officials can float tenders for approval.

A senior GHMC official said that the corporation has been doing the paperwork for the loan. He said that 687 km out

of 709 km of maintenance work will be handed over to the private agencies and the remaining will be executed by HRDCL.

He said that the HRDCL will develop model corridors and lay roads on the outskirts of the city. The civic body alone requires ₹1,300 crore and HRDCL has the scope to borrow ₹200 crore.

"The entire fund raising and tender invitation process will consume at least one month if the government approves one of the proposals and releases the GO," he added.

Poor driving, speeding caused Shadnagar mishap

JAYENDRA CHAITHANYA T. | DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Failing to fasten the seat belt proved fatal for three youngsters while their two friends who followed the rule survived with injuries in a car crash last week at Shadnagar, the Cyberabad police has stated.

The police constituted a team and analysed the

reasons for the freak mishap, where two of the inmates of the SUV were flung out of the car to a distance of 30 feet.

The police said the driver lacked the adequate skills, and that the vehicle carrying eight passengers was speeding when the accident occurred. The SUV hit a rock on the roadside, spun in the air, overturned and landed in the adjacent fields.

On October 11, eight youngsters, employees of an IT company in the city, started in a car (TS08 GQ 4484) to Anantapur from Gachibowli, to attend a wedding. The accident occurred near Jedcherla.

Following the incident, the Cyberabad traffic police constituted a team to analyse the reasons for the deaths of the three passengers found that except for the driver and

the passenger beside him, none had fastened their seatbelts.

The police found that the SUV was travelling at 120 km per hour and the driver of the vehicle Lokesh lost control after overtaking a lorry from left. "The driver and the person in the passenger seat beside him survived with minor injuries. The two persons sitting on the rear seat were rammed

through the rear windshield and died," said Cyberabad DCP (Traffic) S.M. Vijay Kumar.

The DCP said lack of control over the vehicle, lack of driving skills and speeding were the causes of the accident. "All passengers travelling in a car need to fasten the seatbelt for safety. Sadly, many do it only when they are under police observation," he said.

Government of India
Public Enterprises Selection Board
invites applications for the post of
Director (Technical)
in
South Eastern Coalfields Limited
Last date of receipt of applications in
PESB is by **15:00 hours**
on **24th December, 2019.**
For details login to website
<http://www.pesb.gov.in>

SPACE | CRUNCH Experts want paid parking

Free parking concerns for motorists and govt

ADITYA CHUNDURU I DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The state government announced in May 2018 that malls will not be allowed to collect parking fees from customers who shop at outlets within their premises. Visitors could park their vehicles for free for up to 30 minutes. Above that period, they need not pay any parking fee if they show a bill of purchase made at the mall.

Shoppers were delighted with this "people-friendly" move. Over the next few weeks, mall owners came to terms with the fact that they had lost a revenue stream and there was nothing they could do about it. But was the government's move right?

Many urban planners feel free parking at public or private spaces is against free economics and good urban planning. However, there are others who contend providing parking is public good and government is duty bound to provide it.

According to Rutul Joshi, an associate professor at CEPT University (formerly Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology) in Ahmedabad, the move towards free parking is indicative of public perception. "This is the conventional thought about parking. Even courts think the same way. But

as incomes increase, so do number of vehicles. We cannot go on considering parking as an assured and free service. We have to start putting a price tag on it. The job of the government is to provide quality public transit and not free parking," Joshi observes. He believes parking space is real estate. How long can it be subsidised? A vehicle is a private commodity. One cannot expect public entities to provide free space to private goods.

Mr Vijay Gopal, an activist who had filed a public interest litigation in the High Court against malls collecting parking fee, contends private establishments cannot be allowed to charge customers for parking when they are making purchases at their premises. He believes parking should be free. But how about when space runs out?

"By law, the government has no other option but to provide parking to citizens," Mr Gopal says but concedes that when space runs out, the government can charge a fee. "However, the fee should be economical," he states while in the same breath adding, "For some it could be economical, for others it might not."

It is this very attitude that Mr Joshi resists. He believes the idea of forcing businesses or even government entities to provide free services is against basic laws of

economics. He elucidates this with an example: "If I buy a dining table, why should the government give me space to place it. Ideally, the government should charge for parking everywhere. Let the market forces decide how expensive parking should be. It must be left to businesses to decide whether or not they want to provide free parking service."

Mr A.G. Krishna Menon, a Delhi-based architect and urban planner, believes there must be a paradigm shift in how one thinks about public spaces. "A car is not conducive to good city life. Very few people have them. Voices that ask for free parking are those of the elite looking for their own benefit," he remarks. He points out that most of the people who use roads are pedestrians. "Why shouldn't we spend more on them? Why not spend enough on public transport that is used by many people," Mr Menon asks.

The voices of Mr Menon and Mr Gopal, however, are in a minority. Most people have not yet given it a detailed thought. Mr Satish Kumar Pendyala, who had approached Mr Gopal to file his plea, is not happy with the status quo. He believes people should be allowed to park their vehicles inside commercial establishments for at least three hours.

IN BRIEF SSC exam fee dates revised

Hyderabad: Dates for remittance of examination fee for SSC exams' regular and private candidates, who failed once, have been revised by the Office of the Directorate of Government Examinations. The exams are due to be held in March. All heads of recognised schools have to remit the fee in the prescribed treasury challan by enclosing the list of the candidates to it. The last date for remittance of exam fee by the candidates to the headmasters is November 7, without any late fee and the respective headmasters have to submit them in one lot by November 11. With a late fee of ₹500, the students can pay till December 23, whereas headmasters have to remit by December 27.

AI, ROBOTICS TO BE PROMOTED IN DISTRICTS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

The Telangana state government is setting up a technology centre (TC) and an extension centre (EC) costing ₹300 crore. This was announced during a review meeting between Telangana State Planning Board vice-chairman B. Vinod Kumar and industrial department officers and government officials at his residence on Monday.

Mr Vinod Kumar said that steps are being taken to set up new centres to boost employment opportunities to youth besides giving them professional exposure in Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotic and emerging technologies.

He instructed the collectors of Warangal, Karimnagar, Sangareddy and Khammam districts to complete the land acquisition process for the establishments of the centres so that a large number of people could benefit. Mr Kumar recalled that during his tenure as MP, he had held several consultations with the Union industries minister to set up an extension centre in Karimnagar.

■ **PLANNING BOARD** vice-chairman B. Vinod Kumar said that steps are being taken to set up new centres to boost employment opportunities.

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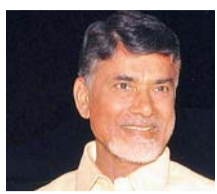
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Eyeing victory

KTR thanks TRS leaders and activists who worked in Huzurnagar for the past month, says confident of victory



AP failed to create assets, but is damaging existing public assets

— N. Chandrababu Naidu TD president

23 INVOLVED IN DARSHAN SCAM ARRESTED

DC CORRESPONDENT NELLORE, OCT. 21

Tirumala II Town police apprehended 23 people involved in a scam pertaining to darshan, accommodation and 'prasad' distribution at Tirumala on Monday. II Town police, led by circle inspector Chandrasekhar, responded quickly when they came to know about misuse of a recommendation letter for darshan issued by Gudur legislator V. Vara Prasada Rao. The scam came to light when TTD employees, who were manning Vaikuntam queue complex at Tirumala, came to know on close questioning that five persons who were going for darshan, with the tokens obtained through the MLA letter, said that they paid ₹21,000 to a broker for the special darshan tickets. Police picked up and grilled the broker in question Srinivasulu Naidu and the information provided by him led the police team to detain as many as 22 more brokers involved. The police also found role of two regular employees of the TTD and an outsourcing staff behind the illegal sale of laddus.

Parents risk their lives to save babies

They reached the 4th floor and rescued kids

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU I DC HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Courageous parents risked their lives to save five babies stuck in the smoke-engulfed Neonatal ICU (NICU) in Shine Children Hospital at LB Nagar early on Monday. Parents sleeping in the ground floor waiting hall were woken by a blast and saw patients and others fleeing the hospital. Yet these parents climbed upstairs to the fourth floor to rescue their children.



Itharaju Giri and Mamatha, parents of three-month-old baby, who escaped with burn injuries and is undergoing treatment at Ankur hospital in Boduppal.



M Naveen, who first entered the ICU and rescued three infants.

went near the beds and handed three children over to other parents standing behind me." Mr I. Giri, whose three-month son escaped with minor burns, said:

"Around 2:30 am we were sleeping when we heard the blast and woke up. We enquired and heard there was a fire on the fourth floor. We immediately rushed upstairs."

"The NICU was filled with smoke and we couldn't see anything," he added. "It became difficult to identify our child. We risked our lives and rescued our child."

INFANTS SHIFTED TO OTHER HOSPITALS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

A 12-day baby girl of Mattappally Suguna w/o Mattappally Nagaraju age: 25 yrs, r/o Urumalla village, Chityal Mandal, Nalgonda, was shifted to Disha Hospital, LB Nagar.

Three-month baby boy of Itharaju Mamatha, w/o Itharaju Giri, r/o Shivannaguda village, Marriguda Mandal, Nalgonda district shifted to Ankura Hospital, Boduppal.

45-day baby boy of Abdulla, s/o Mohammed Khaleel, r/o Pahadi Nagar, Bhongir shifted to Safe Hospital, Malakpet.

Baby girl about 37 days old of Saritha, r/o Chinthabavi village, Devarkonda, shifted to Ankur Hospital, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad.

All the remaining 37 new born babies were also shifted to various hospitals.

MAN KILLED IN FREAK ACCIDENT

Visakhapatnam, Oct. 21: A man travelling on a bike died on the spot after being hit by a truck tyre. The incident took place in Kothavalasa in Vizianagaram district on Monday. The victim was identified as Pilla Achhibabu from Mushiram village under Kothavalasa mandal. According to Kothavalasa police, a truck was on its way from Visakhapatnam to Kothavalasa. Suddenly the front right tyre burst and the rim hit Achhibabu, who is coming from the opposite direction.

under Kothavalasa mandal. According to Kothavalasa police, a truck was on its way from Visakhapatnam to Kothavalasa. Suddenly the front right tyre burst and the rim hit Achhibabu, who is coming from the opposite direction.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

CHARLOTTE MARY DARA
Slept in the Lord on 21.10.2019 in Melbourne, Australia
W/o Mr. Samuel Dara
D/o Mr. Desmond Meledu & Mrs. Marvis Meledu
Charlotte your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. You've lived life to the fullest and left a lasting impression on everyone you met. We Miss You **CHARLOTTE**
Inserted by: Family Members
(S/1920/D01084)

In loving memory...
7th Anniversary

Gowni Srinivas Goud
DOB: 09.01.1962 DOD: 22.10.2012
Your memories will be remembered in our hearts forever.
Seetha Devi (Wife)
Vaishnav Goud (Son)
Poojitha (Daughter-in-Law)
Sai Pranav Goud (Son)
& Family

13th ANNIVERSARY
He will soothe up death forever. Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces (IS 25:8)

OLIVE PRIYANATH
DOB: 05-08-1973 DOD: 22-10-2006
Husband: Kirubakaran
Son: Joey, Parents: Priyanath, Sarala
Sisters: Keren, Julia Moses,
Brother-in-law: Moses, Samson & Children
Contact : 9440915468

9th Day Ceremony
With profound grief & Sorrow we inform the sad demise of

Sri S. Narender Reddy (S.N. Reddy)
Who left for his heavenly abode on 15.10.2019
9th Day Ceremony will be held at our house on Wednesday 23rd October at 12 Noon at H.No: 11-1-333/A, Near Pragathi School, Safalmandi, Secunderabad
Inserted by: Family members

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

CHINDADA GABRIEL DEIVADHEENAM
Inserted by: Christopher Roy Paul Ratna Rao and Family Members

IN MEMORIAM
Absent in the body, Present with the Lord. -2Cori.5:8

G. ANANDA RAO
(13-1-54 to 19-10-19)
Pastor of Bethel Prayer Church, Chikanagar, Uppal (D.A. Friththiguda, Novvalaanda, (Nagale)
Memorial Service on 22-10-2019, at Bethel Church, Chikanagar
Celebrating the glorious ministry and the humble life of HIS servant
Issued by: John Prakash, Chief Engineer, Redd.

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

RATAN HEERA GOPAL
DOB: 16.08.1966 DOD: 22.10.2018
S/o Late Ratan Babu Rao
"You remain with us every moment, guiding us in spirit & in action."
Inserted by: **RATAN FAMILY**
H.No. 3-5141/E/2/A, Eden Garden Ramkoti, Hyderabad.
Ph: 8686441353, 9848764870

14th ANNIVERSARY

Smt. Kolluru Nagaveni Mudiraj
Ever Loving Memory of Your Love and Samskars You have given to Us.
Husband: **K.Sadanandam Mudiraj**
Son: Smt&Sri: **K.Pawan Kumar & Usha Sree**
Daughters: **Smt.Meenukshi Ramesh Kum.Dhyaa & Kum.Anjali & Grand Children**
Smt. Kolluru Nagaveni Mudiraj Charitable & Memorial Trust, Aghapura, Hyd Ph:9346256087

5th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

DASS ELIAS
WE MISS YOU APPA
Ever Loving: WIFE, CHILDREN & GRAND CHILDREN
(B/1920/D00122)

5th ANNIVERSARY
In Loving Memory of

DEVINDER KAUR (Shano)
DOD : 22-10-2014
In grief :
BALWANT SINGH & FAMILY
Ph: 9391119872

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY
I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 23:6

CHINDADA GABRIEL DEIVADHEENAM
"Your memories remain in our hearts forever."
On 22nd Oct. 2019 Memorial Service will start at 7 pm, Venue 16-2-148/C, Anand Nagar, New Malakpet.
C/o PETROS HIGH SCHOOL

5th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. B.J. AUGUSTINE
DOB: 07-11-1945 DOD: 22-10-2014
"Deep in our Hearts a memory is kept, of one we loved and shall never forget"
Inserted by:
Wife: **Mrs. Girija Augustine & Family Members.**

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE & LOVING MEMORY
5th ANNIVERSARY

RAJ CHATRAVAL BAJOR
With Love:
BAJAJ & VAZIR FAMILY
(S/1920/D01087)

DESAM LEADER ARRESTED FOR FINANCIAL FRAUD

Kurnool: P. Tikka Reddy, the Telugu Desam incharge of Mantralayam in Andhra Pradesh, was arrested by the Telangana state police at Yemmiganur on Monday over a financial dispute. Sources said, Tikka Reddy was a partner in a brewery, Paras Collins Pvt Ltd, near Shamsabad. The company purchased 1 lakh tonnes of paddy husk and owed ₹12 crore but defaulted.

OBITUARY

Alhaj Mohammed Abdul Rasheed alias Babu Sait
Managing Partner of Mysore-I-Agarbathi Works (Mastana Durbar Agarbathi)
Expired on: 21st October 2019.
Namaz-e-Janaza at Jamia Masjid Subhash Road, Secunderabad after Zohar prayers 1.30pm, 22nd October. Tuesday Taffeen at Kavadiyada, Sec'bad.
Inserted by: **FAMILY MEMBERS**
Ph: 9391107196, 9396577196

MEMORIAL SERVICE
Death leaves a heartache no one can heal. Love leaves a memory no one can steal.

Mrs. WENDY CHAPMAN
Memorial Mass on 23.10.2019 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Band Lines at 6 PM.
Inserted by: **Brian Chapman**
(CA-3055)

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. C.G. DEIVADHEENAM
Retired Divisional Engineer (DPE) AP Transco
"You remain with us every moment, guiding us in spirit & in action."
On 22nd Oct. 2019 Memorial Service will start at 7 pm, Venue 16-2-148/C, Anand Nagar, New Malakpet.
Inserted by:
M.M. CLARA SUSEELA (Wife) & Sons, Grand Children.
Ph: 8639833035

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY
"Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints." Psalms: 116:15
IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Late KALAPALA EDWIN WILSON
DOB: 04.02.1964 DOD: 22.10.2017
"A great soul serves every one all the time, a great soul never dies, it brings us together again and again."
Inserted by: **Wife, Children & Family Members**
SAM CATERERS
Golnaka, Amberpet, Ph: 989893578/ 9849896774
(S/1920/D01087)

Hell on highway



A private bus overturned at Laxminagaram in Khammam district in the wee hours of Monday. — DC

Passenger killed as bus overturns

DC CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM, OCT. 21

A passenger travelling in a private bus died when it overturned near Laxminagaram in Konigera mandal of Khammam district on Monday around 4:30 a. m. Six other passengers, who sustained injuries in the mishap, were shifted to the Khammam hospital.

The bus was going from Kukatpally Housing Board in Hyderabad to Bhadrachalam. It overturned when the bus driver applied sudden brake to avoid hitting a vehicle coming from the opposite side. Doddi Chittibabu, a resident of Tegada village under Charla mandal, was killed on the spot. Those injured in the incident are stated to be out of danger.

COLLEGE BUS RUNS OVER TWO SISTERS

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS I DC ADILABAD, OCT.21

Two sisters riding a two-wheeler were run over by a private college bus while they were on their way home at Ravindranagar Colony here on Monday. Their brother who was riding the two-wheeler survived.

The locals alleged that the accident took place due to the negligence of the driver of the bus belonging to Vidyarthi College. Police, however, said that the vehicle skidded and came under the wheels of the bus.

The victims were identified as Shaziya, 23, and Shafiya, 21, of Khanapur Colony in Adilabad. Shaziya died on the spot and Shafiya while undergoing treatment at the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences here. They were doing their teacher training course at a local DIET college.

The victims' father Suban works as an attendant at a DIET college. It is said that the two girls had got a good rank in the DIET-CET and got seats in the local DIET college. Their brother Wajid was riding the bike and the incident took place a few minutes just before they reached home.

Locals complained that road accidents were frequently taking place at the same spot. The road was congested and large vehicles like buses find it difficult to traverse the section of road.



After colliding with the vehicle, the bus swerved and drove into a roadside field. — DC

Temporary RTC driver hits vehicle

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

A TSRTC express service, being driven by a temporary driver, reportedly collided with a car near Bhongir on Monday evening. Sub-inspector P. Anjaiah said that around 15 of the 70 passengers travelling in the bus were injured and taken to a hospital for treatment.

"The passengers are out of danger," Mr Anjaiah said. It is learnt that four persons were kept at the hospital and the rest were sent home after first-aid.

The car was entering the road when it was hit by the bus. The bus then swerved and drove into a roadside field. The car was badly damaged.

The bus, belonging to the Parkal depot in Warangal Rural district, was returning from Hyderabad. The depot manager at Parkal said a constable from Bhongir had called to inform him of the accident.

"We have been unable to contact the driver or the conductor. Both their phones are switched off," he said.

3 TRS leaders killed in Rahadari mishap

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, OCT. 21

Three TRS leaders were killed and four others injured when the vehicle in which they were travelling in rammed into a stationary lorry on the Hyderabad-Karimnagar national highway near Gajwel in Siddipet district

during the early hours of Monday.

The deceased have been identified as Kanukuntla Mallesham (47), Janga Prabhakar Reddy (50) and Janardhan Reddy (40). All three were TRS leaders and residents of Manakondur mandal of Karimnagar district. Mallesham was a former

■ **THEY WERE returning after attending the pre-release function of film Tupuki Ramudu in Hyderabad.**

vice-chairman of Manakondur Agriculture Committee. Prabhakar

Reddy was an RMP doctor and a senior TRS leader, while Janardhan Reddy was a ward member of Vegurupalli village panchayat.

The TRS leaders, along with four others, were returning after attending the pre-release function of film Tupuki Ramudu at JRC convention hall in

Hyderabad. Police shifted the four injured to the Gajwel Government Hospital. Bodies of the deceased have been sent for post mortem.

Health minister Etala Rajendar expressed his grief at the death of the three TRS leaders and expressed his condolences to the bereaved families.

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TELANGANA: MAHABUBNAGAR | KHAMMAM | KARIMNAGAR | WARANGAL | NIZAMABAD
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Water mark

Minister Indrakaran Reddy asks officials to speed up Mission Bhagiratha works and complete them at the earliest



AP is the first to give ₹5 lakh compensation to Home Guards who die on duty

— Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy
AP Chief Minister

SHABIR ALI: KCR TRYING TO BE A DICTATOR
DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

Former minister Mohammad Ali Shabbir accused Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao of suppressing all organs of democracy and stated that the state was heading to a serious constitutional crisis.

Speaking to the media on Monday at his residence, Mr Shabbir Ali, a senior Congress leader, said Mr Rao had been trying to supersede the legislature, the executive and even the judiciary and was trying to impose dictatorship where the people are not allowed to exercise their right to freedom of speech or express dissent against government's wrong decisions.

Mr Shabbir Ali was kept under house arrest by the police since 6.30 am on Monday to prevent him from participating in the party's dharna in front of Mr Rao's camp office Pragathi Bhavan. He strongly condemned the arrest of thousands of party workers and leaders across the state to foil their attempt to lay siege to Pragathi Bhavan.

He said almost all Congress leaders were placed under house arrest early on Monday, and those who managed to leave their homes taken into custody and shifted to various police stations. He said that the Congress leaders wanted to assemble at Pragathi Bhavan to submit a memorandum to the Chief Minister seeking immediate resolution of the ongoing RTC strike.

"KCR appears to be in no mood to even accept a memorandum on public issues," he said.

The former leader of the Opposition in the Council alleged that Mr Rao had used the police to foil a simple protest in such an aggressive manner as if using the military to thwart a coup.

Remembering the martyrs



Home minister Mohammad Mahmood Ali along with Telangana DGP M. Mahendar Reddy and city police commissioner Anjani Kumar (left) and IGP Swati Lakra salute martyrs to mark the Police Commemoration Day at the Goshamahal stadium in Hyderabad on Monday.

— P. SURENDRA

MLAs, MLCs wait for money to develop their constituencies

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

According to MLAs, the Constituency Development Fund requires ₹480 crore but the government pared down the amount to ₹298 crore in 2018-19. They do not know what they will get now.

TRS and Opposition MLAs have been struggling to fulfil their poll promises in their constituencies due to the non-allocation of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) by the government for 2019-20.

The CDF was ₹1 crore in the undivided Andhra Pradesh and was increased to ₹1.5 crore in 2014-15 financial year, and again to ₹3 crore in 2016-17 by the Telangana state government. In the present year, the government did not take any steps to allocate the CDF to the MLAs. As a result, they are worried about how to fulfil their promises to the public.

There are 120 MLAs, including one nominated MLA, and 40 MLCs in the state. The government allocated ₹362 crore to the CDF in 2017-18 Budget. After that, the

government revised the allocation to ₹298 crore.

According to the MLAs, the actual amount required for allocations under the CDF was ₹480 crore but, for one or the other reason, the government kept reducing the amount and so as far the current financial is concerned, there is no clarity on the allocation of the budget for the CDF scheme.

However, finance department officials said that in view of the financial crunch, the govern-

ment is taking steps to arrange alternative funds for the MLAs to take up their constituency development activities.

The officials disclosed that the state government had allocated ₹10,000 crore in the Budget in the name of special development funds and these would likely be released to them based on recommendations by MLAs and MLCs.

The MLAs are saying that they would have to send proposals to the chief minister (CM) for the sanction of special development funds but they did not know when the green signal would come from the CM office for their proposals.

Meanwhile, Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramark said that the K. Chandrasekhar Rao government had spent thousands of crores on advertising projects but did

not allocate the funds under the CDF scheme.

He said that the funds under the CDF are crucial for MLAs solve the drainage, roads problems and also to develop anganwadi centres.

He alleged that the Chief Minister has not been respecting elected public representatives.

BJP MLC, N. Ramachandra, said that the CM has promised the opposition and ruling party MLAs that he would allocate funds to take up micro-level development works in their constituencies but the government stopped the funds suddenly and this impacts the pace of development.

Maintaining that every MLC is facing this issue, he said "We requested the finance minister in the recent budget session to allocate the CDF and also asked that the CM consider the issue's gravity and seriousness."

OWAISI: GO BY VALUES OF THE CONSTITUTION

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

MIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday tweeted that a whole generation of Indians had grown up in the shadow of the Babri Masjid's occupation and demolition. A judgment that upholds justice will reinforce the rule of law and deter those who want to distort it to rule of majority.

Mr Owaisi urged the Supreme Court to go by values laid down in the Constitution as generations would feel its impact.

The Supreme Court on Monday had allowed Muslim parties, including Uttar Pradesh Sunni Wakf Board, to file their written note in the decades-old Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case, in which they have submitted that the verdict will have "consequences" for the future polity of the country.

S.N.C.N. ACHARYULU | DC
HYDERABAD, OCT. 21

An overwhelming 84.75 per cent of polling was recorded in the prestigious Huzurnagar Assembly by-election on Monday.

Although this was 1.62 percentage points less than in the 2018 Assembly elections, it was significantly higher than the 81.18 per cent polled in 2014.

The administration heaved a sigh of relief, as polling was completed with-out any untoward incidents.

Both the Congress and the TRS expressed confidence about coming up trumps. Counting of votes is scheduled for October 24 and the result is expected by noon the same day.

A total of 28 candidates are in the fray, including those fielded by the BJP and the Telugu Desam.

Since its creation, the Huzurnagar seat has been a virtual citadel of TPCC president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy as he was elected

thrice in succession. The ruling party is determined to wrest it from the Congress, this time around.

The byelection was necessitated after Mr Uttam Kumar Reddy vacated the seat, upon his election as Nalgonda MP. This now pits Mr S. Saidi Reddy (TRS), N. Padmavathi Reddy (Congress), Mr Kota Rama Rao (BJP) and the TD's Chava Kiranmayi.

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao predicted a big win for his party nominee. He said that according to information available with him, Mr Saidi Reddy was poised to win with a massive margin.

On his part, TPCC treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy pointed out that exit polls may favour the TRS, but the eventual outcome would be in favour of the Congress, whose candidate Padmavathi Reddy, he averred, will uphold the party's track record in Huzurnagar Assembly constituency.

KTR sees win, 85.7% of Huzurnagar votes

EXIT POLLS SHOW BIG WIN FOR TRS

From Page 1

With bookies offering the same amount of money on TRS and Congress should indicate that whoever wins in Huzurnagar may get a small majority and the fight would be close. However, most political and media exit polls, besides professional surveys conducted by some agencies predict a big victory for the TRS.

In the December elections, the bookies had favoured the TRS retaining power. In the byelections, they are unable to predict a winner. As a Congress inside said, "till last evening, it felt we were heading for a big win. But the money pumped in the last few hours seem to have swung the battle towards the TRS."

A TRS leader said, "We are headed for a huge win, as expected."

CSIR-INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research)
HYDERABAD - 500007

Notification No. R-01/2019
Applications are invited from the eligible candidates in the prescribed format for filling-up of one position of "SCIENTIFIC CONTENT WRITER / MEDIA LIASION CO-ORDINATOR". For complete details and application form visit our website www.ictindia.org. The last date for receipt of applications is 11-11-2019.
Sd/-
Controller of Administration

INDIAN RAILWAY CATERING AND TOURISM CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of India Enterprise - Mini Ratna)
CIN-U74899DL1999GO101707
NOTICE INVITING OPEN E-TENDERS

IRCTC Invites

- Open E-Tender (No. 2019/IRCTC/Infra/Base Kitchen-Kanpur) through two bid system for the work of "Construction of Base Kitchen at Kanpur Central" Pre Bid Meeting: 31.10.2019 at 12:00 Hrs. Last Date: 11.11.2019 upto 15:00 Hrs.
- Open E-Tender (No. IRCTC/RN/Bilaspur/LOGISTICS/2019) for selection of agencies for transportation and CFA services of "Rail Neer" Produced at Rail Neer Plant, Bilaspur for a period of three (3) years. Pre Bid Meeting: 07.11.2019 at 15:00 Hrs. Last Date: 22.11.2019.
- Open E-Tender for provision of onboard Catering Services In Duronto/Shatabdi/Mail / Express Trains Having Pantry Car. Last Date: 08.11.2019 onwards upto 15:00 Hrs.
- Open E-Tender (No. CO/NIT/FF/FF/2019/06) cum forward auction through two bid system for Setting up, Operation and Management of Food Plazas at A1 & A category of Railway Stations for a period of 09 (Nine) years. Last Date 11.11.2019 upto 15:00 Hrs.

Tender document downloading & participation can be done on website: www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC.
Corrigendum/addendum if any, will be published only on www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC & www.irctc.com.
Office Address:- GGM / P&T, 11th Floor, B-148, Statesman House, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110 001, Tel. 011-23311263-64, Fax : 011-23311259.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001
Corporate Identity Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in

E-Tender Enquiry No. 241/P-3/EMP-W-11652 dt. 18.10.19 & ID: 46475

Scope of Work: Breakdown / preventive mtc. of ID/FP/PA/Seal Air Fans, ESPs, Ducting, Dampers and Gates including overhauling of PA, SA fans of 4x210 MW BHEL make units at GGSSTP, Ropar.
Completion Period : One Year
EMD: 1.6 Lac
Date & time up to which tender shall be received : 26.11.19 & 11:00 AM
Date & time of opening of tender : 26.11.19 & 11:30 AM
Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website <https://pspcl.abcprocure.com/> & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.
Note-
1) In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office and or M/s e-procurement Technologies Ltd. Contact No. +91-(79)-6813 6833/54/48/49/50. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only.
2) It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on official PSPCL website. www.pspcl.in
RTP-79/19
RO : C-7541
DY.CE/Monitoring,
GGSSTP, Ropnagar

COFOW (INDIAN RAILWAYS)
E-TENDER NOTICE No.OPB-685, DATED: 22.10.2019
PCMM/COFOW,s Office invites e-Bids for the following STORES

Tender No.	Brief Description	Closing Date
OP-510210	Electric Overhead Travelling Cranes, Cap-10 & 15 Ton.	11.11.2019
OP-205810	Electric Overhead Travelling Cranes, Cap-40 & 50 Ton.	14.11.2019
OP-510810	Electric Overhead Travelling Cranes, Cap-10 & 15 Ton.	18.11.2019
OP-205910	Electric Overhead Travelling Cranes, Cap-20,25 & 30 Ton.	20.11.2019
OP-405851	High Pressure System 2500 Bar for Pinion Mounting and Extraction for Three phase Traction Motors.	18.11.2019

E-TENDER NOTICE No.G-434, DATED: 22.10.2019

Tender No.	Description	Closing Date
G-405671	Under Vehicle Search Scanner Machine.	06.12.2019
G-607710	Rate Contract/ Price Agreement for Supply of Hydraulic Re-Railing Equipment.	06.12.2019

Bidders may visit the website www.irps.gov.in to download the tender document and submit their e-Bids. No manual offers shall be accepted.
CORRIGENDUM, DATED: 22.10.2019

Tender No.	Corrigendum No.	Closing Date
OP-405361	Corrigendum No. 01	04.11.2019
G-706821	Corrigendum No. 02	15.11.2019
OP-709650	Corrigendum No. 01	31.10.2019
OP-205710	Corrigendum No. 02	31.10.2019

Bidders may visit the website to download the details mentioned in the corrigendum and submit e-Bids accordingly.
"Serving Customers with a Smile."



Water gushes out of the Sriramsagar project in Nizamabad district on Monday. Officials opened 16 of the project's 42 gates to let out excess water. This is for the first time that water was released from the dam this season.

For first time this season, Sriramsagar full to brim

NARENDER PULLOOR | DC
NIZAMABAD, OCT. 21

The gates of the Sriramsagar project (SRSP) were lifted on Monday for the first time in three years, and water released into the river Godavari. Of the 42 gates on the project, officials opened 16 and released around 75,000 cusecs of water.

The SRSP reached its full reservoir level of 1,091 feet and gross storage of 90 tmc ft on Monday after it received heavy inflows from Maharashtra and catchment areas of the composite Nizamabad and Adilabad districts.

The project also generated 22.8 MW power as the water released into the Kakatiya canal. Visitors thronged the project to see the water gushing out of

The Sriramsagar project reached its full level of 1,091 feet and gross storage of 90 tmc ft on Monday after it received heavy inflows from Maharashtra and catchment areas in Nizamabad and Adilabad districts.

The officials first released water at the rate of 25,000 cusecs and gradually increased the outflow to 75,000 cusecs. In view of flood water release, SRSP officials alerted the administration of Nizamabad,

Nirmal and Jagtial districts. Villagers, fishermen and cattle grazers were advised not to venture into the river due to the swift flow of flood water. Officials released 5,000 cusecs of water into the Kakatiya canal.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, SRSP executive engineer P. Rama Rao said that the Vishnupuri and Balegaon project gates in Maharashtra were shut on Monday evening and the inflow into SRSP may decrease. "We will reduce the outflow on Monday night," he said.

The project did not receive inflows during July and August but received floodwater in September. Heavy rain in Maharashtra filled up the local projects and water was released downstream.

भारत सरकार / Government of India
परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग / Department of Atomic Energy
इंदिरा गांधी परमाणु अनुसंधान केंद्र
/ Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research
कल्पक्कम / Kalpakkam - 603 102.

Online item rate tenders in two parts are invited through e-tendering mode by the Chief Engineer, CEG on behalf of President of India in two bid, from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No	Tender No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest Money Deposit	Tender processing Fees	Time Allowed
1	CEG/IGC/1572/2019	Construction of RR compound wall near East side of Watch Tower - 1 in IGCAR, Kalpakkam.	Rs. 54.48 Lakhs	Rs. 1,09,000/-	Rs. 5900/-	6 [Six] Months
2	CEG/IGC/1573/2019	Construction of open well in North plant site in IGCAR, Kalpakkam.	Rs. 71.44 Lakhs	Rs. 1,42,900/-	Rs. 5900/-	5 [Five] Months
3	CEG/IGC/1574/2019	Supplying, fabricating, testing and erecting in position of Air tight filter bank doors and Strong doors at HEF, DFRP in IGCAR Kalpakkam.	Rs. 103.73 Lakhs	Rs. 2,07,500/-	Rs. 5900/-	6 [Six] Months
4	CEG/IGC/1575/2019	Construction of Nitrogen Plant at RML, IGCAR, Kalpakkam.	Rs. 149.47 Lakhs	Rs. 2,99,000/-	Rs. 5900/-	10 [Ten] Months

Tender documents are available for sale / downloading from 22-10-2019 (10:00 Hrs) to 28-10-2019 (15:00 Hrs). Last date of closing of online submission of tenders: 31-10-2019 (14:30Hrs).
Last date for submission of original DD/BC/PO etc., towards EMD either at IGCAR liaison office, ShastrīBhavan, Chennai (or) at office of Chief Engineer, CEG, IGCAR, Kalpakkam.
Time of opening of Technical bid at Office of Chief Engineer, CEG, IGCAR, Kalpakkam : 15.00 Hours on 05-11-2019
Financial Bids of qualified bidders will be opened at a later date to be notified separately.
Detailed NIT & tender documents are available on website www.tenderwizard.com/DAE for free view / download. Registered contractors only can download & submit / upload tenders. Interested agencies may visit this website for registration.
Detailed NIT is also available on website www.igcar.gov.in/tenders for view only. For further information, please contact 044-27480500 - Extn 22353 / 22341 (or) 27480306; Fax 044 - 27480306 on all working days.
Chief Engineer, CEG
Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research



Verdict today

The SC on Tuesday will pronounce judgment on Chidambaram's plea challenging the Delhi HC verdict denying him bail

Saffron tsunami likely in Maha, Haryana

Exit polls forecast a facile victory for the BJP in the two states, rout for its rivals led by the Congress

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

EVM GLITCHES, RAINS MAR POLLING



MAHARASHTRA	— 288	HARYANA	— 90
	BJP-Shiv Sena	Cong+ NCP	BJP Congress
JAN KI BAAT	216-230	52-59	52-63 15-19
NEWS18-IPSONS	243	42	75 10
ABP-C VOTER	204	69	72 08
TIMES NOW	230	48	71 11
NEWSX-POLSTART	188-200	74-89	75-80 9-12

A voter after casting vote at a water logged polling station in Kochi. — ARUN CHANDRABOSE

59 Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail units and 19 EVMs were replaced in Nagpur district due to glitches. Faulty EVMs delayed polling at some booths in Ratnagiri and Bhandara districts as well

Three motorcycle-borne masked men fired at a candidate of pro-farmer outfit Swabhimani Paksha on Monday when he was going in a car, and also beat him up after pulling him out of the vehicle in Amravati district

Sunil Khambe, a BSP leader, threw ink on the EVM in a polling booth situated in Thane Head Post Office

77.46% per cent was recorded in the bypoll to the Naxal-hit Chitrakot Assembly constituency in Chhattisgarh till the scheduled deadline of 5 pm

Heavy rains affected voting in Ernakulam Assembly constituency in the initial hours as voters waded through waterlogged roads to exercise their franchise

It may be recalled that the Election Commission had earlier announced bypolls to 15 Assembly seats in Karnataka too. But they will be now held in December.

● Congress MP H. Vasanthakumar was detained on Monday for allegedly staying in Nanguneri Assembly constituency in TN where a bypoll was under way

● A woman was injured as clashes took place between two groups outside a polling booth in Malaaka village in Nuh district in Haryana's Mewat region

● JJP leader Dushyant Chautala levelled allegation of "bogus voting" in connivance with a police official at a booth in Dumerka Kalan village of the Ucherna Kalan Assembly constituency

● Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday travelled by train from Chandigarh to Karnal and then rode a bicycle to reach a polling booth to cast his vote.

● In a bid to make the polling process convenient for women voters, temporary creches for their children were set up for the first time in some Assembly segments of Maharashtra

● A 62-year-old man fainted while standing in the queue outside a polling station in adjoining Pimpri-Chinchwad and later died of brain hemorrhage in a hospital



Pakistan is not only India's problem, it is a challenge for entire world

— Ram Madhav
BJP leader

BRIEF

'Goa cattle have turned non-veg'

Panjaji: Stray cattle brought to a cow shelter in Goa are found to have turned non-vegetarian, state minister Michael Lobo has claimed. The animals developed this habit by feasting on leftover chicken and fried fish dumped in garbage, he said. "We brought 76 cattle from Calangute area to the gaushala where they are being looked after. We realised that they have turned non-vegetarian," Lobo said. "These stray cattle do not eat grass. They neither eat gram nor the special feed given to them," he said.

Kartarpur fee fixed at US \$20

New Delhi: India on Monday said it is ready to sign an agreement with Pakistan on October 23 for the operationalisation of the Kartarpur Corridor, even as it expressed "disappointment" over Islamabad's insistence on levying USD 20 service fee per pilgrim and asked it to reconsider its decision.

Explosion at Hubballi station

Bengaluru: One person was injured in an explosion at the Hubballi Railway Station in north Karnataka on Monday when he lifted one of the small plastic boxes found in an unclaimed bucket on a platform, police said. Maharashtra Shiv Sena MLA Prakash Rao Abitkar's name handwritten on a corrugated sheet was found pasted on the bucket along with some address and slogans "No BJP, no NSUI, only Shiv Sena", a police officer said. Police said it was not a major explosion and investigations were on.

CAB may be tabled in Winter Session

New Delhi: The winter session of Parliament will be held from November 18 to December 13. Sources said that the decision was conveyed to the secretariats of both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha by the parliamentary affairs ministry. The government is likely to introduce several major bills, including the Citizenship Amendment Bill, nullifying the National Registrar of Citizens to a considerable extent. This, however, will be a very short session, compared to the last few years, when winter sessions were convened on November 21 and ended in the first week of January.

TIWARI MURDER: 1 HELD IN MAHA

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 21

The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) on Monday claimed that the 29-year-old man arrested from Nagpur in connection with last week's murder of Hindutva leader Kamesh Tiwari in Lucknow, was in continuous touch with other persons held in the case. Meanwhile, the UP police has announced a reward of ₹2.5 lakh each for the arrests of two more suspects.

A senior ATS officer said that the probe agency suspected that Sayyed Asim Ali, who was apprehended by the Maharashtra ATS from Mominpura area in Nagpur on October 19, had played a "very important" role in the crime.

The Maharashtra ATS, on the basis of leads provided by the UP police, on Saturday arrested Ali. Tiwari (45), a former leader of the Hindu Samaj Party, was killed at his house in Naka Hindola area of Lucknow on October 18.

The exit polls have predicted a landslide victory for the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance in both the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly polls held on Monday. While most exit polls predicted a saffron tsunami, the TV9 Bharatvarsh poll indicated a hung Assembly in Haryana.

Going by the exit polls, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance is expected to form the government in Maharashtra again, while in Haryana incumbent CM Manohar Lal Khattar will get a second term. Once elected, Shiv Sena's Aditya Thackeray, who made his political debut by contesting his first election, is likely to get a major portfolio as he makes a start in governance.

In Maharashtra, the "Poll of Exit Polls" showed that the BJP-Sena alliance had a clear edge over their rivals Congress and Nationalist Congress Party, with 218 seats predicted for the ruling alliance in the 288-member Assembly.

The Congress-NCP is expected to get 57 seats, while others may get 13. Interestingly, the BJP-Sena had contested the 2014 Assembly polls separately and later came together to form the government. But this time they had decided to be together from the beginning itself to avoid splitting of votes and giving the Congress-NCP alliance an advantage.

In Haryana too, the "Poll of Exit Polls" gave the BJP 66 seats in the Assembly of 90, while giving 14 to the Congress, two to the INLD and Akali Dal alliance and eight to others.

The results of these exit polls are a major blow to the Congress, which was hoping to revive its fortunes in the two states. The party had hoped to encash on the brewing dissent among people over the economic slowdown and loss of jobs. However, while the BJP juggernaut apparently rolled on

unhindered in both states, the Congress was bogged down by internal strife and factionalism. The day started with a lukewarm response by voters with only 37.64 per cent turnout by 2 pm in Haryana and 30.91 per cent in Maharashtra. While it picked up marginally after lunch, the final voter turnout in Maharashtra remained at 55.45 per cent and in Haryana it was 61.92 per cent.

Besides the Assembly polls in the two states, there were bypolls in 51 Assembly and two Lok Sabha seats in 18 states, where the overall voter

turnout was close to 57 per cent. The bypolls to the five Assembly constituencies in Kerala were marred by heavy rains, especially in Ernakulam, as voters waded through water-logged roads to exercise their franchise.

High voter turnout was reported in Khonsa West seat in Arunachal Pradesh (90 per cent), Naxal-hit Chitrakot in Chhattisgarh (74 per cent), Huzurnagar Telangana (84 per cent) and Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh (62 per cent) and Sheela in Meghalaya (84.56 per cent). The votes will be counted on October 24.

The overall voter turnout for the Mumbai recorded a voter turnout of 46.92 per cent till the same time. In areas like Colaba and Bandra west, where there is a significant elite population, the voter turnout was recorded at 37.43 per cent and 38.13 per cent, respectively — less than even 40 per cent. Versova, too, recorded a voter turnout of 39.47 per cent.

There are 36 Assembly constituencies in Mumbai. At 53.04 per cent, the

BYPOLLS VOTING PERCENTAGE

Arunachal Pradesh	92.94%
Uttar Pradesh	47.66%

IT IS A reiteration and reaffirmation of the credibility of the leadership of Modi in terms of his positive agenda of change that focuses on development and building a new India.

NALIN KOHLI, BJP

Less than 50% voting in Mumbai

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, OCT. 21

It was the same old story in Mumbai, with less than 50 per cent voters exercising their franchise till 6 pm in many constituencies.

Navi Mumbai and Kalyan-Dombivali recorded the poorest turnout, according to the Election Commission.

The overall voter turnout for Mumbai city was recorded at 44.4 per

cent, while the suburbs recorded a voter turnout of 46.92 per cent till the same time.

In areas like Colaba and Bandra west, where there is a significant elite population, the voter turnout was recorded at 37.43 per cent and 38.13 per cent, respectively — less than even 40 per cent. Versova, too, recorded a voter turnout of 39.47 per cent.

There are 36 Assembly constituencies in Mumbai. At 53.04 per cent, the

highest voter turnout was recorded in Bhandup west constituency, which has a large Gujarati and Marathi-speaking population.

This was followed by Anushakti Nagar near Trombay (50.84 per cent), Ghatkopar west (50.49 per cent), Dindoshi (50.2 per cent), Ghatkopar east (50.11 per cent) and Vikhroli (50.01 per cent).

Meanwhile, the remaining constituencies fared between 40 and 50 per cent.

The overall voter turnout for the Assembly elections this year was comparatively less than the turnout observed during the Lok Sabha elections this year.

A nonagenarian was the cynosure of all eyes as he accompanied Union minister Smriti Irani outside a polling booth in Mumbai. "Today's hero is Khanna sahab, who served in the Army. At 93, he came out to vote. It is an inspiration," Ms Irani said.

We will go inside PoK: J&K Guv

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, OCT. 21

Jammu and Kashmir Governor, Satya Pal Malik, on Monday warned Pakistan of stern military action if it continued to push in militants and terrorists to foment trouble in the state.

"We will dismantle terrorist camps. If they don't desist we will go inside (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir)," he said while talking to reporters on the sidelines of a function organised by the police to pay tribute to its 'martyrs' at Zewan on the outskirts of Srinagar.

The Governor also said, "War is bad and Pakistan should behave. If they don't mend their ways, what will happen in future will be worse than what happened on Sunday."

Malik in his message to the people of the Valley particularly its youth said "there will be a new Kashmir from November 1...participate in it and take it ahead. I would like to ask the boys here what did they achieve, so far (through confrontation)?"

Army says more infiltration likely

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

The Army is expecting more infiltration attempts by terrorists in next one-and-a-half months despite destruction of launch pads in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) through targeted shelling.

"Before snow closes the paths in mountains along the Line of Control (LoC) we are expecting more attempts by terrorists to intrude into India," said a senior Army official.

"We were expecting Pakistan trying to up the terrorist flow after the

Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meeting early this month. Now with Pakistan getting time from FATE, it will go back to its old game," said sources. Pakistan has got reprieve from Financial Action Task Force till February 2020. Sources said that there are still six to seven terror launch pads in the PoK along the LoC north of the Pir Panjal range.

"The number of launch pads is dynamic. These are makeshift structures where 10-15 terrorists are kept by their handlers before trying to push them into India," said a source.

PoK's Neelam Valley, killing six to ten Pakistani soldiers. Army chief General Bipin Rawat had said that the Indian action was in retaliation to an

Siachen thrown open to tourists

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

Siachen glacier, world's highest battlefield know for extreme cold weather and tough mountaineering terrain has been thrown open to tourists.

"The Siachen area is now open for tourists and tourism. From Siachen Base Camp to Kumar Post, the entire area has been opened for tourism purposes," said defence minister Rajnath Singh in eastern Ladakh.

He was addressing a function to inaugurate Col Chewang Rinchin Bridge on Shyok river, located about 45 km from the county's border with China.

He indicated that this step will make people appreciate the efforts put in by jawans, engineers and other workers who are deployed at such a difficult environment. Defence minister said that Ladakh has tremen-

Army says more infiltration likely

PAWAN BALI | DC
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SAVARKAR AN ACCOMPLISHED MAN: SINGHVI

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, OCT. 21

Wading into the ongoing debate over a Bharat Ratna for V.D. Savarkar, senior Congress leader Abhishek "Manu" Singhvi on Monday praised the Hindutva ideologue and said he was an "accomplished" man who fought for Dalit rights and had taken part in the freedom struggle.

Singhvi's comments came days after the BJP's Maharashtra unit had proposed a Bharat Ratna for Savarkar.

After this, former PM Manmohan Singh too had toned down the Congress' stand against Savarkar.

Singhvi added, however, that he does not subscribe to Savarkar's ideology. "I personally don't subscribe to Savarkar's ideology but that doesn't take away the fact that he was an accomplished man" who played a part in the freedom struggle."

NEW RULES ■ Norms to regulate social media to be firmed up in 3 months

Net can cause disruption: Centre

New Delhi, Oct. 21: The internet has emerged as a potent tool to cause "unimaginable disruption" to democratic polity, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Monday, while seeking three more months for finalising and notifying the rules that would regulate the functioning of social media intermediaries in the country.

The ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) told the top court that though technology had led to economic growth and societal development, there was also an

exponential rise in hate speech, fake news and anti-national activities.

A bench of justices Deepak Gupta and Surya Kant took the affidavit on record after advocate Rajat Nair, appearing for the Centre, mentioned the matter and said they had sought three months' time for finalisation of the Information Technology Intermediaries Guidelines (Amendment) Rules, 2018.

The affidavit was filed in a transfer petition moved by Facebook Inc., seeking transfer of cases filed in three high courts, relating to linking of social media

profiles with Aadhaar. The affidavit filed by Pankaj Kumar, additional secretary, MeitY, said, "As the internet has emerged as a potent tool to cause unimaginable disruption to the democratic polity, it was felt that the extant rules be revised for effective regulation of intermediaries, keeping in view the ever-growing threats to individual rights and the nation's integrity, sovereignty, and security."

"In view of the complexity involved in the matter and the significant impact it entails on the functioning of all stakeholders, including netizens, various government departments/ministries, social media platforms, messaging platforms, websites and mobile apps etc., a conscious and bona fide

decision was taken by the respondent ministry to call for further inter-ministerial consultation so that effective, robust and comprehensive rules, covering all aspects of the matter, can be framed," the affidavit said.

"If on one hand technology has led to economic growth and societal development, on the other hand, there has been an exponential rise in hate speech, fake news, anti-national activities, defamatory postings and other unlawful activities using internet/social media platforms," it said.

ODISHA COUPLE TAKES OATH ON CONSTITUTION TO GET MARRIED

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC
BERHAMPUR, OCT. 21

A young couple in Odisha has set an example by solemnising their marriage in a novel way. They did not take help of any priest nor any hymns were chanted.

They took oath on the Constitution declaring them as life partners. Biplab and Anita, the couple, kept their marriage a low-key affair.

Reports on Monday said Biplab Kumar and Anita got married in the presence of guests and their relatives. A blood donation camp was also organised to mark the occasion.

Including the newly-wed couple, the invitees participated in the voluntary blood donation where as many as 36 units were collected.

"I am a rationalist and do not believe in age old religious practices. We kept it simple and got the marriage solemnised in a unique way," said Biplab's father, Mohan Rao.

Biplab (31) works for a pharmaceutical firm and Anita (23) is engaged as an auxiliary nurse midwife.

A lot of times, we censor ourselves before the censor even gets there

A well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people

DECCAN Chronicle

22 OCTOBER 2019

Pact to end ceasefire violations now dead

Though many ceasefire violations, some quite serious, have occurred since 2003, when Pakistan signed an agreement with India to not allow this, transgressions were sorted out by invoking this deal. By and large, the spirit of the ceasefire was not thought to be dead. The events across the Line of Control last weekend, when India said it retaliated hard as Pakistan violated the ceasefire in Tangdhar area to give covering fire to infiltrating terrorists from launchpads across the LoC, will guide us in understanding whether even the spirit of the agreement between Gen. Pervez Musharraf, as President, and then PM Atal Behari Vajpayee, now survives.

India had prided itself on its troops not violating the LoC, rightly holding violations were done by Pakistan to aid infiltration. This was needed to persuade the world of Islamabad's use of terrorism as an instrument of policy in Kashmir and elsewhere.

Without giving thought to the larger picture, the Narendra Modi government adopted the "surgical strike" posture in 2016 to look valiant. This was for electoral reasons. In doing so, it turned its back on the long-held view that violating the truce and crossing the LoC was a Pakistani speciality. In response to the Pulwama attack on a CRPF convoy, the Balakot attack in late February, in which Indian fighter jets crossed the LoC to hit targets inside Pakistan, effectively put a seal of finality on a new tactical line regarding Pakistan. This renders the 2003 pact on not violating the ceasefire wholly irrelevant. The new mantra is — if Pakistan violates the truce, India reserves the right to reply in kind.

What this does, in turn, is to allow the theoretical possibility of things getting out of hand — a strategic miscalculation by either side, quite by accident. This bespeaks a parlous state in policy terms.

Whether this derives from poverty of thinking, or a display of pseudo-nationalistic fervour in which the readiness to go to any military length to appear bold (to intimidate the foe) is paramount, is not easily discernible. Nobody outside India is impressed, of course. Within the country, it's those in the top tiers of government who are the most impressed.

There is a case for dispelling this air of self-congratulation in the aftermath of the August 5 move on Kashmir, which appears to have had a negative effect on the internal security situation in the Valley despite the greatly enhanced force levels. Resort to diplomacy is always available to persuade Pakistan that a show of belligerence on the LoC is in no one's interest. It's also time our military leaders lowered their own decibel levels.

The politics of selfie love

Love *aaj kal* is blossoming. Specifically, and quite spectacularly, on Twitter, where Bollywood biggies have been tweeting selfies with Narendra Modi. Appended to these smile please photos are mushy messages about the honour of posing with the honourable PM.

Karan Johar, Salman Khan, Kangana Ranaut and Akshay Kumar have been among Modi's happy and regular Bollywood posers for long. But there are some Johnny-come-latelys to this selfie lovefest that's known to restore stars' self worth.

In 2015, Aamir Khan talked about rising intolerance in Bharat. Incredible India frowned and dropped his mug. Modi has since been the face of InIn, and Khan a regular at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, to pose and post selfies. Last Saturday it was the turn of Shah Rukh Khan, who too, in 2015, was all negative and anti-national when he spoke of religious intolerance taking us away from *acche din*. A month later, his film flopped and he quickly went on to make serious amends. First he said, I never said. Then he said, I am a proud Indian. And then he almost made Rajat Sharma weep on TV by saying, *kabhi kabhi* I feel like crying when the likes of Kailash Vijayvargiya, BJP general secretary, say my heart lies on the wrong side of the LoC. But now that he has tweeted his first selfie with PMJi, and has been given homework to complete and submit soon, things should look up. But it seems PMJi's love for Bollywood is making southern stars suffer acute bouts of FOMO. Upasana Konedelaji, daughter of Chiranjeevi and missus of Telugu star Ram Charan, got her *langa voni* in a twist over this northern bias and cutely complained to Modi, suggesting that he look at stars beyond the Vindhya.

Given that Modi is so busy, it's not easy to take time out for selfies with all stars. He does so only to keep up the nation's *josh* and everyone in the service of Bharat Mata. Yet, we believe, Modi listens to everyone's *mann ki baat* and tries to adjust.

The lawns of the PM's bungalow will soon be lit up for stars from the unconquered South. So all Tollywood, Kollywood, Mollywood worthies must keep their kanjivarams and crisp mundus ready for an outing with PMJi, to pose, praise and post.



Subhani

Amid Brexit furore, will Boris have to eat his hat?



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray
Reflections

If a politician has to eat today what he said yesterday, Britain's ebullient Prime Minister might suffer acute indigestion from too hearty a repast. First, Boris Johnson announced that he would "rather be dead in a ditch" than ask for the "do or die" October 31 Brexit deadline to be postponed. Then, after Saturday's humiliating defeat in the House of Commons, he proclaimed: "I will not negotiate delay". Yet, with prosecution and even jail looming ahead for defying the law, he sent not one but three letters to the European Union asking for precisely that, and then telephoned Donald Tusk, the EU Council president, and other European leaders, pleading that the request was from Parliament and not him.

"Super Saturday", as it's called, made history. It was the House of Commons' first Saturday sitting in 37 years. It was democracy in action of a vibrant kind never seen in India, for all that 900 million voters queue up in the heat and rain to make their mark against a picture. That is why it would have been educative for Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Rahul Gandhi and all our rumbustious MPs to watch the day-long session with probability every one of nearly 650 British members of Parliament popping up to catch the Speaker's eye. A large screen in the Central Hall projecting the BBC's live coverage of the momentous occasion would have given them a glimpse of the difference between governance and tub-thumping.

Not that the question-and-answer parrying resolved the dilemma of

a country that having lost an empire, is still seeking a role, as Dean Acheson put it. Britain remains poised in the uncertainty of no-man's-land. But Saturday's session ventilated public concerns and regional anxieties. The million massed protesters chanting outside the Palace of Westminster demonstrated popular support for not leaving the EU now that there is better understanding of the costs involved. John Bercow, the Speaker, was at his best as a larger-than-life version of West Bengal's valiant Bijay Kumar Banerjee who in 1967 — when the rule of law was much stronger in India — thunderingly denounced the governor, Dharam Vira, as another English King Charles I. To no one's surprise, Mr Johnson tried to slip dextrously through loopholes that lesser mortals didn't even know existed, recalling that another Tory Prime Minister, fellow Etonian David Cameron, had accused him of "sharp practices."

Gordon Brown, the last Labour Prime Minister, once predicted that Mr Johnson would be the last Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The cracks began to appear on Saturday when 322 MPs voted for (with 306 against) an amendment moved by Sir Oliver Letwin, one of Mr Johnson's 21 rebel

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If a politician has to eat today what he said yesterday, Britain's ebullient Prime Minister might suffer acute indigestion from too hearty a repast

Tories. The purpose was to compel the Prime Minister to obey the similarly defiant Benn Act — the European Union (Withdrawal) (No. 2) Act 2019 — requiring him to seek an extension to avoid a no-deal crashout on October 31, thereby delaying Brexit well beyond the deadline. Neither law may have been thought necessary if parliamentarians had trusted Mr Johnson. The absence of trust was highlighted when Ian Blackford, the Scottish National Party's rhetorically aggressive leader in the Commons, said bluntly that he wouldn't buy a house from "this Prime Minister". Earlier, he had called Mr Johnson "racist" and, referring to his journalism, accused him of making a career out of lying.

More important, he complained that the deal Mr Johnson had negotiated with Brussels "shafted" Scotland where 62 per cent of voters want to remain in the EU. The Scottish government, which failed to push independence through in the September 2014 referendum, is now demanding another vote on seceding from the UK. It feels that the fear of a separatist Scotland not having enough clout in the EU if Britain withdrew explained the anti-independence sentiment in 2014. That argument has gone. Wales, which voted Leave three years ago, "is now a Remain nation again", says Adam Price, leader of the pro-independence party, Plaid Cymru, and wants a second referendum on the EU. Northern Ireland's discontent was evident from the refusal of the province's 10 Democratic Unionist Party MPs, on

whom Mr Johnson relied for support to vote for him, although he boasts of having worked out a compromise that gives the British province the best of both worlds.

It soon became clear that Mr Johnson was indulging in tortuous manipulation to wriggle out of his legal obligation under the Benn and Letwin Acts to inform Brussels of the outcome of Saturday's debate and ask for more time. He sent an apology of a letter by ordering a senior diplomat to email an unsigned photocopy of the request by MPs set out in the Benn Act — the Labour Party's Sir Keith Starmer, responsible for Brexit, called the deception "childish" and "silly". A second letter, which Mr Johnson signed, warned of the "corrosive impact" of delay, and blamed Parliament for "missing the opportunity to inject momentum into the ratification process", and said "a further extension would damage the interests" of both parties and UK-EU relations. There was a third covering letter from the British ambassador in Brussels.

Ignoring the subterfuge, Mr Tusk responded exactly as if Mr Johnson had made a straightforward request for more time without any pussyfooting or prevarication. In consequence, the British are trying desperately hard this week to rush through in 10 days the procedural requirements under the Letwin amendment to keep to the deadline. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister might take a tip from the politician who had a hat made of barley sugar for just such contingencies. Indian politicians of course never face this situation, not because they don't wear hats they might have to eat but because they never admit to being in the wrong. No wonder Mr Johnson claims kinship with India.

The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author

LETTERS

NAME AREA MLA

DC's initiative to start Speak Out pages is a very good one. It will be more impactful if names of the area legislator and corporator are mentioned so that voters can see their performance and decide whether to vote for them or not in the next elections.

Mohammed Abdul Jaleel
Hyderabad

I am thankful to DC for Speak Out pages. They should be an eye-opener for Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and urban affairs minister K.T. Rama Rao. With every passing day, civic conditions in the city are deteriorating. Travelling has become a nightmare. Where would all this lead to, God alone knows.

S. Laxmiram
Hyderabad

SACK RTC STAFF

Kudos to DC for highlighting the plight of commuters during and because of the RTC strike under way. The government should have invoked the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), which is a legal tool, and then sacked the RTC employees. The government had given a 45 per cent hike in salaries to the staff of a loss-making organisation but employees were hell bent on causing more losses.

Laxmi Narayan
Hyderabad

SAD DIWALI

I think the state government cannot remain a silent spectator to the plight of the striking RTC employees. It must invite union leaders to reach an amicable understanding. With Diwali around the corner, RTC employees will have a tough time if their salaries are not paid. Is this the Golden Telangana that we had dreamed of and fought for?

Mohammed Wasif Ali
Secunderabad

BJP'S VICTORY

The BJP deserves to be given one more term in Maharashtra and Haryana (*12 or to cast vote today, Oct. 21*). The Fadnavis government has been clean and largely without controversy. In Haryana, Mr Khattar too seems likely to be re-elected, largely on account of confusion in the opposition ranks. One has to appreciate the spirit of PM Narendra Modi and BJP president and home minister Amit Shah for not leaving anything to chance.

Phani Marur
Hyderabad

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Anum Malkani

Weaponisation of social media: Defence in DNA of tech sector

A recent BBC investigation revealed the use of social media bots to promote a pro-government agenda in Papua, Indonesia, where the military has played a controversial role in cracking down on a separatist movement. The social media bots have been deployed in a well-coordinated campaign to skew perspectives.

Modern tech gives us great reason for optimism about the future, with its potential to solve so many of our greatest challenges. At the same time, it appears to bring us ever closer to a dystopian nightmare. As Don DeLillo describes in his novel *White Noise*, "This is the whole point of technology. It creates an appetite for immortality on the one hand. It threatens universal extinction on the other."

A bot is an automated programme designed to run simple and repetitive tasks. Bots are not always bad. For example, customer service is a popular application of bots where they can carry basic conversation and assist with spe-

cific tasks such as food delivery or technical support. If you have chatted with a customer service representative on a website, chances are you were chatting with a bot.

Social media bots, however, are often designed for nefarious goals — censorship, propaganda, surveillance and/or bullying. They take on fake personas and advocate certain ideas, observe activity and amass followers. These bots may spread misinformation, create the illusion of mass support for certain ideas, bully dissidents and engage in innovative techniques such as "hashtag hijacking".

A recent study by the Oxford Internet Institute found evidence of organised social media manipulation campaigns conducted by state actors in 70 countries in 2019, up from 48 in 2018 and 28 in 2017. Social media in these countries has been co-opted to crush dissent, conduct smear campaigns against opponents, and suppress political participation and freedom.

In many other countries around the world, including Pakistan, we

see a growing militarisation of cyberspaces, with the systematic creation of disinformation to mislead citizens, including memes, videos, fake news and manipulated media. The presence of state actors is prevalent across platforms — Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp — with online spaces being usurped by bot accounts as well as human-run accounts.

Significant resources appear to have been allocated towards such campaigns in Pakistan — teams working year-round, with strategies around social media control and manipulation. Data-driven strategies are also employed to maximise the impact of disinformation campaigns by profiling citizens and targeting specific groups. This is just one symptom of the corruption at the heart of the technology sector. The dirty little secret, which leaders in this space now take great pains to hide, is that defence work has been in their DNA throughout history.

The companies that we have increasingly come to rely on for

technology needs are at the forefront of the relationship between technology, defence and increasingly sophisticated warfare techniques. Many technologies we now use, such as GPS, have their origins in military-funded research. This centuries' old affinity lends itself well to the use of modern technology in the state's war against its citizens. Globally, information warfare and psychological operations (psychological techniques used to alter the state of mind and behaviour) have been in military playbooks throughout history. While they are not new concepts, the scale and impact are unprecedented with the advent of social media, algorithms and automation.

Social media was once seen as a democratising force, giving people access to more information than ever before, as well as a space to connect and debate. It has now been weaponised, and the digital space is the new battlefield where state agencies wage war and exert control.

Access to private online spaces is a fundamental right in a democrat-

ic society. There is a lack of transparency on how much of our data is being collected, by whom and for what purposes, and what surveillance techniques are being used against us. The legal system is currently inadequate to deal with social media and data-driven manipulation campaigns. Technology companies are unwilling to open up their business models and algorithms to scrutiny, and governments are unwilling to reveal the extent of their use of our data and social media.

While these are greater challenges to resolve, on an individual level, it is crucial to be wary of whom one follows and befriends on social media, and to be critical of the information one consumes. As Indonesian human rights lawyer Veronica Koman told the BBC, "We are fighting machines, the only thing individuals like me can do is remain hopeful that the truth will be stronger than any kind of propaganda."

By arrangement with Dawn

2025: A glimpse of the geopolitical future



Krishnan Srinivasan

To look too far into the future is speculative: 2025 is a better horizon; President Donald Trump will have finished a possible second term; Prime Minister Narendra Modi will have finished his second term, and China's targets set by President Xi Jinping can be assessed.

In many countries, populist-nationalist parties have squeezed traditional political parties; only they seem to fire up enthusiasm among voters. The public is abandoning mainstream political parties because the social contract that promised equal opportunity and rising incomes for both the elites and the masses is discredited. Financial corporates made profits in globalisation while the working class lost jobs; in the United States, the average income of the top one per cent is 138 times higher than the bottom 50 per cent. The Western flagship model of democracy and free market

prolonged itself through widening the franchise, but voters everywhere distrust elected representatives and democracy looks headed for a long drawn out decline.

Liberalism is used in India today to attack the government and by the government against its detractors. Russia and China are not the only countries to believe they have a different kind of civilisation where sovereignty trumps democracy and stability trumps human rights. India, Turkey, Iran and many others feel they present an alternative model to Western-style liberalism.

The desire for freedom is universal, but freedom to shatter the economy in protests as in Hong Kong, or freedom to blaspheme as in the French Charlie Hebdo or Russian Pussy Riot cases, or freedom to bear arms as enshrined in the American Constitution, are examples that show that liberty has limitations, even if self-imposed. The relative success of street protests in Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, France, Ecuador,

Catalonia and Hong Kong are indications that this trend will continue, driven by the social media. No country will find the golden mean between free-range liberalism and statism.

In international relations, the centre ground for concepts like strategic autonomy will shrink with polarisation, and affect countries like India, which has already, with a wary eye on China and Pakistan, moved towards a more aligned position with all the liabilities that this entails.

Mr Trump's foreign policies are more popular than commonly perceived, with support for isolationist and protectionist policies. So, whether or not Mr Trump is re-elected, the America First doctrine will endure. This makes US foreign policy essentially bilateral, generating less chance for the expansion of permanent membership of the UN Security Council to which India aspires.

Leaks are a feature of American politics ever since the founding fathers and will grow apace. Impeachment will be on the agenda if Mr Trump wins a second term. The Zelensky telephone scandal will make every foreign leader cautious in talking to the US President.

America perceives China as its greatest threat. China is regarded as an affront, since the presumption is that being American implies Number One status. China's rise is

The growth of India's economy and the democratic system remains our best insurance policy. India is one of the world's big economies, but big-player status is difficult without being pivotal in South Asia.

something that the world has to adjust to. Despite the slowdown, China grows at around six per cent and will overtake America's GDP before 2030. The Belt and Road Initiative will succeed in bringing Central Asia, Eurasia and West Europe into greater economic cooperation and enabling China's reach into Latin America and Africa. Connectivities are never exclusive but the political implications are clear when China becomes lender of first resort rather than the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank put together. President Xi Jinping has set 10 objectives for global leadership for China by 2025; among them, Artificial Intelligence, driverless cars, robotics, and quantum engineering.

There is unlikely to be a China-US war other than by accident. Iran and the South China Sea are unlikely to cause accidents, but North Korea

may. India's efforts to normalise relations with China will flounder because of Pakistan. An India-China war is also unlikely, but China will use Pakistan as a proxy to hinder India's rise. The growth of India's economy and the democratic system remains our best insurance policy. India is one of the world's big economies, but big-player status is difficult without being pivotal in South Asia where India's leadership is insufficiently credible.

Multilateralism is the answer to managing China's rise. The West will regret their refusal to grant China its rightful share of control in the multilateral financial institutions. Multilateralism is also the means to counter trends towards unilateralism, ethnocentrism, protectionism and racial intolerance.

On the "frozen" disputes of Cyprus, Palestine, Ukraine and North Korea, little progress is possible unless Washington's position changes on the last three. If the situation in Kashmir deteriorates, the issue may be revived in international forums, although no third party has enthusiasm for India-Pakistan disputes. Kashmir cannot be solved bilaterally except on the basis of the status quo.

Eighteen years after the Twin Towers fell, 75 per cent of Americans call terrorism a national priority and 50 per cent prioritise security over

civil liberties, but the number of fatalities directly attributed to terrorism is microscopic compared to the 700 killings a year by so-called law enforcement agencies. The same is the case with India, where the number of road deaths is 364 times higher than terrorism casualties. The ability of intelligence agencies worldwide against terrorism has enormously increased.

The race is on for supremacy in artificial intelligence and 5G. Cyber attacks will proliferate. The role of the intelligence agencies will grow with technological capability; governments will increasingly rely on them and eventually be in thrall to them. It will be impossible to distinguish between the role of intelligence organisations and conventional diplomacy.

The quality of democratic debate will plummet. Opponents will be regarded as enemies. Interference in elections by the US, Russia, China and smaller fry will increase. The green movement will continue to grow, but remain on the political fringes for want of corporate financing.

Muslim grievances, which can take extremist form, will remain as long as the Kashmir and Palestine issues remain unresolved and the Shias believe the West is hostile. Iran will continue to be a stone in the throat of the West. So too Turkey, to a lesser extent. The

oil monopoly of the Middle East and its political influence will diminish sharply.

The West will attempt to drive a wedge between Russia and China, but the price to pay for this will be high.

The World Trade Organisation will fall into disuse, unable to engineer global agreements. It is arguable that China and India no longer deserve special differentiated status as developing nations.

In the US, Europe and everywhere, it will be harder for the minorities, refugees, economic migrants and asylum seekers.

The mainstream media will be on the defensive to show accuracy as it scrambles to compete with an ever-growing number of news sources.

The Responsibility to Protect doctrine will be back on the shelf where it belongs. As for humanitarian arguments, such reasoning has been appropriated by Russia in Georgia and Ukraine. The International Criminal Court will remain without credibility.

The time has come for a new Geneva Convention to replace the existing four, a new global agreement to replace the WTO, and treaties on the use of plastics and ocean sanctuaries. Action to protect the environment against global warming, despite US opposition, has a greater chance of success.

The writer is a former Indian foreign secretary

Pax Russica: As Trump ditches Syria's Kurds, Russia set to expand empire



Paul Wood

While American troops were hurriedly leaving north-eastern Syria, a young female Kurdish politician called Herwin Khalaf was pulled from her car and executed by the side of the road. Actually, the Kurdish media said she was raped and then stoned to death. They blamed one of the Arab militias being used by Turkey in its invasion. A grim video posted online shows a man holding a Kalashnikov nudging her body with the tip of his boot, as you would a dead animal. The video has not been authenticated and the militia accused of doing this says it is miles away at the time. But in Khalaf the Syrian Kurds have found a martyr to the American "betrayal". She was a human rights activist who formed her own political party to bring Arabs and Kurds together. Foreign diplomats would visit to talk about her quixotic dream of a secular, multi-ethnic Syrian democracy. Her death is a symbol of everything that has gone wrong in the past week.

To recap: President Trump told the Kurds they could come in and he ordered his own troops out. The Kurds stopped fighting Isis, or even guarding them in the jails and camps on their territory. Invoking their fear of a "genocide", the Kurds turned for protection to the Syrian regime and to Russia. Kurdish civilians are dying under Turkish bombing; Arab civilians are dying under Kurdish shelling. And Islamist Arab militias are bloodily settling scores with the Kurds. This was entirely predictable and was predicted by Trump's former special envoy for defeating Isis, Brett McGurk. He tweeted: "Did Trump not understand the well-known nature and makeup of the forces Turkey would be bringing into NE Syria?... Clearly not." McGurk resigned six months ago, when Trump first announced — by tweet — that the US would abandon Syria's Kurds. He wrote then that the

Arab militias allied to Turkey were "marbled with extremists" and that letting them into north-eastern Syria would "precipitate chaos". So it has proved.

In another video on the social media, a bearded Arab fighter carves the air with his hand and tells the Kurds: "If the Turkish Army gives us the order, we will slit your throats... In the name of God Almighty, we will butcher you with swords!" He adds: "And I don't want anybody telling me that in Islam you can't do this. The Prophet had a sword — you think he used it to tickle people?" One militia shot dead a Kurdish prisoner as he sat on the ground, his hands bound behind his back. Inevitably, the militia posted the video online (prompting the Turkish military to arrest the men responsible). Many of the Arab fighters were armed and trained by the CIA; the man they killed was part of a force armed and trained by the Pentagon. America has been waging a proxy war against itself in northern Syria, backing both sides in the conflict. And of course, Turkey is a Nato ally. This was the incoherent, strategically impossible situation that Donald Trump inherited.

So it's unfair to blame the Syria mess entirely on Trump's impulsiveness, ignorance and general imbecility, as much of the American media do. They are helped in that by Trump's crass reaction to criticism of his decision: where were the Kurds in 1944? he asked. Why didn't they help with the Normandy landings? (The answer is that the Kurds had no state and no military to join World War II, though a few Kurds did fight with the Soviets against Nazi Germany.) More recently — only last week in fact — Syria's Kurds were in a military alliance with the US against Isis, losing 11,000 sons and daughters to that fight. They were doing this for themselves as much as for the United States, certainly. But only weeks ago, they took

Trump may be right that he has dumped the terrible problem of Syria on to the Kremlin, or this could be a moral, security and strategic disaster ... But Russia is now the indispensable power in the Middle East: Pax Russica.

down their defences on the Turkish border because the US asked them to and guaranteed their security. They believed American promises that turned out to be worthless. One retreating American soldier said he felt ashamed of his uniform.

Why did Trump do it? Some American commentators say it's because there are two Trump Towers in Istanbul and he will lose money if he upsets the Turkish leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. But Trump probably doesn't make that much money from those buildings and wasn't swayed when Erdogan threatened to take his name off them after the "Muslim ban" (the short-lived ban on immigration to the US from some Muslim countries). I heard an extraordinary story from an informant close to the Qatari royal family — Qatar being Turkey's most important Arab ally — that Erdogan got Trump to roll over so easily because he had dirt on him. That claim follows another made to me by a source in the US that an intelligence whistleblower had reported concerns about a call Trump made to the Middle East, supposedly about this "dirt". For those keeping count, this would be the third US intelligence whistleblower, the other two coming forward about Ukraine.

Here we go again, down the Trump conspiracy rabbit hole. Trump's erratic behaviour seems to invite these kinds of far-fetched theories. Usually they're fantasy but occasionally you are left with the suspicion that they might just be correct. With Syria, however, an elaborate explanation is not required. Trump has always said he wants to get America out of foreign wars. He is being as good as his word. The timing may be awful, but when is there a good time to betray your allies?

One account published by a

Turkish journalist says that when Erdogan called Trump, he told him to either help Turkish troops or "get out of the way". Some have said Trump should have called Erdogan's bluff and refused. That might not have worked. According to the US military, Turkish artillery fired 155 mm shells near an American Special Forces base, apparently to encourage them to leave. Yavuz Baydar, a Turkish journalist in exile, told me he thought Erdogan would have gone into Syria regardless. Not because there was a real military threat from the Syrian Kurds to Turkey, or because there was a serious prospect of the Kurds getting an independent state. (For one thing, the Syrian Kurds and the Iraqi Kurds don't get on.) No, he said, Erdogan had political problems, "bleeding massively" in the local elections. Like Trump, he didn't do "nuance", was completely obstinate and governed by "reflex" and by "daredevil acts". He needed a small, victorious war to satisfy the ultra-nationalists and the generals in the "deep state" coalition around him. "Erdogan is a natural gambler," said Baydar. "His path has always been jumping from crisis to crisis, or expanding the crisis. He's hoping to emerge as the national hero by teaching a lesson to the Kurds."

If successful, Erdogan can be expected to send back a large part of the almost four million Syrian refugees that Turkey has been hosting for years. The Kurds are afraid this will change the ethnic balance of north-east Syria and rob them of the territory forever. Most of the Arabs in the border town of Tell Abyad fled when the Kurds arrived. They say that young men who returned were forcibly conscripted into the Kurdish forces. So they wait, their bags packed, in the town of Akcakale, a few hundred yards away, but in Turkey. Someone told me, by phone, that they could see plumes of smoke: the Kurds burning their homes.

The temporary beneficiaries of all this are Isis, who are no longer facing a Kurdish enemy on the battlefield. The permanent beneficiary is Vladimir Putin. A former Russian intelligence officer I know said that Putin and Erdogan conferred before Erdogan spoke to Trump. If true, that isn't as

surprising as it once would have been. Turkey and Russia are increasingly close. Turkey — once again, a Nato member — has just bought Russian S-400 missiles. The two governments seem to have had cordial discussions over the future of Idlib, the last Syrian province in rebel hands. There are reports of Russian mercenaries massing to attack Idlib. They are said to be from the Wagner group, which is run by a Russian oligarch known as "Putin's chef". If so, this tells us something important about what's happening in Syria.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, to use his real name, is a billionaire whose spectacular rise symbolises Russia's brand of out-law capitalism. Russian newspapers reported that when he was a young man he was given a 12-year jail sentence for robbery and pimping. But after starting out with a hot dog stand in St Petersburg, he opened a luxury restaurant that became one of Putin's favourites. Putin is his *krysha* — his "roof", or protection — and in return Prigozhin hands over a share of the profits. In Syria, these are profits from oil, where Wagner mercenaries have taken over oil fields and pipelines. There are both in Kurdish territory. More importantly, the Syrian regime is back in charge under a deal brokered by Russia and can be expected to show appropriate gratitude to Wagner and to Putin.

As the last Americans left north-eastern Syria, President Putin was on an official visit to Riyadh. The Saudi royals looked relieved to have a foreign visitor who would not lecture them on the killing and dismemberment of their dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Putin's visit — the first by a Russian leader for 12 years — was a sign of the new realities. For 50 years, it has been the goal of American policy to keep Russia out of the Middle East. President Trump may be right that he has deftly dumped the terrible problem of Syria on to the Kremlin — or this could be a moral, security and strategic disaster, as one prominent Western supporter of the Kurds put it. But Russia is now the indispensable power in the Middle East: Pax Russica.

By arrangement with the Spectator

Fruitless in Kashmir, no sign of Pak hand



Anand K. Sahay

TRUBLE IN PARADISE-2

Srinagar/Baramulla/Shopin: Says a 30-year-old, a minor government functionary in Baramulla, in an uncomplicated way, "Aap apne Pakistan ka gussa Kashmir par nikal rahe hain!" (You are taking it out on us in Kashmir because you are angry with Pakistan!)

He is angry. "Look at what Modi has done. Militancy had tapered off, but you scrapped Article 370 on the pretext of stopping terrorism. Life was running quite smoothly until the Burhan Wani killing. And then, after an interruption, it was back to normal again."

"New Delhi has cooked up the fear of terrorism," says the young man. After this, who knows what will happen? Militants are gathering already. The Army says hundreds have crossed over from Pakistan. Young men here can't be unaffected. They are hurt and angry. The government has cut our mobile phones. So now the militants can go about organising, and no one can know." (This was the day before the embargo on post-paid connections ended after 70 days.)

One morning, I rise early and rush to get to the famous apple trade mart — the apple "mandi" at Sopore in northern Kashmir, the biggest in India after New Delhi's Azadpur mandi, by about eight in order to get there ahead of the closing time imposed by the "people's resistance". These days shops in Kashmir, other than the local vegetable seller or butcher, don't stay open beyond 9-9.30 in the morning, if they open at all.

The place is practically empty. It is supposed to be so packed with trucks on a normal day around this time of the year that visitors must park their cars more than 2 km away and walk. But we drive right in. There are no more than a dozen trucks and a few tempos and tractors scattered about, and this is peak season. On a normal working day, around 1,400 trucks laden with the lush apple crop start revving out of Sopore for destinations as far away as Bangladesh.

But this year the fruit economy is in shambles, badly denting the incomes of practically every single Kashmiri home since nearly everyone owns a few apple trees, or is connected with the fruit trade in some way — as financier, transporter, commission agent, loader, push-cart apple seller, labourer, the dhaba people who feed the thousands who come to the mandi every day.

I accost a couple of commission agents, who are just hanging around, not having much to do. Both have very sad faces. They explain the trading mech-

anism — the orchard-gate-to-loading-the-trucks process to me, and fall silent. One of them begins again, and asks: "What was wrong with the way the Congress used to do things in Delhi? Why have these people ended 370 and ended everything that was normal?"

I shrug this off and ask, "So, when will the people's protest end — why not lift the self-imposed embargo and get on with it?" Hearing this, the other man comes to life, "No! We must carry on with our strike. Why does the government think it can do anything it likes and get away with it?"

Shopian in the south produces Kashmir's best apples and has the second-most important apple mandi after Sopore. It too is shut, I find two days later. Completely shut. Since all commercial establishments are closed in Kashmir these days, a few trucks show up in the villages to load the fruit. In a normal year, about 800-1,000 trucks leave Shopian every day, laden with the apple. Business worth crores of rupees is transacted. In the current season, local traders say, only around 20 trucks go out every day.

According to a high-ranking district official in northern Kashmir, apple could account for about 25 to 30 per cent of Kashmir's GDP. The season is practically over but apple growers have no interest in selling to Nafed, the government market intervention agency. The open market is a well-oiled system and offers a much better price than the government's fixed rate.

The growers won't mind selling to Nafed the apples that fall off trees and get somewhat damaged but would still be first rate for juice and jams. But Nafed has shown no interest.

Since all the phones were dead until a few days ago, the apple grower and trader could not be in touch with their destination markets in faraway places and gain access to market intelligence, which usually helped them regulate daily supplies. This too has led to a drop in earnings.

Apparently, in order to keep markets shut, suspected militants have killed an apple trader in Sopore, and last week hit at a transporter from Punjab and a trader from Rajasthan in Shopian and Pulwama respectively. In September, a shopkeeper was killed in Srinagar. Plain murder is naturally culpable, but the militants' game also seems foolish since an angry Kashmiri appears to seek to press on with the peaceful strike anyway — at least for now. There appears to be no Pakistani hand in this.

(To be concluded)

Former ministers denounce EMS' leadership



TRIVANDRUM, October, 21 The ultimate fate of the attenuated United Front Cabinet of Kerala headed by Mr. E. M. S. Nambudiripad stood postponed to Friday when the Assembly adjourned at midday today to meet again tomorrow to take up a motion

introduced by Mr. T.A. Majid (CPI) to discuss the Chief Minister's statement of October 17 with particular reference to the steps initiated to deal with the corruption charges levelled against four ministers. As a strong police force stood guard outside a packed House in

which RSP, the CPI, the ISP and the Muslim League had moved away from the treasury benches, heard seven out of eight ministers who tendered their resignations mounted a vigorous attack on the CPI, Marxist and particularly on Mr. Nambudiripad.





Protest matters

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam apologises after a mosque was hit by blue dye from a water cannon in recent protests in the city

Fresh Brexit deal vote disallowed

London, Oct. 21: Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces a potentially perilous ratification of his Brexit divorce deal in the British parliament after the Speaker refused to allow a vote on it on Monday.

With just 10 days left until the United Kingdom is due to leave the EU on October 31, the divorce is again in disarray as Britain's politicians argue over whether to leave with a deal, exit without a deal or hold another referendum.

House of Commons Speaker John Bercow said a vote should not be allowed on Monday as the same issue had been discussed on Saturday when opponents turned Johnson's big Brexit day into a humiliation.

"In summary, Monday's motion is in substance the same as Saturday's motion and the House (of Commons) has decided the matter," Bercow told parliament.

"My ruling is therefore that the motion will not be debated Monday as it would be repetitive and disorderly to do so," Bercow said, provoking the ire of Brexit supporting lawmakers who said they had been refused a chance to vote on Johnson's deal.

Bercow said the government could still secure ratification for the Brexit deal by October 31 if it had the numbers in parliament. Johnson was disappointed by the decision, a spokesman said.

But the Speaker's decision means that the government will have to try to push on with the legislation needed for ratification, a process opponents are plotting to wreck with amendments that would destroy Johnson's deal.

Johnson was ambushed in parliament on Saturday by opponents who demanded a change to the sequencing of the ratification of the deal, exposing the prime minister to a law which forced him to request a delay until January 31.

He sent the note to the European Union unsigned — and added another signed letter arguing against what he said was a deeply corrosive delay.

Brexit secretary Steve Barclay said European Council President Donald Tusk had accepted the delay request as valid and was considering it.

The European Union, which has grappled with the Brexit crisis since Britons voted 52 per cent - 48 per cent to leave in a 2016 referendum, decided on Sunday to play for time rather than rush to decide on Johnson's request for a delay.

From the bloc's point of view, extension options range from just an additional month until the end of November to half a year or longer.

The government insists Britain will leave the EU on October 31. Parliament will vote in the second reading on legislation known as the Withdrawal Agreement Bill on Tuesday, after which amendments can be proposed to it.

Johnson's ministers said they were confident they had the numbers to push a deal through parliament, though there was concern that amendments could wreck Johnson's deal. — Reuters

Johnson's Conservative Party now has 288 seats, after recent loss of strength in the form of by-election losses, expulsions and resignations. Even if (although there is not even slightest chance) the 10 Democratic Unionist party members support the UK Prime Minister, he falls short of 22 votes

Also, Johnson's conservative party enjoys the support of 20 former Tories who now are independent MPs. Various other independents may also lean towards Johnson's side

she is from a very influential family," a college official said.

Nusrat could not be reached for comment.

Test fraud, cheating and leaking of question papers ahead of exams are common in Bangladesh, prompting authorities frequently to cancel results.

As per media reports, she had been in Dhaka but sent the lookalikes to eight exams as proxy candidates, one of whom was caught in the act. — AFP

Tornado churns through Dallas



A man looks at his missing roof after his home was hit by a tornado in Richardson, Texas on Monday. A tornado tore homes and businesses apart in a densely populated areas of Dallas, where only minor injuries were reported, but a person was killed by a falling tree in northwest Arkansas as a series of storms caused chaos in several US states.

Turkish PM accuses West of standing by terrorists in Syria

Deadline for withdrawal of Kurdish fighters from Syria expires today

Istanbul, Oct. 21: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday lashed out at the Western states, accusing them of 'standing by terrorists' in failing to support Turkey's operation against Syrian Kurdish fighters.

"Can you imagine the whole West stood by the terrorists and all attacked us, including Nato member states and European Union countries?" Erdogan said in Istanbul.

"Since when did you start to side with terror? Did PYD-YPG (Syrian Kurdish forces) join Nato and we do not know about it?" he asked.

Ankara says the YPG is a 'terrorist' offshoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been waging an insurgency inside Turkey since 1984.

The PKK is blacklisted as a terror group by Ankara, the US and the EU.

Ankara's military action against Kurdish forces who played a key role in the fight against the Islamic State group has drawn widespread international criticism and prompted some Nato coun-



Recep Tayyip Erdogan

■ PRESIDENT ERDOGAN says the country does not have an eye on any other country's territory and that Turkey considers such an accusation as the biggest insult directed at it

Jens Stoltenberg has repeatedly voiced serious concerns about the military operation launched on October 9 to push Syrian Kurdish forces back from the border.

Erdogan denied any territorial ambition saying: "Turkey does not have an eye on any country's territory. We consider such an accusation as the biggest insult directed to us."

Turkey has announced a 120-hour suspension of the offensive following a deal with US Vice-President Mike Pence, under which Kurdish fighters were to withdraw to allow a 'safe zone' to be set up along the border.

Erdogan was to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday in the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

The deadline for the withdrawal of Kurdish fighters from areas in northeastern Syria expires at 1900 GMT on Tuesday, a Turkish military source said.

"It started at 10 pm on Thursday, so it finishes at 10 pm on Tuesday," the source said. — AFP

HILLARY POSTS LETTER MOCKING TRUMP

Washington, Oct. 21: Hillary Clinton on Monday posted a joke letter on Twitter supposedly sent by John F. Kennedy during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, written in the excitable style of US President Donald Trump's recent letter to Turkey.

The parody letter is addressed to Russia's then leader Nikita Khrushchev. "Don't be a dick, ok? Get your missiles out of Cuba," starts the letter pretending to be from president Kennedy.

"Everybody will say 'Yay! Khrushchev! You're the best!' But if you don't everybody will be like 'what an asshole' and call your garbage country 'The Soviet Bunion'."

The letter echoes the bizarre tone of Trump's October 9 letter to Erdogan, in which he warned that he would wreck Turkey's economy if its invasion of Syria went too far. — AFP

US may retain some troops near oilfields

Dohuk/Kabul, Oct. 21: The Pentagon is considering keeping some US troops near oilfields in northeastern Syria alongside Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces to help deny oil to Islamic State militants, defense secretary Mark Esper said on Monday.

tries to suspend new arms sales. Nato secretary general

drawn widespread international criticism and prompted some Nato coun-

tries to suspend new arms sales. Nato secretary general

tries to suspend new arms sales. Nato secretary general

Prince Harry opens up on rift with brother

London, Oct. 21: Prince Harry has admitted he and his brother are now 'on different paths' and have good days and bad days in their relationship.

The Duke of Sussex has been plagued by rumours in recent months of a rift between him and Prince William, and in an interview with ITV he acknowledged that "inevitably stuff happens" given their high-profile role and the pressure the family faces.

Speaking during his recent tour of southern Africa with his wife Meghan Markle, he said: "We are brothers. We will always be brothers. We are certainly on different paths at the moment but I will always be there for him as I know he will always be there for me."

"We don't see each other as much as we used to because we are so busy but I love him dearly."

"The majority of the stuff is created out of nothing but as brothers, you know, you have good days, you have bad days."

Meghan, who has also been rumoured to have feuded with Kate Middleton, described the past year as 'hard' and said her British friends warned her not to marry Harry.

Meghan, 38, has had to face an increasingly hostile press since she married into the Royal Family



Prince Harry

last year, with the tabloids luxuriating in stories about her fractured family and the rumours of palace rifts. The couple launched legal action this month against British tabloid *The Mail* for invasion of privacy. The former actress said she had tried to cope by putting on a stiff upper lip but she was not prepared for the intensity of tabloid interest.

Meghan said: "When I first met my now-husband my friends were really happy because I was so happy, but my British friends said to me, 'I'm sure he's great but you shouldn't do it because the British tabloids will destroy your life.'" Asked whether she can cope, Meghan said: "In all honesty I have said for a long time to H — that is what I call him — it's not enough to just survive something, that's not the point of life. You have got to thrive."

— AFP

Emergency extended in Chile, death toll at 11

Santiago, Oct. 21: Chilean authorities extended a curfew for a second consecutive night on Monday after two people died in a torched supermarket amid a wave of unrest over price hikes and social inequality.

Chile is "at war", President Sebastian Pinera said, as the country reels from three days of violent demonstrations and looting that have left 11 dead and almost 1,500 detained in the worst outbreak of social unrest in decades.

"We are at war against a powerful, implacable enemy, who does not



Sebastian Pinera

respect anything or anyone and is willing to use violence and crime without any limits," Pinera told reporters after an emergency meeting with army general Javier Iturriga, who has been placed in charge of order and security in the capital.

Santiago and nine other of Chile's 16 regions were under a state of emergency, Pinera confirmed late on Monday, with troops deployed onto the streets for the first time since Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship between 1973-1990.

The clashes, which have seen some 9,500 police and military fire tear gas and water cannon against protesters who have set fire to buses, smashed up metro stations and ransacked shops, were sparked by anger over price hikes and social inequality. — AFP

STATUES ROBBED AMID AMAZON MEET

Vatican City, Oct. 21: Pope Francis' controversial meeting on the Amazon took a criminal twist on Monday after thieves stole indigenous fertility statues from a Vatican-area church and tossed them into the Tiber river.

Video of the pre-dawn theft from the Santa Maria in Traspontina church was shared and celebrated on conservative social media. The Vatican's communications czar, Paolo Ruffini, termed it a "stunt" that violated the idea of dialogue.

Even before the three-week Amazon synod opened on October 6, conservative and traditionalist Catholics had blasted its agenda as a heretical celebration of paganism, given its deference to indigenous cultures and spirituality. Their criticism reached a fever pitch at the synod opening, when Francis presided over a prayer service featuring the statues of naked pregnant women.

SAD | CHAPTER Leader caught after news channel entered exam hall

B'desh MP hires lookalikes for BA exams

Dhaka, Oct. 21: A Bangladeshi lawmaker has been expelled from university after allegedly hiring as many as eight lookalikes to take exams in her place, officials said on Monday.

Tamanna Nusrat, from the ruling Awami League party, is accused of paying the lookalikes to pretend to be her in at least 13 tests. The scandal emerged after private broadcaster *Nagorik TV* entered a test

hall and confronted one of the women posing as Nusrat, in a video that went viral.

Nusrat, who was elected to parliament last year, was studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree with the Bangladesh Open University (BOU).

"We expelled her because she has committed a crime. A crime is a crime," BOU head M.A. Mannan said.

"We have cancelled her enrolment. She will never



Tamanna Nusrat

be able to get admitted here again." "The proxy students were protected by the MP's

musclemen when they sat for the tests. Everybody knew it but nobody uttered a word because

she is from a very influential family," a college official said.

— AFP

HOW BREXIT NUMBERS ADD UP

320
Magic Figure



Of the 650 MPs in the UK House of Commons, with seven non-sitting Sinn Féin representatives, as well as the Speaker and his two deputies not taking part in votes, the magic number for any victory comes down to 320

288
Conservatives



However, thanks to certain factions in the Labour Party, a fraction of 35 independent MPs may favour the Brexit divorce deal. They hold the key to the crucial Brexit vote that may take place soon, in the lead up to the Oct. 31 deadline

Johnson's Conservative Party now has 288 seats, after recent loss of strength in the form of by-election losses, expulsions and resignations. Even if (although there is not even slightest chance) the 10 Democratic Unionist party members support the UK Prime Minister, he falls short of 22 votes

As many as six Labour Party MPs — Kevin Barron, Ronnie Campbell, Jim Fitzpatrick, Caroline Flint, Kate Hoey and John Mann — voted for Johnson's Brexit proposal and are expected to back him all through. How many other labour MPs would follow suit is the question of the hour

Also, Johnson's conservative party enjoys the support of 20 former Tories who now are independent MPs. Various other independents may also lean towards Johnson's side

she is from a very influential family," a college official said.

Nusrat could not be reached for comment.

Test fraud, cheating and leaking of question papers ahead of exams are common in Bangladesh, prompting authorities frequently to cancel results.

As per media reports, she had been in Dhaka but sent the lookalikes to eight exams as proxy candidates, one of whom was caught in the act. — AFP



2nd attack

Czech antivirus maker discloses second attack aimed at compromising CCleaner releases.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

TUESDAY | 22 OCTOBER 2019 | HYDERABAD

SHORT TAKES

PRASAD: USE DIGITAL INDIA FOR RURAL AREAS

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Digital India initiative should be leveraged to transform rural India and create avenues for those in smaller towns and cities, IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said on Monday.

The minister said Digital India should become a beacon for inclusion, healthcare, education and entrepreneurship.

He launched the next version of the government's mobile payment app Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) called BHIM 2.0 that is packed with new features and capabilities. The minister also launched an Indian software products registry, which will act as a single window portal to collate Indian software product database.

Speaking at the 'Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) StartUp Summit' here, Prasad said there is compelling case for social startups and that these should be encouraged so they unleash their power in India's changing digital narrative. "I want Digital India platform to transform rural India and create aspirations in tier 3 and tier 4 cities and towns," the Minister said. Citing success stories of technology platforms Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and GSTN (GST-Network), the Minister said government entities such as NIC, STPI should also become competitive.

"For Digital India to succeed, the government entities must also become competitive. I have told National Informatics Centre (NIC) that your people have to become competitive and innovative...they have changed. Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) also must change," the Minister said.

— PTI

ANDROID GETS TWITTER'S 'LIGHTS OUT'

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, OCT. 21

Months after having rolled out a dark mode for Twitter's iOS users, the social media company has finally done the same for its android app users. Rolled out only for its select group of invitation admitted 'alpha' users, the mode is called the 'Lights Out Mode'. While twitter's android users had already received a version of a dark mode for its application, this still had a bluish-grey background. Dark modes are known to provide battery conservation with pitch black UIs, where OLED screens are known to be able to switch off some parts of the screen.

This flaw reportedly gets corrected within the new update, according to reports saying that, the pitch-black interface would be available upon opting for the 'lights out' mode. Thus, the new version will also retain the older, bluish-grey coloured background in the interface under the name 'dim' mode. If you are a member of the 'Alpha' group of users, you can check the availability of this version 8.19.0 through by going through the Settings and privacy menu.

GOOGLE TO FIX 'BUG' FOR IPHONE PICS

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, OCT. 21

Google is soon going to patch a bug in its Photos app that allowed iPhone devices free services of the Google Photos backup feature that allowed users to a backup an unlimited number of photos at its original resolutions. On Android, users could either choose between 15GB of backup for original resolution photos and videos or unlimited backup at a lower resolution. Getting both features would require a fee.

As Apple's HEIC file format is more efficient than Google's reduced quality JPEG files, the app would simply take the original pictures, but this would not add up in the limited 15GB storage.

While the solution is not yet clear, it would be easy to assume that the patch would in some way make it mandatory for the HEIC files to be first converted to JPEG for free users. This would mean iOS users not paying for service would actually end up letting the app use more of the phone's resources to convert and upload the 'lower quality' images.

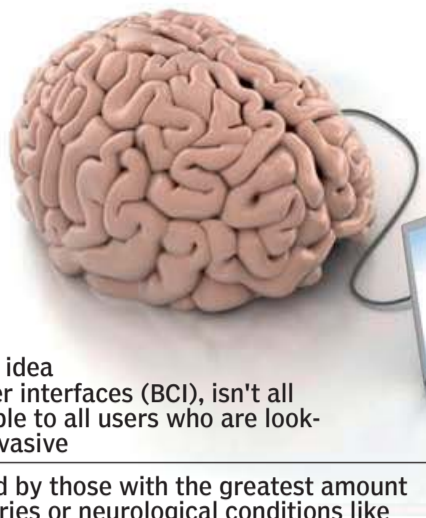
BRAIN-COMPUTER INTERFACE — THE NEXT BIG THING?

While Elon Musk's Neuralink may be one of the best-known brain-computer interface (BCI) companies in the world right now, Facebook recently acquired CTRL-labs thus officially kicking off the race among the big tech giants.

However, like every new big technological advances, BCI, which allows us to connect our brains to computers for some limited purposes, comes with its own set of challenges and nightmares.

Neural interfaces are devices implanted in the body, or worn externally, which are capable of recording or stimulating activity in the brain. The idea of such technology, also known as brain-computer interfaces (BCI), isn't all that new. Currently, there are two options available to all users who are looking at this new technology — Invasive and non-invasive

While invasive systems will continue to be used by those with the greatest amount to gain from BCIs, such as people with spinal injuries or neurological conditions like Parkinson's disease, broader uptake among consumers is likely to be concentrated on non-invasive systems.



Currently, BCIs can gather data that is more based around measuring the physical movements people want to make or their emotional state. But, as machine-learning algorithms become more sophisticated and BCI hardware becomes more capable, it may be possible to read thoughts with greater precision.

Once the data is collected by BCI and passed on to other software, it's just as secure as any other set of information.

However, in the wake of recent data breaches it's clear there are no guarantees that sensitive information is better protected than others.

A report from the Royal Society — the UK's national science academy — said the government should launch an investigation into neural interface technologies, including looking at regulations around their development and the ethics of using them.

The Royal Society warned that if developments are dictated by a handful of companies then less commercial applications could be sidelined. It said regulation should not be so onerous, complicated and expensive that it allows 'big tech' to dominate the emerging field.

The Royal Society said that the government needs to investigate the ethical issues presented by neural interfaces, to address questions of what data should be collected, how it is kept safe, and the acceptability of enhancements.

Russian hackers hijacked Iranian spying operations

In the past, Moscow, Tehran denied Western allegations

London, Oct. 21: Russian hackers piggy-backed on an Iranian cyber-espionage operation to attack government and industry organizations in dozens of countries while masquerading as attackers from the Islamic Republic, British and US officials said on Monday.

The Russian group, known as "Turla" and accused by Estonian and Czech authorities of operating on behalf of Russia's FSB security service, has used Iranian tools and computer infrastructure to successfully hack in to organizations in at least 20 different countries over the last 18 months, British security officials said.

The hacking campaign, the extent of which has not been previously revealed, was most active in the Middle East but also targeted organizations in Britain, they said.

Paul Chichester, a senior official at Britain's GCHQ intelligence agency, said the operation shows state-backed hackers are working in a "very crowded space" and developing new attacks and methods to better cover their tracks.

In a statement accompanying a joint advisory with the US National Security Agency, GCHQ's National Cyber Security Centre said it wanted to raise industry awareness about the activity and make attacks more difficult for its adversaries.

MSSQL SERVER BACKDOOR FOUND

Chinese cyberspies have developed malware that alters Microsoft SQL Server (MSSQL) databases and creates a backdoor mechanism that can let hackers connect to any account by using a "magic password."

Furthermore, the backdoor also hides user sessions inside the database's connection logs every time the "magic password" is used, helping hackers remain undetected even when administrators may suspect something is wrong.

In a report published today, ESET said hackers deployed the backdoor as a post-infection tool, after compromising networks through other methods.



"We want to send a clear message that even when cyber actors seek to mask their identity, our capabilities will ultimately identify them," said Chichester, who serves as the NCSC's director of operations.

Officials in Russia and Iran did not immediately respond to requests for comment sent on Sunday. Moscow and Tehran have both repeatedly denied Western allegations over hacking.

GLOBAL HACKING CAMPAIGNS

Western officials rank Russia and Iran as two of the most dangerous threats in cyberspace, alongside China and North Korea, with both governments accused of conducting hacking operations against countries around the

world. Intelligence officials said there was no evidence of collusion between Turla and its Iranian victim, a hacking group known as "APT34" which cybersecurity researchers at firms including FireEye FEYE.O say works for the Iranian government.

Rather, the Russian hackers infiltrated the Iranian group's infrastructure in order to "masquerade as an adversary which victims would expect to target them," said GCHQ's Chichester.

Turla's actions show the dangers of wrongly attributing cyberattacks, British officials said, but added that they were not aware of any public incidents that had been incorrectly blamed on Iran as a result of the Russian operation. The US and its

Western allies have also used foreign cyberattacks to facilitate their own spying operations, a practice referred to as "fourth party collection," according to documents released by former US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden and reporting by German magazine Der Spiegel.

GCHQ declined to comment on Western operations. By gaining access to the Iranian infrastructure, Turla was able to use APT34's "command and control" systems to deploy its own malicious code, GCHQ and the NSA said in a public advisory.

The Russian group was also able to access the networks of existing APT34 victims and even access the code needed to build its own "Iranian" hacking tools. — Reuters

New lithium-ion battery won't catch fire: Scientists

Washington, Oct. 21: Scientists have developed a flexible lithium-ion battery that can not only operate under extreme conditions — including cutting, submersion, and simulated ballistic impact — but also does not catch fire.

Current Li-ion batteries are susceptible to catastrophic fire and explosion incidents — most of which arrive without any discernible warning — because they are built with flammable and combustible materials, according to researchers from Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in the United States.

They noted that some phones were banned from airlines as a result of this danger, and the US Navy's prohibition of e-cigarettes on ships and submarines is a direct response to the need to reduce the flammability of such devices.

With these batteries emerging as the energy storage vehicle of choice for portable electronics, electric vehicles, and grid

storage, these safety advancements mark a significant step forward in transforming the way Li-ion batteries are manufactured and used in electronic devices, the researchers said.

In the research published in the journal *Chemical Communications*, the team described a new class of "water-in-salt" and "water-in-bisalt" electrolytes — referred to as WiS and WiBS, respectively.

These electrolytes, when incorporated in a polymer matrix, reduce water activity and elevate the battery's energy capabilities and life cycle while ridding it of the flammable, toxic, and highly reactive solvents present in current Li-ion batteries.

It's a safe, powerful alternative, the researchers said.

"Li-ion batteries are already a constant presence in our daily lives, from our phones to our cars, and continuing to improve their safety is paramount to further advancing energy storage

technology," said Konstantinos Gerasopoulos, a senior research scientist and principal investigator at APL.

"Li-ion battery form factors have not changed much since their commercialisation in the early 1990s; we still use the same cylindrical or prismatic cell types. The liquid electrolyte and required hermetic packaging have a lot to do with that," Gerasopoulos said.

"Our team's efforts have generally been focused on replacing the flammable liquid with a polymer that improves safety and form factor. We are excited about where we are today," he said.

Additionally, the damage tolerance initially demonstrated with the team's flexible battery in 2017 is further improved in this new approach to creating Li-ion batteries.

"The first generation of flexible batteries were not as dimensionally stable as those we are making today," Gerasopoulos said. — PTI

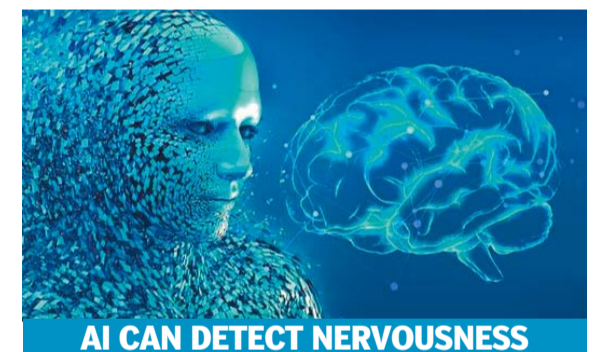
COMPANIES LEAKING DATA TO VIRUS SCANNER

San Francisco, Oct. 21: Despite the growing mainstream focus on data security, companies are still being quite careless about sensitive data being uploaded online, according to a report on Bloomberg.

Citing cybersecurity firm Otorio, Bloomberg reported that companies using Alphabet's virus scanner and similar products are unwittingly leaking sensitive data such as blueprints to intellectual property online.

The report further stated that the firm has discovered thousands of unprotected files from firms in the pharmaceutical, industrial, automotive and food industries as part of a project to research the malware logged by VirusTotal, which is owned by Alphabet cyber security subsidiary Chronicle.

"From what we found, we could design a very constructive hack. We found files that gave us a blueprint of how to infiltrate the production floor," said Otorio CEO Daniel Bren. — Agencies



AI CAN DETECT NERVOUSNESS

Fujitsu Laboratories has developed a technology that is more accurate at tracking complex facial expressions such as awkward giggles, nervousness or confusion.

The company's laboratories have come up with an AI-based technology that can track subtle changes of expression such as nervousness or confusion. Companies like Microsoft are already using emotion tools to recognise facial expression, but they are limited to eight "core" states: anger, contempt, fear, disgust, happiness, sadness, surprise or neutral.

Fujitsu mentioned various potential applications for its new technology, which include pushing the uncanny valley by making robots that are capable of both recognising our most subtle changes of humour, and of recreating those shifts themselves. It could also improve road safety by detecting even small changes in drivers' concentration.

Whether the tool can achieve a high level of accuracy, however, is likely to be a topic of debate for psychologists, who argue that AUs do not on their own reflect emotion.

New artificial skin will help devices feel ticklish

London, Oct. 21: Scientists have developed an artificial skin that allows devices such as smartphones and computers to 'feel' the user's grasp, pressure and location, and can even detect interactions such as tickling, caressing, twisting and pinching.

The Skin-On interface, developed by researchers at the University of Bristol in the UK in partnership with Telecom ParisTech and Sorbonne University in France, mimics human skin in appearance as

well as sensing resolution. The researchers adopted a bio-driven approach to developing a multi-layer, silicone membrane that mimics the layers present in human skin. This is made up of a surface textured layer, an electrode layer of conductive threads and a hypodermis layer, the researchers said.

Not only is the interface more natural than a rigid casing, it can also detect a plethora of gestures made by the end-users, they said. — PTI



Facebook open to currency-pegged stablecoins

Due to scepticism, FB said Libra could use cryptocurrencies based on fiat currencies

Washington, Oct. 21: Facebook, facing growing scepticism about its digital currency project Libra, on Sunday said the initiative could use cryptocurrencies based on national currencies such as the dollar, instead of the synthetic one it initially proposed.

David Marcus, who heads the Libra project for Facebook, told a banking seminar the group's main goal remained to create a more efficient payments system, but it was open to looking at alternative approaches for the currency token it would use.

"We could do it differently," he said. "Instead of having a synthetic unit ... we could have a series of stablecoins, a dollar stablecoin, a euro stablecoin, a sterling pound stable coin, etc." Marcus told the panel.

"We could definitely approach this with having a multitude of stablecoins that represent national currencies in a tokenized digital form," he said. "That is one of the options that should be considered."

Marcus said he was not suggesting currency-pegged stablecoins were the group's new preferred

FB ROLLS OUT DARK MODE

Facebook has begun rolling out a new interface for desktop users, with an optional dark mode in addition to the traditional white design.

When they log into the desktop site, some users have reported seeing a pop-up asking whether they would like to try the new design, which is referred to as 'Facebook Beta'.

option. "What we care about is the mission and there are a number ways to go about this," Marcus told Reuters after the panel, adding that the Libra needed to "demonstrate a lot of agility."

The Facebook-led project suffered severe setbacks earlier this month, as major payment companies Mastercard and Visa became the latest part-

ners to quit the group behind the project.

Other key members that have pulled out included Stripe, eBay and Booking Holdings and PayPal.

Global policymakers and regulators have also worry that creation of a new synthetic global currency could upend the global financial system, threaten users' privacy, and facilitate money laundering.

Group of 20 finance leaders on Friday agreed to set strict regulations on cryptocurrencies and said such stablecoins should not be issued until various global risks were

addressed.

Marcus told Reuters that Facebook was still aiming for a June 2020 launch of Libra, but acknowledged it could miss that target due to regulatory hurdles.

"We'll see. That's still the goal," Marcus told Reuters when asked if the recent departure of several major partners from the project would delay the planned 2020 launch.

"We've always said that we wouldn't go forward unless we have addressed all legitimate concerns and get proper regulatory approval. So it's not entirely up to us," he said. — Reuters

World
economy is
stumbling
towards
disasterUltraTech
Cement net
up 62% to
₹578 crore
in Q2

Overleaf

quick
BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,298.38	+0.63
Nifty 50	11,661.85	+0.65
S&P 500	3,002.29	+0.54
Dollar (₹)	71.14	0.00
Pound Sterling (₹)	92.05	+0.21
Euro (₹)	79.09	-0.16
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	38,955*30	-0.07
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	58.65	-1.30
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.692	-0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	+1.778	+0.028

* As of 9:30 pm IST

Gold bonds
price fixed at
₹3,835 a gram

The government on Monday rolled out the sixth tranche of sovereign gold bonds. The Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme 2019-20 - Series VI will close for subscription on the day of Dhanteras, on Oct. 25. The issue price has been fixed at Rs 3,835 per gram with settlement date as Oct. 30. A discount of Rs 50 per gram is available for digital buyers.

Banking staff
to strike work
today

Services in state-owned banks may be affected as some employees unions will observe a nation-wide strike on Tuesday to protest against bank mergers and the fall in deposit rates. But officers and private sector banks are not part of the strike call given by the All India Bank Employees Association and the Bank Employees Federation of India.

YuppTV, BSNL
join hands for
enhance tech

YuppTV on Monday announced that it has entered into a triple play partnership for video and broadband technology services for mobile and fixed line with BSNL. As the largest broadband provider in the country, the fiber network by BSNL has covered every nook and corner in the country and enjoys an equally fervent mobile base. It has the potential of providing Triple play services to any corner in the country, including India's very hinterlands. YuppTV offers an extensive and exclusive content library with Live TV channels and catch-up, movies and exclusive originals. For YuppTV Originals, the brand has partnered with renowned names from the South Indian film fraternity and has been one of the firsts to produce the biggest hits of Web Series, down South.

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■ NBFCs, HFCs still rely heavily on securitisation
Securitisation market
to cross ₹2L cr in FY20FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, OCT. 21

Funds raised through the securitisation route have seen an unprecedented rise in the last one year as non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs) facing a shortage of funds since the IL&FS crisis in September 2018 have resorted significantly to this route for raising funds. The HFCs and NBFCs have raised as much as Rs 2.36 lakh crore over the last one year (October 2018 to September 2019) through sell down of their loan assets under either the securitisation or direct assignment route. This unprecedented increase in sell down volumes reflects the choking up of traditional borrowing channels such as loans, bonds and commercial paper issuances. As per Icr, the domestic securitisation market is expected to remain robust and FY2020 is poised to be another good year in terms of issuance volumes. Securitisation involves creating a financial instru-



ment by pooling together loans such as home mortgages, automobile loans or credit card debt obligations and future receivable and then selling them to investors as securities. Abhishek Daffra, Vice-President and Head of Structured Finance at Icr, "NBFCs and HFCs continue to rely heavily on securitisation as a tool for raising funds, manage liquidity and to correct any ALM mismatch. In addition to this, the partial credit guarantee scheme (PCG) of the government will also add bulk to the overall market volumes. With the public sector banks directed to disburse funding of Rs 1

lakh crore under the PCG scheme by February 2020, we believe that the size of the securitisation market would be at an all-time high, in excess of Rs 2 lakh crore for FY2020." "Growth rode on both, established and new originators entering the market to augment their resources profile in a challenging financing environment. The number of active originators was close to 100 in the first half of this fiscal, compared with 70 in the corresponding period of last fiscal. Overall, growth was broad-based with both mortgage backed securitisation (MBS) and asset-backed securitisation

(ABS) logging healthy uptick in volume," said Rohit Inamdar, Senior Director at Crisil.

A bigger boost, however, is expected from regulatory interventions, say analysts. Among recent regulatory interventions, the Reserve Bank has relaxed the guidelines on minimum holding period in securitisation transactions backed by long-tenure loans till December 31, 2019. This would ensure increased supply of eligible assets available for MBS transactions.

Krishnan Sitaraman, Senior Director, Crisil Ratings said, "The partial credit guarantee scheme launched by the Ministry of Finance is expected to further lift demand for securitisation from public sector banks. Many of these banks have already sanctioned loans under the scheme and disbursements are expected over the next few months."

Securitisation of gold loan receivables, personal loan receivables, two-wheeler loan receivables and lease rental receivables are now mainstream.

'Low inflation
focus hurting
farm sector'New Delhi,
Oct. 21: String-
ent commitment
of the govern-
ment to low
inflation is hurt-
ing the agricul-
ture sector and
has resulted in
farm distress,
Nobel laureate
Abhijit Banerjee
said here.

He also said disinvestment is not a long-term solution for bridging fiscal deficit. Attributing farm distress to the government's commitment to low inflation, winner of Nobel Prize for Economics said it has affected support price.

On banking sector stress, he said part of the problem is that decision-making is absolutely frozen. He said probably the moderation in direct tax could push the growth northward. —PTI

Amid economic gloom, household
wealth grows 5.2%, debt 11.5%SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Amidst the economic slowdown, India's household wealth grew 5.2 per cent to \$12.6 trillion in 2019. But its household debt grew faster at 11.5 per cent, says a report.

As per the Global Wealth Report by Swiss bank Credit Suisse, Indian households added \$625 billion by mid-2019 from mid-2018 levels, taking their total wealth to \$12.6 trillion. The country recorded 5.2 per cent growth in household wealth, which was higher than the global growth of 2.6 per cent. Total wealth in India increased four-fold between 2000 and 2019.

Credit Suisse finds that personal wealth in India is dominated by property and



other real assets, which make up the bulk of household assets.

Growing by 6.9 per cent or \$708 billion in absolute terms, non-financial assets had a higher share in the wealth of households. This included real estate and gold. Financial assets grew by \$37 billion, or by 1.4 per cent, in 2019.

Much of the year-on-year variation in wealth levels is due to changes in asset prices and exchange rates.

Exchange-rate fluctuations between the dollar and the local currency are mostly the source of the biggest gains and losses, finds the study. Further, India with 6 per cent and China with 9 per cent rise in prices were among the nations experiencing a robust housing market. Gold too has appreciated significantly this year.

Wealth per adult grew a bit slower in India at 3.3 per cent to \$14,569 in 2019. But this was higher than the global growth of 1.2 per cent. Wealth per adult grew by an average of 11 per cent annually over the period 2000-2019. Prior to 2008, wealth rose strongly, from \$2,127 in 2000 to \$6,378 in 2007. After falling 29 per cent in 2008, it rebounded and grew at an average rate of 12 per cent up to 2019.

Unorganised trade sees muted sales

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Unorganised traders, who have alleging that e-commerce companies have been grabbing away their business, anticipate a drop of 50 to 60 per cent of sales during the festive season this year.

With a week more to go for Diwali, the commercial markets in different cities, comprising of small and medium traders, are wit-

nessing a slump in business. Usually, the retail trade in India does an annual business of about Rs 45 lakh crore of which festive season alone accounts for about Rs 6 lakh crore.

According to the Confederation of All-India Traders (Cait), traders are witnessing around 60 per cent drop in business as a major chunk of the sales has shifted online.

The mobile phone cate-

gory is witnessing a slump of 60 per cent. Sales of FMCG goods, consumer durables and electronics goods have dropped 35 per cent and electrical appliances, 30 per cent, Cait said. In apparels, which is a major category for Diwali season, a 25 per cent drop is expected. A 20 per cent fall is expected in footwear and watches and 30 per cent in beauty and cosmetics and bags.

Festive-specific items too are seeing a slump—35 per cent in gift items, 25 per cent in furnishing goods and 25 per cent in decorative items. Building hardware is seeing a 15 per cent decline in sales, 30 per cent in kitchen equipment, 30 per cent in computer and computer goods and 30 per cent in fitness and sports goods, finds Cait.

There are about seven crore small businesses in the country, generating about 45 crore jobs, it said.

Whistleblowers allege
window-dressing by Infosys

Bengaluru, Oct. 21: An anonymous group claiming to be employees of IT major Infosys has written to the company's board accusing CEO Salil Parekh and CFO Nilanjan Roy of indulging in "unethical practices" to boost short-term revenue and profits.

"We have high respect for all of you and bring to your notice the unethical practices of CEO in recent quarters. Same measures are taken up in the current quarter also to boost short term revenue and profits," the letter addressed to the Board of Directors dated September 20, read.

Calling themselves as "ethical employees", the "whistleblowers" have said that they have emails and voice recordings on these matters.

"We hope the Board will conduct immediate investigation and take action," they added.

The Bengaluru-based Infosys said the whistleblower complaint has been placed before the Audit Committee as per the company's practice.

"The whistleblower complaint has been placed before the Audit Committee as per the Company's practice and will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's whistleblower policy," it said in a statement.

The whistleblowers have also written to the US-based office of the Whistleblower Protection Programme on October 3, alleging willful misstatement and accounting irregularities for the last two quarters.

Stating that in the last quarter, they were asked not to fully recognise costs like visa costs to improve profits, the whistleblowers have claimed: "We have voice recordings of these conversations. When auditor opposed, the issue was postponed."

"This quarter, there is lot of pressure to not



CASTING DOUBT

▶ Whistleblowers say they were asked not to fully recognise costs like visa costs to improve profits in last quarter

▶ "This quarter, there is lot of pressure to not recognise reversals of \$50 mn of upfront payment in FDR contract"

▶ Infosys said the complaint has been placed before the Audit Committee

recognise reversals of \$50 mn of upfront payment in FDR contract, which is against accounting practice. As this will reduce profits for the quarter and negative for stock price, they are putting pressure not to take the charge," they claimed.

Alleging that "critical information" is hidden from the auditors and Board, the letter claimed that in large contracts like Verizon, Intel and JVs in Japan, ABN Amro acquisition, "revenue recognition matters are forced which are not as per accounting standards."

"We have emails and voice recordings and we will share when investigators ask us. We are asked not to share large deal information with auditors," they said.

"Large deal approvals

have irregularities. The CEO is bypassing reviews and approvals and instructing sales not to send mails for approval. He directs them to make wrong assumptions to show margins. CFO is compliant and he prevents us from showing in board presentations large deal issues," they further alleged.

"The CEO told us, no one in the Board understands these things, they are happy as long as share price is up...", the group alleged.

Claiming that several billion dollar deals of last few quarters have nil margin, the whistleblowers have urged the Board to ask auditors to check deal proposals, margins, undisclosed upfront commitments made and revenue recognition.

"All information is not shared with auditors."

"In board meetings, we are told not to present data on large deals and important financial measures as it will get board attention. The CEO and CFO are asking us to show more profits in treasury by taking up risks and make changes to policies. This will provide short term profits. They ask us not to make key disclosures in 20F and annual report and to share only good and incomplete information with investors and analysts," they wrote.

"Whoever, disagrees is sidelined and many of them leave," they claimed. —PTI

Bigwigs give polls a miss

Mumbai, Oct. 21: Business tycoons like Ratan Tata, N. Chandrasekaran, the Ambani brothers, Sajjan Jindal and so on were conspicuous by their absence at the polling booths for Assembly elections that recorded 63 per cent turnout on Monday.

Their spokespersons said these leaders had unavoidable prior commitments, forcing them to stay out of the city on the important day. The island city alone sends as many as 38 legislators to the 288-member house.

Those who did cast their votes included Mahindra group Chairman Anand Mahindra, HDFC Chief Executive Keki Mistry, Marico Chairman Harsh

Mariwala, and M&M Managing Director Pawan Goenka who also appealed to citizens to cast exercise their domestic right.

The polls saw a voter turnout of around 63 per cent, almost matching the 63.38 per cent polling recorded in the last elections held in 2014.

According to official sources, Tata and Chandrasekaran and Jindal were not in town. Jindal, however, took to Twitter to appeal to voters to exercise their rights saying, "I urge each and every one of you to exercise your duty towards our democracy."

The Ambani brother Mukesh and Anil, who normally come out with

their families on the polling day, did not cast their votes this time around.

Why they did not make it this time around is not known yet.

After casting his vote, Mahindra tweeted: "Casting your vote is one of the most empowering experiences in life. And it's the privilege of living in a democracy a privilege we often take for granted."

As many as 3,237 candidates, including 235 women, are in the fray for the 288-member house. Their fate will be known on October 24.

Due to the polls, major markets like equities, currency and debt were shut. —PTI

Start-up founder to join Indonesia's new cabinet

YOOLIM LEE &
VIRIYA SINGGIH
OCT. 21

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has offered the 35-year-old co-founder of the country's biggest startup, Gojek, a position in his new cabinet, affirming the importance of the internet sector in propelling Southeast Asia's largest economy.

Nadiem Makarim on Monday told reporters he has accepted a cabinet post after resigning with immediate effect as chief executive officer of the

ride-hailing giant he started nine years ago. That leaves the \$10 billion start-up, one of Southeast Asia's largest, without its most visible leader at a time it's pursuing funding to compete with arch-rival Grab Holdings Inc. Gojek said President Andre Soelistyo and co-founder Kevin Aluwi will take the helm as co-CEOs. The company will outline its next steps in the coming days, Gojek said in an emailed statement.

Widodo, commonly known as Jokowi, will specify the role to be



Nadiem Makarim

taken up by Makarim in a later announcement. Makarim's appointment — in line with the Indonesian president's stated desire to include professionals and millen-

nials in his second-term team — shouldn't disrupt operations at Gojek given its deep bench of experienced managers.

"This means President Jokowi's new cabinet will be filled with young people with ability to execute," said Willson Cuaca, Managing Partner of East Ventures, one of the most active Indonesian-focused venture capital firms. "It shows that Indonesia appreciates what they've done for the country. For Gojek, it's reached a point that even if Nadiem resigns, it's business as

usual."

The Gojek co-founder hails from a prominent Indonesian family. His grandfather was part of the delegation that won the country's independence from the Netherlands in a 1949 conference at The Hague.

"Since the beginning, my mission in Gojek has been to display Indonesia on the world's stage," Makarim told reporters when he announced his resignation in Jakarta on Monday. "So, this is a continuation of that mission, but this is certainly for

the state and within a bigger scale."

Gojek is the largest player in an Indonesian internet industry that's booming as smartphone adoption there explodes. The world's fourth most populous country with 264 million people has produced other unicorns including Tokopedia and Bukalapak, which are driving e-commerce and the digital economy more generally.

Makarim started Gojek in 2010 as a call center arranging couriers in Jakarta. At that early

stage, everything was done manually — employees called motorbike drivers one by one until someone accepted an order — and Makarim had to work at other startups in order to sustain Gojek.

It was only in 2014 that the Gojek chief decided to introduce a mobile app, with backing from private equity investor Northstar Group. When that debuted in January 2015, the service was so popular that Gojek couldn't cope with demand, Makarim said in an interview in 2016. —Bloomberg



Sterling hits 5-month peak above \$1.30

London, Oct. 21: The pound hit a five-month peak above \$1.30 Monday on renewed Brexit optimism after Prime Minister Boris Johnson requested another extension to Britain's scheduled departure from the European Union. At about 0830 GMT, the pound reached the highest level since May at \$1.3012, up from \$1.2984 late in New York on Friday. The euro steadied at about 86 pence.

"Markets (are) starting to price in a best case scenario in terms of the deal getting passed this week and then a short extension to pass any necessary legislation," CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson told AFP.

"Whether that optimism turns out to be premature is another matter; only time will tell." Johnson was on Monday attempting again to push his EU divorce deal through parliament and avoid the political damage of delaying Brexit beyond next week.

Lawmakers on Saturday mandated the prime minister to break his promise and send a letter to Brussels asking for more time. —AFP

China Banks keep prime loan rate at 4.2%

Beijing, Oct. 21: China's base rate for new corporate loans stayed unchanged in October, defying expectations of a reduction as the economy sees its slowest pace of growth since 1990s.

The one-year loan prime rate was kept at 4.2 per cent, according to a People's Bank of China. That compares to the 4.15 per cent median estimate compiled by Bloomberg. The five-year tenor was also kept unchanged at 4.85 per cent.

The LPR is a revamped market indicator of the price that lenders charge clients for new loans, and is linked to the rate at which the central bank will lend financial institutions cash for a year. It's made up of submissions from a panel of 18 banks, though Beijing has a role in setting the level. The rate is released monthly.

A static 1-year rate shows China "may be trying to balance the shrinking margins of banks with support to the economy," said Zhou Hao, Economist at Commerzbank AG.

India to import refined copper after 18 yrs: Care

New Delhi, Oct. 21: The closure of Vedanta's copper smelter plant at Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu has led to a rise in imports of the metal, making the country a net importer of refined copper after 18 years, Care Ratings has said.

"India used to be a net exporter of copper cathodes till FY18. Now with the closure of the Tuticorin smelter, the drop in domestic production has led to the domino effect of increasing the country's imports and decreasing its exports. India has become a net importer of refined copper after 18 years," Care Ratings has said.

During FY2018-19, exports fell by 87.4 per cent, whereas imports increased by 131.2 per cent, it said.

India imported refined copper from Japan, Congo, Singapore, Chile, Tanzania, the UAE and South Africa while exported refined copper to China, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea and Bangladesh during 2018-19.

Revenue from ops rises 4% to ₹9,620 cr, domestic sales fall 1.2%

UltraTech Cement net up 62% to ₹578 crore in Q2



New Delhi, Oct. 21: UltraTech Cement on Monday reported a 62.59 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 578.55 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2019.

The company had recorded a net profit of Rs 355.82 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago, the Aditya Birla Group firm said.

Its revenue from operations rose 4.01 per cent to Rs 9,620.47 crore as against Rs 9,249.26 crore in the corresponding quarter of previous fiscal.

UltraTech Cement's total expenses rose marginally to Rs 8,877.92 crore as against Rs 8,868.43 crore in the year ago period.

The consolidated results also include the cement business of Century Textiles, whose acquisition process was completed by UltraTech Cement on October 1, 2019.

On a standalone basis, Century Textiles had net sales of Rs 746 crore in July-September quarter. "UltraTech completed the acquisition of Century Textile's cement business, with the Scheme of Demerger becoming effective from 1st October, 2019.

With this acquisition, UltraTech's cement manufacturing capacity stands augmented to 117.4 mtpa, including its overseas capacity," the company said.

"This makes UltraTech the 3rd largest cement company in the world, outside of China. It is also the only company in the world to have a capacity of over 100 million tonnes in a single country, outside of China," it added.

However, UltraTech's domestic sales fell 1.20 per cent to 17.19 million tonnes in July-September as against 17.40 million tonnes in the corresponding quarter last year.

"Monsoon quarter results in lower volumes," the company said in its investor presentation.

During the first half (April-September) of this fiscal, Ultratech Cement's net profit almost doubled to Rs 1,859.82 crore from Rs 940.84 crore in the corresponding period of previous fiscal.

Revenue from operations rose 11.87 per cent to Rs 21,025.41 crore in the first half as against Rs 18,794.11 crore in the corresponding period of 2018-19. —PTI

Infratel profit up 61% to ₹964 crore

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Bharti Infratel posted 61 per cent jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 964 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2019.

The mobile tower arm of Bharti Airtel had recorded a profit of Rs 600 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

"We continue to believe that there is a strong growth potential in telecom passive infrastructure in the country as telecom networks keep pace with the continuing exponential data consumption growth," Akhil Gupta, Chairman, Bharti Infratel, said.

The company reported a marginal dip in revenue to Rs 3,638 crore from Rs 3,668 crore in the year-ago period. —PTI

Ujivan Fin profit doubles to ₹93 crore

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Ujivan Financial Services reported over two-fold jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 93 crore for the second quarter ended September 30.

The company had recorded a profit of Rs 44.3 crore in July-September 2018-19.

Total income increased 55 per cent to Rs 710 crore in the quarter under review as against Rs 459.04 crore in the year-ago period. Ujivan Financial Services said in a release.

The company's subsidiary Ujivan Small Finance Bank has filed its DRHP with SEBI in August 2019 and is committed to complying with the listing condition within the stipulated timelines, it said. —PTI

Piramal Q2 net up 15% to ₹554 cr

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Diversified business group Piramal Enterprises on Monday reported 15.33 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit at Rs 554.08 crore for the second quarter ended September, 2019.

The company had reported a net profit of Rs 480.42 crore for the July-September quarter a year-ago, —PTI

Piramal Enterprises said. Its total income was up 14.55 per cent to Rs 3,666.24 crore as against Rs 3,200.41 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

Piramal Enterprises' total expenses was at Rs 2,934.29 crore as against Rs 2,630.60 crore, up 11.54 per cent. —PTI

Almost resolved broad issues in India-US trade package: Goyal

New Delhi, Oct. 21: India and the US have almost resolved broad issues of the proposed trade package and an announcement is expected soon, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday.

He said that the two countries should look at a much larger engagement in the days ahead, possibly even leading to an announcement for a bilateral agreement which will go beyond near tinkering which "we are doing at present".

The minister said that trade negotiations are complex in nature but things are going smoothly between the two countries.

"We have almost resolved the broad contours of what we are going to announce. I do not see any great difficulty in closing the gap on the first announcement," he said here at a USISFP programme.

He said that probably now, both the sides could have announced something, but certain other engagements including the US talks with Japan and China delayed the announcement.

"Both I and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer have understood

'Will protect interest of industry'

New Delhi, Oct. 21: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday that the government will protect the interest of domestic industry before entering into the proposed mega free-trade pact RCEP, which is in the last phase of negotiations.

The RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) agreement is being negotiated among 10 ASEAN members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and

Vietnam) and their six free-trade pact partners Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

"Every interest of domestic industry and the people of India has to be protected before we execute any free-trade agreement," he told reporters when asked whether RCEP negotiations would be concluded next month. The member countries have fixed a target to conclude the talks in November and sign the agreement in June 2020. —PTI

World economy is stumbling towards disaster

BLOOMBERG EDITORIAL BOARD

The world's finance ministers and central-bank governors gathered this past weekend in Washington and looked out at a global economy badly in need of treatment. Most say they understand the dangers, but that seems open to question. With the facts in plain sight and the need for policy changes all too apparent, they've shown little sense of urgency, and even less sign of action. Prodded by an unhinged US administration, the world could be stumbling into the next global recession.

The International Monetary Fund has lowered its growth forecasts yet again. Global output is projected to rise by just 3 per cent this year (down from

the 3.3 per cent predicted in the spring) and by a still-sluggish 3.4 per cent (down from 3.6 per cent) in 2020. Economic momentum is fading almost everywhere — the IMF calls it a "synchronized slowdown." The revised outlook is already the weakest since the crash in 2008, and the risks in the forecast are very much, as economists say, to the downside.

This would be concerning under any circumstances, but the prospect of recession under current conditions is truly alarming. The hesitant recovery of the past decade has depleted the conventional tools of macroeconomic policy. In many countries — not least the US — fiscal stimulus and persistent budget deficits have boosted ratios of public debt to national

income. Next time, governments will be reluctant to lean as heavily on extra public borrowing to raise demand, rightly or wrongly fearing lack of fiscal space. Monetary policy is all but exhausted too, with interest rates either close to their effective lower bound (as in the US) or slammed down against it (as in the European Union).

Another legacy of that previous recession, and the extraordinary measures taken to contain it, is heightened financial fragility. With abundant quantitative easing and super-low interest rates, financial conditions have been kept loose to support asset prices, press down on yields and strengthen demand. The measures were necessary,

but the result is outlandish asset valuations and heightened credit risk. Recklessly inflated house prices were a main cause of the crash; in many countries, they've soared again on the back of cheap credit. Banks have added capital since 2009, but not enough to make them safe in another big downturn. The notorious "doom loop" of risky sovereign debt and bank insolvency — recognized as a major risk after 2008 — remains substantially undressed in Italy and other countries.

With all these vulnerabilities to the fore, and with few if any policy options for dealing with the crash they might cause, US President Donald Trump chose to embark on his trade war

Share of ready housing units rises to 12% in Sept qtr



SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, OCT. 21

Top seven cities have a total of 81,300 ready-to-move-in unsold units, which is 12 per cent of the total unsold stock. Their share has risen from 11 per cent or 77,100 in Q2, despite demand picking up for affordable and mid-segment units.

The top cities had a total of 6.56 lakh unsold units at the end of September quarter. Of this 12 per cent of 81,300 were ready-to-move-in units.

According to Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock Property Consultants, the share of ready homes among overall unsold stock has seen a quarterly rise. "Out of the overall unsold stock in Q2 2019, ready homes were more than 77,100 units across the top seven cities comprising nearly 11 per cent share. As many as 4,200 units since then completed in one quarter, thereby increasing unsold ready stock to 81,300 units as on Q3 2019 with overall share of ready homes increasing to 12 per cent in Q3 2019," he said.

Nearly 35 per cent or approximately 28,830 units are in the affordable bracket and 32 per cent or 26,180 units in the mid-segment

homes priced within Rs 45-80 lakh - are ready-to-move-in.

Recent government announcements, including tax benefits and interest rate deduction for affordable housing to a large extent will attract first-time homebuyers. As ready homes are in demand and property prices are at their lowest best, those homebuyers waiting to take the plunge will come forward, finds Puri.

Trends also suggest that the sops for affordable segment are beginning to show some positive signs as ready inventory of affordable homes has declined by nearly 3 per cent on quarterly basis while mid segment saw it fall by 2 per cent. However, with new ready inventory getting added, their share will remain higher in the near future as well.

Mumbai has 21,000, National Capital Region 16,800 and Pune 14,260 ready-to-move-in units. However, Chennai with 10,640 units, has the highest share of ready-to-move-in units among its total unsold stock. While Bangalore's 17 per cent unsold stock are ready homes this is just 9 per cent in Mumbai and NCR.

It's neither RERA nor HIRA in Bengal realty

RITWIK MUKHERJEE KOLKATA, OCT. 21

In a curious turn of events, two ministries of the Mamata Banerjee government seem to have locked horns over a policy related issue pertaining to the real estate sector. While one department prefers taking the sides of the consumers, that is home or property buyers, the other seems more concerned about expanding the state's coffers.

Quite significantly, the issue also leads to a much bigger question of whether two separate Acts on the subject of regulation of the real estate sector — one enacted by the Centre (RERA) and the other by a particular state (HIRA) — can coexist. The matter relates to the existence of Real Estate (Regulation & Development) Act, 2016 (RERA), which is a central government legislation, and the Housing & Industrial Regulation Act, 2017 (HIRA), which was enacted by the West Bengal government.

RERA had been fully notified in 2017 and states were given powers to notify their respective rules and appoint regulatory authorities.



While this is applicable across the country, except in J&K, the West Bengal government is the only one that has come out with its separate legislation, HIRA.

Interestingly now, one of the departments of Bengal government is neither following RERA. Nor is it complying with the provisions of WBHIRA.

West Bengal consumer affairs minister, Sadhan Pande, in a letter (MIC/432/2019), dated August 21, addressed to Onkar Singh Meena, secretary, housing department and designated authority, WBHIRA, unequivocally said, "WBHIRA came into force in the year 2017 and according to the Act of HIRA it was decided that a customer will only pay for

the carpet area of the apartment or property, which he/she is buying. This has enabled to develop more transparency between the builder and the customer. But to my surprise, we came to know that still the directorate of registration and stamp revenue is conducting the registration process in super built-up area, thus forcing a customer to pay much more stamp duty and registration cost than he/she should have actually paid if the registration had been conducted on the carpet area of the property."

"As a consumer protection minister, I have received several complaints from the consumers regarding this contradiction in the rules of WBHIRA and directorate of registration and stamp revenue. So please rectify this problem as soon as possible and charge the stamp duty and registration cost on the basis of carpet area as per the rules of WBHIRA," the letter from the minister added.

The letter from the consumer affairs and protection minister, however, is yet to elicit any response from the other department, that is housing.

Q2 results to drive market sentiments

Market may see a lot of action this week in the run up to Diwali on Sunday as people buy gold and stocks on this occasion.

The market would also track busy earnings season in progress, results to be declared on October 24 for the assembly elections in Maharashtra and Haryana as well as other vacant Lok Sabha and Assembly seats that went for polling. Attack on terrorist camps in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and global cues like US-China trade negotiations and EU, UK Brexit deal in the final phase of Parliament approval would come into play as market opens on Tuesday after.

BSE and NSE will conduct one-hour special muhurat trading session on the occasion of Diwali on Sunday, October 27 making it an extended week for the market.

Since Monday was a holiday, second quarter results declared by Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, LIC Housing Finance among others would boost market sentiments with robust performances.

Ajit Mishra, Vice President — Research, Religare Broking said, "It's going to be an important week on the earnings front as big names like HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, SBI, ITC, Bajaj Auto, Hero Motocorp, L&T and HCL Technologies will announce their numbers along with several others. Participants will first react to the Reliance results and minutes of RBI's MPC's meet which came in after the market hours on Friday."

"Technically Nifty looks buoyant for further surge but 11,800 would be tough to cross. In case of profit-taking, 11,540-11,370 zone would provide the needed support. The underperformance of the banking index is still a concern and perhaps the upcoming results from the banking majors may help in triggering a sustainable move ahead. Amid all, we do not see easing in volatility," Mishra said.

Buying in equities by the foreign portfolio investors last week was quite encouraging for the market as both Sensex and Nifty-50 indices rose for the sixth consecutive session. It will be interesting to see when the profit booking comes in the market this week as traders would like to book some profit before Diwali while institutions like mutual funds would take advantage of sharp fall in prices of the Mid-Cap and Small-Cap stocks and go for buying before the prices soar on account of FPIs buying. FPIs are net buyers by Rs 4,790 crore in October so far.

How the overnight US market performs and opening of Asian markets would also define Indian markets performance on Tuesday.

—RAVI RANJAN PRASAD



Not quite champions

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola believes his side are still not strong enough to count themselves as realistic contenders to win the Champions League for the first time

IT'S A RED LIGHT

Liverpool's unbeaten run halted by Manchester United

Manchester, Oct. 21: Liverpool failed to record a record-equalling 18th straight Premier League win, but Adam Lallana's late equaliser saved the European champions from a shock defeat at Manchester United in a 1-1 draw on Sunday.

Marcus Rashford's controversial goal handed Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's struggling Red Devils a 1-0 half-time lead, but they could not hold out for a much-needed victory as they left substitute Lallana unmarked at the back post to level with five minutes to play.

Liverpool move six points clear of Manchester City at the top of the table, but will still feel this was a missed opportunity to inflict more pain on a United side sitting 13th in the Premier League, just two points off the relegation zone.

The two most successful sides in English football could not have come into the game in more contrasting form.

However, United answered Solskjaer's calls to rise to the occasion in style.

Liverpool were without Mohamed Salah through injury and the Egyptian's pace and trickery was badly missed.

The visitors were able to welcome back goalkeeper Alisson Becker for the first time in two months after a calf injury, but the Brazilian was rarely tested as United were happy to sit back and counter-attack.

Solskjaer changed his formation to a 3-5-2 in an attempt to limit Liverpool's flying full-backs Trent Alexander-Arnold and Andy Robertson and it was largely effective as the hosts restricted the league leaders to precious few chances.

Liverpool's best opening before the break came when Sadio Mane finally found some space to counter-attack, but from his cut-back Roberto Firmino fired too close to David de Gea.

United had not scored in their two previous matches prior to the international break, but finally produced a moment of quality going forward to take the lead, even if fortune was also on their side for the goal to stand.

Victor Lindelof looked to have upended Divock Origi halfway, but no foul was given by Martin Atkinson and as United broke forward, Daniel James's cross perfectly picked out Rashford to prod past Alisson.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was furious on the touchline even before a VAR review failed to overturn the decision. — AFP



Manchester United's Scott McTominay (left) vies for the ball with Sadio Mane of Liverpool during their English Premier League match at the Old Trafford stadium in Manchester on Sunday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw. — AP

Inter close gap at the top

Milan, Oct. 21: Inter Milan held off a late Sassuolo surge to win 4-3 and keep pace with leaders Juventus in Serie 'A' on Sunday as Claudio Ranieri settled for a goalless draw against former club Roma in his first game as Sampdoria coach.

Romelu Lukaku and Lautaro Martinez each bagged a brace for Inter in a seven-goal thriller to keep Antonio Conte's side second, a point behind Juventus who beat Bologna 2-1 on Saturday.

The match at Sassuolo's Mapei Stadium was briefly interrupted before the break after a parachutist inexplicably landed on the pitch just as Lukaku was about to take a penalty.

The man was quickly led off by security agents as players and fans looked on bewildered. Then the former Manchester United striker slotted in to give Inter a 3-1 lead.

Martinez had opened the scoring after two minutes. He added a penalty after

71 minutes, following Lukaku's quick-fire double on 38 and 45 minutes.

Inter were in control 4-1 with 20 minutes to go, when Antonio Conte brought on winger Matteo Politano and midfielder Valentino Lazaro for their first appearances this season.

Then Filip Djuricic (74) and Jeremie Boga (81) hit back for the hosts to add to Domenico Berardi's first-half goal.

Inter held on for a win after consecutive defeats

against Barcelona in the Champions League and Juventus in Serie A.

"Once it goes to 3-1 and 4-1, it should be over," said Lukaku who has now scored five Serie 'A' goals in eight games.

"In the first half, we did everything well. However, we should have scored in the first 15 minutes after the restart to really kill off the match. The positive we take is that we got the three points, but we need to defend better than that," he said. — AFP

French toast on Sindhu's mind

Paris, Oct. 21: World champion P. V. Sindhu would look to snap her recent run of early exits when she begins her women's singles campaign at the \$750,000 French Open badminton tournament, beginning here on Tuesday.

Since claiming her maiden World Championships title in August, Sindhu has looked awfully out-of-form as she had failed to cross the second round in three tournaments.

She faltered in the second and first rounds at the China Open and Korea Open respectively last month. Sindhu again exited in the second round in straight games against Korea's An Se Young in Denmark Open last week. The Olympic silver medalist looked a tad slow in her movement in the last three tournaments, showing signs of dip in her form.

Seeded fifth in the tournament, Sindhu, a 2017 semifinalist, will be up against Canada's world number 9 Michelle Li, who has beaten the Indian in the past twice.

If Sindhu gets past the early rounds, the world number 6 Indian is likely to face top seed Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals.

World number 8 Saina Nehwal, who is also taking part in this BWF World Tour Super 750 event, has also been struggling with her fitness and has made three first-round exits in her last three tournaments.

The 29-year-old, who had finished runner-up at the 2012 edition, will meet Hong Kong's Cheung Ngan Yi in the opening round.

In the men's singles, 2017 champion Kidambi Srikanth too will be desperate to turn around his poor run in form when he steps out at the Stade Pierre de Coubertin here.

● Seeded fifth in the tournament, Sindhu will be up against Canada's world number 9 Michelle Li, who has beaten the Indian in the past twice. The world champion has looked a tad slow in her movement in the last three tournaments, showing signs of dip in her form.

However, it will not be an easy outing for the world number 9 Indian as he opens his campaign against second seed Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen.

Parupalli Kashyap would look to prove that the first-round exit last week at Denmark Open was an aberration when he locks horns with Hong Kong's NG Ka Long Angus.

Sameer Verma, who had reached the semifinals of the World Tour Finals last December, will meet Japan's Kenta Nishimoto in the opening round.

World number 12 B. Sai Praneeth, who had claimed a bronze at the World Championships, will once again face the legendary Lin Dan of China in the opening round.

In the doubles, the women's pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N. Sikki Reddy will square off against fifth seeded Korean duo of Lee So Hee and Shin Seung Chan.

The men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty face the Dutch combination of Jelle Maas and Robin Tabeling. Another men's doubles pair of Manu Attri and B. Sumeeth Reddy and the mixed duo of Satwiksairaj and Ashwini are also in the fray. — PTI

SUSHILA SURE HOCKEY SIDE WILL MAKE TOKYO

Bhubaneswar, Oct. 21: Midfielder Sushila Chanu is confident of the Indian women's hockey team qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics as she feels the country has made a lot of improvement in the last three years.

The Indian team, which returned to the Olympic fold in Rio in 2016 after a gap of 36 years, plays against United States here on November 1 and 2 for a berth in next year's Tokyo Games.

"We know how it felt representing India at Olympics when we qualified for it after a 36-year gap in Rio. However, when we came back from that outing, there was a unanimous feeling around the group that we need to push ourselves and make sure we consistently put in the performances which will help us in qualifying for the next edition," Sushila said.

"We have made huge strides from the previous Olympics, and now we are all very determined to secure our place in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics," said the 26-year-old Sushila who captained the side in 2016 Rio Olympics.

"We have 10 players in this current side who were there in Rio as well, and all of us collectively want to experience that feeling again. Not just that, we want to win a medal for the country this time in Tokyo," said the midfielder from Manipur. — PTI



There was clear contact and Divock Origi goes down. They carried on and counter-attacked.

— Jurgen Klopp, Liverpool manager cries foul over draw with Man U

SHORT TAKES

Murray wins first title after surgery

Antwerp, Belgium: Andy Murray said he was "very proud" after earning his first ATP title since March 2017 on Sunday with a 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory over fellow three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka in the Antwerp final.

Former world number one Murray, who contemplated retirement earlier this year before undergoing career-saving hip surgery, fought back from a set and 1-3 down to claim his 46th career title.

"It means a lot. The last few years have been extremely difficult," Murray, who broke down in tears at the end, told Amazon Prime.

"Both me and Stan have had a lot of injury problems in the last couple of years. It's amazing to be back, playing against him in the final like that. I think it was a great match. I didn't expect to be in this position at all. I'm happy, very happy," added Murray, who became the lowest-ranked ATP champion since No. 355 Pablo Andujar triumphed at the 2018 Marrakech Open. — AFP

Federer set for 1,500th match

Basel: Roger Federer will check off another landmark when he starts his bid for a 10th Basel title by playing the 1,500th match of his career. The 38-year-old begins his bid for his 103rd title against German qualifier Peter Gojowczyk. The 20-time Grand Slam champion has beaten the German twice — including at Indian Wells last March.

"My preparation had to be a little faster than usual since I have to start Monday," said Federer ahead of the Swiss Indoors tournament, which he first attended as a ballboy.

Federer, who has made the Basel final on all of his last 12 visits, owns ATP titles this season in Dubai, Miami and Halle. Despite not adding to his tally of majors, he still stands at 47-8 for the year, a record bettered only by eternal rival Rafael Nadal, whose triumphs at Roland Garros and the US Open have taken the Spaniard to 19 Grand Slams. — AFP

SHOOTERS IN UGLY SPAT AT THE RANGES

New Delhi: The National Rifle Association of India's Athletes Commission on Monday launched an inquiry into the scuffle involving two marksmen inside the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range here, promising appropriate action at the earliest.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has cancelled the membership of the two marksmen — Babar Khan and Yoginder Pal Singh — while the national federation referred the matter to its Athletes Commission, headed by former international shooter Morad Ali Khan. Ugly scenes were witnessed at the range on Sunday when the two errant shooters got into a fight after an argument regarding the scheduling of rounds.

"The process of inquiry has started and we will come out with the findings as soon as possible, and then pass our recommendation to the NRAI president for appropriate action. I will call not just the two shooters involved but all those present there at the time of incident, the inquiry will be very detailed," Morad said.

Earlier, the breach of discipline had forced the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to act against the shooters. "The NRAI has referred the matter to the Athletes Commission and asked them to look into it, send them a notice and launch an inquiry. Meanwhile, their 'pay and play' scheme membership has been cancelled by SAI," an official of the federation had said. — PTI

Ronaldo's Juve ready to attack left, right, centre

Rome, Oct. 21: Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo gave coach Maurizio Sarri a vote of confidence on Monday when he said he was happy with the "more attacking" approach the club had adopted since Sarri came on board in the summer.

"I think the team is getting better," said Ronaldo on the eve of Juve's Champions League Group 'D' meeting with Lokomotiv Moscow.

"We are getting more and more confident. We are playing a different brand of football, more attacking. I like the way he (Sarri) wants the team to play. We are creating more opportunities, we have more confidence in ourselves, I'm happy with these changes," Ronaldo said. "Maybe we could score a little more but I'm proud of what we are doing," he added. So far this season, Ronaldo has scored five goals in nine games and was on target at the

Live on	TV
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	Galatasaray vs Real Madrid from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony SIX, HD
Shakhtar Donetsk vs Dinamo Zagreb from 10.25 pm on Sony Six, HD	Manchester City vs Atalanta from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony TEN 1, HD
Atletico vs Leverkusen from 10.25 pm on Sony TEN 2, HD	Tottenham vs Crvena Zvezda from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony TEN 3, HD
Juventus vs Lokomotiv Moskva from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony TEN 2, HD	Club Brugge vs Paris Saint-Germain from 12.30 am (Wednesday) on Sony ESPN, HD

weekend when Juventus beat Bologna 2-1 to consolidate top spot in Serie 'A'.

"My role hasn't changed, perhaps I have a bit more freedom," he said. "I am happy because, bit by bit, we are getting to where Juventus ought to be. We have a different system, new players. We changed in order to improve," he said. Last week, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner scored his 700th career

goal while playing for Portugal. "That's already in the past. I want to move on, reach new heights to help the team. I want to play and help the team win trophies. Of course I am proud of the individual records but the priority is to win games for Juventus and Portugal," Ronaldo said.

The Italian champions top Group 'D' in the Champions League having drawn with Atletico Madrid and beaten Bayer Leverkusen 3-0 in the last round of games. — AFP



Tottenham Hotspur's English defender Eric Dier takes part in a drill during a training session at Tottenham's Enfield Training Centre in north London on Monday, ahead of their UEFA Champions League Group 'B' match against Crvena Zvezda. — AFP

Gritty NorthEast hold Bengaluru

SUMIT SINGH | DC BENGALURU, OCT. 21

Bengaluru FC and NorthEast United played out a goalless draw in the second match of the Indian Super League at the Sree Kanteereva Stadium on Monday amidst relentless rain. This was the first time a game ended in a stalemate since the Blues entered the ISL.

Coach Carles Cuadrat opted for a 4-3-3 line up with a three-man midfield with Dimas Delgado, Harmanjot Khabra and Raphael Augusto while North East started Asomah Gyan as a lone striker in a 4-2-3-1 formation.

BFC started on the right note maintaining possession that restricted the Highlanders to playing on the break and the first chance came from the new signing Ashique Kurinyan. The former Pune City FC player deployed as a left-back picked the ball near the halfway mark and sprinted down the left, bypassing the North East

United defence and drilled a shot across the goal.

Another chance went begging as the Blues could not divert one on target as Sunil Chhetri drove a loose ball that evaded the near post.

Udanta Singh then missed a glorious chance after being played by Raphael Augusto. The BFC winger shot wide of the target with only the goalkeeper to beat.

NorthEast got into the groove as Martin Chaves had the first sight on goal after linking up with Gyan. Gurpreet Sandhu made a routine save. Gyan then put the ball in the net but his position was ruled offside.

A defensive error almost gifted North East the opening goal late in the first half after Rahul Bheke headed a ball back to Sandhu only for it to be intercepted by Chaves who pulled it wide. Gyan rattled the goal post in the second half with his left foot, after being played in by Chaves but once again was ruled offside.



Fitness battle

Limited-overs captain Aaron Finch is battling to be fit for Australia's opening Twenty20 against Sri Lanka after suffering a side strain

Fast & furious

■ Pacers Shami and Yadav let it rip as India on brink of 3-0 Test series sweep over South Africa

SCORECARD

India (1st Innings): 497-9 decl.
South Africa (1st Innings): D. Elgar c Saha b Shami 0, Q. de Kock c Saha b Yadav 4, Z. Hamza b Jadeja 62, F. du Plessis b Yadav 1, T. Bavuma st Saha b Nadeem 32, H. Klaassen b Jadeja 6, G. Linde c Rohit b Yadav 37, D. Piedt lbw b Shami 4, K. Rabada run out (Yadav) 0, A. Nortje lbw b Nadeem 4, L. Ngidi (not out) 0. **Extras (b8, lb3, nb1) 12. Total (In 56.2 overs) 162.**
FoW: 1-4, 2-8, 3-16, 4-107, 5-107, 6-119, 7-129, 8-130, 9-162.
Bowling: Shami 10-4-22-2, Yadav 9-1-40-3, Nadeem 11-2-4-22-2, Jadeja 14-3-19-2, Ashwin 12-1-48-0.
South Africa (2nd Innings, following-on): Q. de Kock b Yadav 5, D. Elgar (retired hurt) 16, Z. Hamza b Shami 0, F. du Plessis lbw b Shami 4, T. Bavuma c Saha b Shami 0, H. Klaassen lbw b Yadav 5, G. Linde run out (Nadeem) 27, D. Piedt b Jadeja 23, T. de Bruyn (batting) 30, K. Rabada c Jadeja b Ashwin 12, A. Nortje (batting) 5. **Extras (b5) 5. Total (for 8 wickets in 46 overs) 132.**
FoW: 1-5, 2-10, 3-18, 4-22, 4-26 (Elgar retired), 5-36, 6-67, 7-98, 8-121.
Bowling: Shami 9-5-10-3, Yadav 9-1-35-2, Jadeja 13-5-36-1, Nadeem 5-0-18-0, Ashwin 10-3-28-1.

Saha injured, Pant keeps wickets

Ranchi, Oct. 21: India's first-choice Test wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha suffered an injury on his right ring finger during the South African second innings as Rishabh Pant kept wickets in the final hour. The 35-year-old Saha, who was phenomenal behind the stumps in the second Test in Pune, was hurt in the 27th over, while keeping to off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin. The latest injury adds to the long list of on-field setbacks that the Bengal stumper had suffered in his career including a career-threatening shoulder injury for which he had to undergo surgery which forced him out of national team for 20 months. — PTI

African first innings for 162 in 56.2 overs in yet another meek batting surrender that lasted less than two sessions after the visitors resumed the day at nine for two in five overs. Local lad Nadeem cleaned up the tail by trapping Anrich Nortje in front to make it a memorable debut, returning with figures of 11.2-4-22-2. Nadeem had his "big moment" when he dismissed Temba Bavuma (32) for his first wicket in international cricket. He foxed Bavuma with his flight as the batsman stepped out of the crease, leaving Wriddhiman Saha to do the rest. Nadeem's first international wicket incidentally came even before any batsman could score run against him. South Africa began the second session staring at an imminent follow-on as they lost their seventh wicket on the fourth ball after the lunch-break when a hapless Dane Piedt was beaten by Shami's raw pace as it cut back in to trap him in front. What followed was a body blow in 39th over where Shami made Nortje hop all over with his sharp incoming bouncers though the tail-ender managed to survive the hostile spell. — PTI



Umesh Yadav celebrates a South African wicket. — AP



Mohammed Shami



South Africa's Dean Elgar is felled by an Umesh Yadav bouncer. — AP

Elgar suffers concussion after being hit by bouncer

Ranchi, Oct. 21: South Africa opener Dean Elgar was on Monday ruled out of the third Test against India as he suffered a concussion after being hit by a bouncer from pacer Umesh Yadav. Minutes before the tea break, Elgar tried to duck a short delivery from Yadav, who was in the middle of a hostile spell of short-pitched bowling. Elgar was hit just above the ear and immediately fell on the ground, calling for medical help. He was batting on 16 off 29 balls when Umesh bouncer struck him. "Dean Elgar is still being

assessed and we are following the standard ICC concussion protocol. I will send an update as soon as there is one to send. The Match Referee has approved Theunis de Bruyn as Dean Elgar's replacement as result of concussion," South Africa media manager issued a statement on behalf of the team. Elgar is the third concussion substitute after Marcus Labuschagne of Australia (in place of Steve Smith during Ashes Test at Lord's) and Jermaine Blackwood (vs India replacing Darren Bravo). — PTI



I don't think playing the Hundred will dilute our chances of winning the next World Cup. — Joe Root, England Test captain

SHORT TAKES



McDonald named RR head coach

Mumbai: Rajasthan Royals on Monday appointed former Australian cricketer Andrew McDonald as their new head coach for a three-year term. McDonald has been a part of the Indian Premier League, having played for Delhi Daredevils in the 2009 season before being signed up by Royal Challengers Bangalore in 2012-2013. He was also the bowling coach of Royal Challengers Bangalore. The 38-year-old former Australian all-rounder has coached Leicestershire, Victoria and the Melbourne Renegades. McDonald, who played four Tests for Australia, had guided Victoria to the title win in Sheffield Shield in his first year as senior coach. The Victorian then moved the Renegades from 7th position to winning the Big Bash this year. "We are delighted to appoint Andrew as our head coach. He shares our belief of discovering potential and championing dreams and is aligned with our vision to continue to drive innovation in the IPL," said Ranjit Barhakur, Executive Chairman, Rajasthan Royals in a team statement. — PTI

I'll meet Kohli on Oct. 24: Ganguly

Kolkata: BCCI president-elect Sourav Ganguly on Monday left it to skipper Virat Kohli to take a call on his availability for the upcoming three-match T20 series against Bangladesh, starting November 3. There is a speculation that Kohli, who has played 48 of the last 56 international games across formats, will take rest for the T20s but come back for the two Test matches in Indore and Kolkata. "I will meet him on October 24. I will talk to him like a BCCI president talks to the captain. He is the captain and he can take a call," Ganguly told reporters at the CAB headquarters. He was all praise for Rohit Sharma, who has been a smash-hit with 529 runs in his kitty, including a maiden double hundred. — PTI

Bangladesh cricketers go on strike

Dhaka/ Kolkata, Oct. 21: Bangladesh's upcoming tour of India was on Monday thrown into jeopardy after their national team players refused to participate in any cricketing activity until their demands, including a hike in salary, are met. The boycott plan was announced by the country's top players such as Test and T20 captain Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah and Mushfiqur Rahim at a press conference here. Nearly 50 players are part of the protest. A boycott of any cricket activity for the foreseeable future will have an immediate impact on the National Cricket League, currently in progress. The action could also jeopardise the training camp for next month's tour of India and possibly the tour itself. During the tour starting November 3, Bangladesh are scheduled to play three T20 Internationals and two Test matches as part of the World Championship. "We have to respect the local coaches, physios, trainers and groundsman. They get really a little amount of salary at the end of the month," senior opener Tamim Iqbal said on behalf of the players at the press conference. However, many in the



Flanked by his teammates Bangladesh cricketer Shakib Al Hasan (centre) addresses the media at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Dhaka on Monday. — AFP

The camp was supposed to start this week with the team's spin consultant Daniel Vettori in attendance. BCCI president-elect Sourav Ganguly said in Kolkata that he was confident that Bangladesh will not call-off the series. "It is the internal matter of BCB but it's not under my purview," Ganguly said. However, many in the

Indian Cricket Board feel that Ganguly's cordial relations with both players and officials in Bangladesh cricket might help in salvaging the situation. "There is a Test match in Kolkata, which will certainly generate a lot of interest among the Bangladesh fans keeping the local connect in mind. A lot of fans are expected to travel from Dhaka and it's surrounding towns to watch the match, a first in Kolkata. I believe that they will pay heed to our president's request if the situation demands," another BCCI official said. One of the major points raised by the players was better remuneration for those competing at the first-class level. "Match fee for the first-class cricket

should be increased to one lakh (Bangladesh Taka), which is now 35 thousand only. At the same time, the salary of first-class cricketers also should be increased by 50 per cent," said their most decorated player Shakib. "A first-class cricketer gets only 1500 taka as the daily allowance. I don't think this is enough for a cricketer in order to get a healthy lifestyle. At the same time, we are demanding to increase the travel allowance. We will be happy if BCB ensures the air tickets for travelling for the first-class cricketers around the country." Some of the players' main demands are: Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) must go back to franchise model, Dhaka Premier League (their domestic first-class competition) must go back to open market transfers, central contract salary should be higher, and include more players, higher first class match fees, players association to no longer have conflict of interest. "We just came to know about it we will discuss it in the board and try to resolve it as soon as possible," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said. — PTI

Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu make semis; Mumbai out

Bengaluru, Oct. 21: Rain ended Mumbai's Vijay Hazare Trophy campaign here on Monday as Chhattisgarh made it to the semi-finals on the basis of more wins against their quarterfinal opponents in the league phase. Tamil Nadu also reached the semi-finals on the basis of more wins than Punjab in the league stage after their quarter-final game was cut short by rain. Tamil Nadu had won nine out of nine matches in Group C, while Chhattisgarh emerged victorious in five out of eight games in Group A. Mumbai won four. While Tamil Nadu will take on Gujarat in the semifinals on Wednesday, hosts Karnataka will clash with Chhattisgarh on the same day. In pursuit of a revised target of 195 from 39 overs, Mumbai were cruising at 95 for no loss in 11.3 overs with young Yashasvi Jaiswal batting on 60 (38 balls, 5 fours, 5 sixes) and

VIJAY HAZARE BRIEF SCORES

- Chhattisgarh 190 for 6 in 45.4 overs (Harpreet Singh Bhatia 83, Amandeep Khare 59 not out, Dhawal Kulkarni 2 for 9) vs Mumbai 95 for no loss in 11.3 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 60 not out, Aditya Tare 31 not out).
- Tamil Nadu 174 for 6 in 39 overs (Baba Aparajith 56, Washington Sundar 35 not out, Gurkeerat Singh 2 for 25) vs Punjab 52 for 2 in 12.2 overs.

(Note: Both matches were abandoned due to rain)

Aditya Tare on 31. However, the skies opened up and the match was abandoned, ending Mumbai's topsy-turvy campaign. As per rules, Mumbai needed to bat a minimum of 20 overs to get a result in this game. But as the game was abandoned, Chhattisgarh qualified. Put into bat at the Alur cricket stadium III, Mumbai bowlers did well to restrict Chhattisgarh to 190 for six in 45.4 overs, when play was halted due to rain. Experienced medium-pacer Dhawal Kulkarni sent Chhattisgarh opener Jivanjyot Singh Chauhan (0) back after he edged to keeper Tare. Shardul Thakur got rid off Shashank Chandrakar to leave Chhattisgarh in trouble at 3 for 2. Ashutosh Pratap Singh (27), who came in at one drop, was unable to convert his start as Chhattisgarh slipped to 40 for 3. Skipper Harpreet Singh Bhatia (83) and Amandeep Khare (59 not out) led the recovery with a 135-run stand. In the other last eight game, Punjab restricted Tamil Nadu to 174 for six in 39 overs when rain stopped play. Tamil Nadu had a shaky start after openers Murali Vijay (22) and Abhinav Mukund (17) failed to convert starts. — PTI

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