

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | THURSDAY 24 | OCTOBER 2019

WEATHER



Max: 31°C
Min: 24°C
Rainfall: 5 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Aippasi 7
Tithi: Ekadashi
Star: Magam/ Puram
Rahukalam:
1.30 pm to 3 pm
Yamagandam:
6 am to 7.30 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.49 am
Zohar: 11.58 am
Asar: 3.14 pm
Maghrib: 5.46 pm
Isha: 6.58 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.46 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.01 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 2.04 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 2.57 PM

Ex-U'khand CM booked by CBI for horse-trading

New Delhi: The CBI has filed an FIR against former Uttarakhand chief minister Harish Rawat and his then cabinet colleague Harak Singh Rawat, who is now a minister in the state's BJP-led government, for alleged attempts of horse trading in 2016, which was caught on tape by an editor of a news channel, officials said on Wednesday. The agency had conducted a preliminary enquiry into the alleged horse trading attempt on March 23, 2016 when the state was under President's rule.

Exercise utmost caution while travelling to Turkey: Govt

New Delhi: India on Wednesday asked its nationals to exercise "utmost caution" while travelling to Turkey in view of the situation in the region. The government of India has been receiving queries from Indian nationals on travelling to Turkey in view of the situation in the region, an advisory issued by the Indian Embassy in Turkey said.

Hong Kong gov't withdraws bill that sparked protests

Hong Kong: Hong Kong authorities on Wednesday withdrew an unpopular extradition bill that sparked months of chaotic protests that have since morphed into a campaign for greater democratic change.

COUNTER POINT



Will it be happy Diwali or Diwala? We spent all our money in polls!

Market report

GOLD
24 ct (1 gm): ₹3,850.00
22 ct (1 gm): ₹3,667.00
SILVER
Bar (1 Kg): ₹48,100.00
INDICES
Sensex 39,058.83 pts
Nifty 11,604.10 pts
EXCHANGE
US\$: ₹70.91 Euro: ₹78.87



WORLD 7 17 TABLOID Trump impeachment: Diplomat reveals explosive details

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BSF PROBE REPORT

BGB firing that led to jawan's death unprovoked

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, OCT. 23

An investigation by the Border Security Force (BSF) into the killing of its head constable Vijay Bhan Singh in firing by the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) in Murshidabad on October 17 has revealed that the shooting was "unprovoked and unwarranted" and was carried out after the flag meeting between the two forces over Indian fisherman Pranab Mondal's detention.

The probe, conducted by BSF South Bengal Frontier, has identified the accused as BGB Havildar Sayed who opened fire on the BSF boat, and given a

● **The October 17 incident is an 'aberration' and efforts were being made to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate, sources added**

detailed account of how the attack took place under the nose of BGB's post commander at Charghat although he was known to BSF border out post (BOP) commander at Kakmarichar. The startling findings came a few days after Bangladesh home minister Asaduzzaman Khan said a "misunderstanding" between the BSF and BGB

had led to the shooting. On October 17, three Indian fishermen were apprehended by BGB patrol. Of these, one, Pranab Mondal, was pulled inside the BGB's trawler while the other two were left off, but told to go to BSF post in Kakmarichar and convey the message that the post commander of Charghat has asked for a flag meeting to release the Indian fisherman.

According to the report, the BSF's commander proceeded for the flag meeting while taking adequate precaution, which included putting an orange flag of the appropriate dimension on the speed boat to indicate a friendly move.

When the BSF team drew close to the pre-designated point, they were guided by the BGB personnel on the ground to a point where the depth of water was sufficient for mooring the boat as twin-engine boats require at least three to four feet deep water for the same.

The BSF team then parked the boat, took out the heavy iron anchor, placed it on the ground and tied the boat, expecting a friendly environment and amicable discussion given the interaction in the past. The report said that the BGB post commander and BSF BOP commander had met each other on several occasions in the past.

Shivakumar released after HC grants him bail in money laundering case

New Delhi, Oct. 23: Karnataka Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar was released from Tihar Jail on Wednesday evening following the Delhi High Court order granting him bail, said a jail official.

He is accused in a money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). After the court order was received in the evening, he was released following a medical check-up and other formalities at 9.15 pm, the official added. The judge, who granted him bail, also said that Shivakumar, 57, cannot tamper with the evidence as the documents are with the investigating agencies.

The ED had challenged his bail plea. Shivakumar was arrested by the ED on September 3 in the money laundering case. He was lodged in Tihar jail under judicial custody and had challenged the trial court's order denying him bail in the case. —PTI

TN gets approval for six new govt medical colleges

D SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The Tamil Nadu Government on Wednesday achieved a unique distinction of securing the Centre's approval for starting six medical colleges in the districts that do not have such state-run institutions at present. This could yield an additional 900 seats to TN's kitty, if its request for sanction of 150 seats per institution sails through the Medical Council of India (MCI). The state even now has the highest number of medical colleges in the country, both government-run and private.

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami responded by writing to the Prime Minister to warmly thank him for acceding to his request for the medical colleges and better still, granting Central contribution of Rs.1,170 crore as its 60 per cent contribution towards the entire outlay for the



ambitious project that would deliver 600-900 new medical graduates annually.

The state contributes 40 per cent of the total cost, which is Rs.780 crore, according to a media statement from the Chief Minister referring to his 'thank-you' letter to the PM. He also listed out the six districts where the new medical colleges will be set up - Virudhunagar, Ramanathapuram, Dindigul, Namakkal, Tiruppur and Nilgiris.

Buoyed by this success, the state is readying another appeal to the Centre to grant three more medical

colleges in the districts not served so far -Tiruvallur, Krishnagiri and Nagapattinam.

"I had asked the Centre to clear these medical colleges and also sought the required funds from the Prime Minister. We got all the plans and proposals in the shortest possible time. Land has been already allocated for all the six colleges, as required by the Centre", CM said.

"Work will begin almost immediately to launch the construction work for the six medical colleges now sanctioned. We got this sanction (from the Centre) in record time and we put in huge effort to speed up the process. We got all the concerned department heads to pass clearances and as many as five ministers sign the papers to finally get Government Order (G.O) allocating land issued in just one day, which is a record", state health minister C Vijaya Baskar told DC

4G SPECTRUM, VRS PART OF SCHEME

Centre approves MTNL-BSNL merger

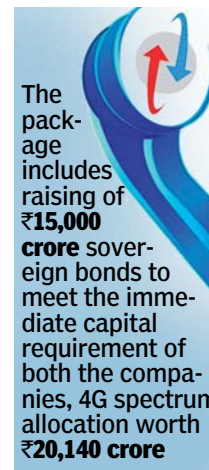
DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

Aiming to revive its two loss making telecom arms, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL), the government on Wednesday decided to merge the two ailing firms as part of a ₹68,751-crore revival package which includes 4G spectrum allocation, raising sovereign bonds, monetising assets and voluntary retirement scheme (VRS) for employees.

Till the completion of the merger process, MTNL will operate as a subsidiary of BSNL, telecom minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said while addressing a press conference.

Sharing details of the revival package, he said that it includes raising ₹15,000 crore sovereign bonds to meet the immediate capital requirement of both the companies, 4G spectrum allocation worth ₹20,140 crore, ₹29,937 crore for VRS covering 50 per cent of their employees, and ₹3,674 crore for goods and services tax that will be levied on allocation of radiowaves.

"In case of BSNL and MTNL, the government's view is clear. These are strategic assets of India. The entire army network is maintained by BSNL. The VRS package approved by the Cabinet will give eligible employees 125 per cent of income that they would have earned by serving the company till the age of 60 years. With this decision, we have taken care of the interests of lakhs of employees of these PSUs," Mr Prasad said. BSNL has



In the VRS package, employees above the age of 53.5 years will get 125 per cent of their salary which they could have earned in balance period of their service

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— Ravi Shankar Prasad, Telecom minister

around 1.68 lakh employees and MTNL around 22,000.

"The VRS is voluntary and nobody can be forced to opt for it," the telecom minister said. The total debt of both the companies stood at ₹40,000 crore, of which half is owed by MTNL alone that operates in Delhi and Mumbai.

Both the companies have been demanding spectrum to start 4G services to remain competitive in the market. Telecom secretary Anshu Prakash said the spectrum will be allocated to both the companies administratively within a month. "The spectrum allocation to BSNL worth ₹14,115 crore will be in lieu of equity shares and about ₹6,295 crore for MTNL in lieu of preferential shares," he added.

The government will monetise MTNL and BSNL's assets worth ₹37,500 crore over a period of three years. "The assets primarily include land assets but also rental and leasing of their

buildings. MTNL has around 29 retail outlets in Delhi alone," Mr Prakash said. He said BSNL will also need around ₹10,000 crore to roll out 4G services in phases and MTNL around ₹1,100 crore. "The debt on BSNL is the lowest. They can raise capital expenditure required for rolling out network from the banks and bringing in efficiency in their operations," the telecom secretary elaborated.

In the VRS package, the government has approved Rs 17,169 crore as ex-gratia component and ₹12,768 crore for preponement of pensionary benefit.

"Employees above the age of 53.5 years will get 125 per cent of their salary which they could have earned in balance period of their service," the secretary said. Employees in the age bracket of 50 to 53.5 years opting for the VRS will get benefit in the range of 80 to 100 per cent of the remuneration to be paid in the balance period of their service.

Counting of votes in Maha, Haryana today

New Delhi, Oct. 23:

Counting of votes in Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly elections will take place on Thursday, with the BJP looking to retain power, its hopes buoyed by exit polls indicating an easy victory. These were the first major elections after the BJP retained power in the Lok Sabha polls in May, winning 303 seats of the 543. The counting will begin at 8 am, Election Commission officials said.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission has made elaborate arrangements for the counting of votes in Vikravandi and Nanguneri Assembly constituencies where the bye-elections were held on October 21, Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo said.

Speaking to reporters here on Wednesday, he said the counting would be taken up on Thursday at 8 a.m. The postal votes will be counted first and it will be followed

● **The postal votes will be counted first and it will be followed by EVM votes**

by EVM votes. Tight security has been provided at the counting centres. "If there is any dispute, then the respective Returning Officers will take a decision," Mr Sahoo said.

Earlier, he held elaborate discussions with L. Subramanian, Collector of Villupuram district and Shilpa Prabhakar Satish Collector of Tirunelveli district, through video conferencing, and reviewed the arrangements for counting in Vikravandi and Nanguneri constituencies.

In Vikravandi the final poll percentage has been announced as 84.41% and this includes a total of 93,633 male voters and 95,022 females. ■ P4



Will run BCCI the way I know, the way I led India, says Ganguly

Mumbai, Oct 23: Clad in his captain's navy blue blazer, Sourav Ganguly on Wednesday promised a "corruption-free, same-for-all BCCI", a philosophy that, he said, guided his tenure as India skipper from 2000 to 2005. Elected unopposed to the top position in the world's richest cricket Board, the bespectacled 47-year-old also gave enough indications that he would run the show the way he wants and is unlikely to be influenced. "I will do it the way I know, I will do it the way which I feel is best for the BCCI with no compromise on credibility, corruption-free and same for all BCCI. That's the way I led India and that's the way I will take this organisation forward," said the man with more than 18,000 international runs under his belt. Hard to miss at his maiden press interaction after taking charge was the India blazer that he was wearing. —PTI

39 bodies found near London in truck container: UK police

Grays, United Kingdom, Oct. 23: Britain launched a major murder investigation after 39 bodies were found Wednesday in a truck from Bulgaria, as police tried to establish where the victims were originally from.

All victims were pronounced dead at the scene in Grays, east of London, triggering revulsion among politicians and once again putting the spotlight on the shadowy people trafficking business. The local Essex Police force, who are working

with immigration officials, said their priority was to try to identify the victims, thought at this stage to be 38 adults and one teenager. The truck driver, a 25-year-old man from Northern Ireland, has been arrested on suspicion of murder.

"This is a tragic incident where a large number of people have lost their lives," Essex Police chief superintendent Andrew Mariner said in a statement.

The police said they were alerted by the ambulance service shortly before

1.40am (0040 GMT) following the discovery of a truck container with people inside at the Waterglade Industrial Park.

Officers in white forensic suits could be seen working by the truck and a white tent was erected outside.

Ambulance services said the victims were already dead by the time they arrived.

"We are in the process of identifying the victims. However I anticipate that this could be a lengthy process," said Mariner.

"We believe the lorry is from Bulgaria," he added.

"We have arrested the lorry driver in connection with the incident, who remains in police custody." The tragedy sparked questions about the route taken by the truck - and whether people trafficking had played a part. —AFP

An aerial view as police forensic officers attend the scene after a truck was found to contain a large number of dead bodies, in Thurrock, South England, on Wednesday. — UK Pool via AP





Supply good food

Cooperation minister Sellur K. Raju has urged PDS shops not to distribute food materials spoilt by rain



For Deepavali, omnibus owners have hiked their tariff by about 214% in all routes. Government should take action

— K.S. Alagiri, TNC president

SHORT TAKES

Man found murdered

Tirupur: The owner of a small-scale knitwear manufacturing unit was found murdered inside his unit here recently. Police said, Inbavalavan (37) hailing from Dharmapuri, was running a small-scale garment manufacturing unit in a rented building at Thiruvinankudi Nagar here. Sathish, who is running a saloon in the same building, grew suspicious over foul smell coming from the closed unit. The unit was bolted from outside. On suspicion, he opened the shutter and was shocked to find the body of Inbavalavan, which was wrapped in a cloth. On information, Velampalayam police rushed to the spot and recovered the body. A case was registered and investigation launched to nab the murderers.

Brain dead man gives lease of life to six

Coimbatore: With aneurysm in the brain, 43-year old Raghunathan from Vellakovil, Tiruppur, was admitted to a city-based hospital. The patient was unconscious during admission. Despite being provided best of medical treatment, the patient breathed his last at the hospital. Meanwhile, the family of the deceased person expressed their desire to donate his vital organs. The liver and one kidney were transplanted to patients at the city-based hospital. Two private hospitals in the textile city received the second kidney and eyes. The lungs and heart were transported to two individual private hospitals in Chennai, thus giving a lease of life of six persons.

Kovai doctor bags award

Coimbatore: Dr. Devi of a city-based hospital presented a video on the laparoscopic correction of urinary incontinence at a conference organised by the Indian Association of Gynaecological Endoscopists recently in the city for which she was awarded the first prize. The procedure was well appreciated by the surgical fraternity. Unlike surgeries which involve the use of a mesh, correction of stress urinary incontinence using laparoscopic suturing completely eliminates the complications of a mesh. It is a day care procedure with faster recovery and better quality of life, the hospital said in a statement. "Our scientific paper on laparoscopic cystocele and stress urinary incontinence correction was published in the internationally renowned JOGI (Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology). Dr. Saranya Ravi and Dr. Karthika R. of our hospital also grabbed the first prize in the quiz competition in the same conference," a source from the hospital said.

Theatres asked to return fans' money

Bigil and Kaithi wait for govt nod

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT 23

With the Tamil Nadu Government unrelenting on the application from the film distributors body seeking permission for extra shows of Deepavali releases-Vijay's Bigil and Karthi's Kaithi-it seems that the fans would have to make do with the usual festival routine of having the first show at 8 a.m. The government has asked the theatres to return the money taken from the fans for the tickets sold for such early shows, said to have been planned at as early as 0100 and 0300 hours.

State Information Minister Kadambur C Raju told reporters at Kovilpatti on Tuesday that there is no scope for the permission unless the distributors and theatre owners give an undertaking they would not charge extra for such special shows. It's been the usual practice during the release of movies of big stars to have extra shows, whose tickets would be given to the various district units of the concerned star's fan clubs so they could make some money by selling them at huge profits.



"We have not granted permission for any special shows until now. Even if we do give the permission, they will have to agree not to charge extra for the tickets," Minister Raju had told the media.

Exhibitors' association functionary Tirupur Subramanian has said the petition to the government had already given the undertaking that the tickets would not over-charge for the extra shows. The fans, particularly of the Vijay camp, have reacted with expected anger at the Minister's statement, posting their displeasure on the social media. One of them alleged that the government was hostile towards

Vijay and would wake from slumber only when his films get released and choosing to snore when the films of other stars are released to special shows in the wee hours.

"Bigil" is the third consecutive Vijay film to be released for Deepavali and there has been huge expectations among his fans, particularly after the star made that speech at a recent grand show at suburban Tambaram to promote the film, wherein he had declared, "Everything will be fine if the right person is placed in the right place". The public quickly, and easily, interpreted that statement as directed at the AIADMK and its CM.

MTR Deepavali to be eco-friendly, noise-free

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC OOTY, OCT. 23

The Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) administration has planned for an eco-friendly-cum-noise-free Deepavali around the jungles to make sure that the deafening noise of crackers and glowing aerial fireworks do not affect the wild animals in and around MTR. Stating this, deputy director of the MTR, Srikanth, said that there will be restrictions around the MTR limits and its fringes to burst crackers during Deepavali.

● Tourists staying in hotels and lodges are expected to refrain from bursting crackers and strict action will be taken against those who defy the rules, Srikanth said

Patrolling by forest staff will be intensified to see that people and tourists abide by the the wildlife life protection laws, he noted. Stating that the MTR administration is soliciting co-operation from the people living in jungle hamlets around MTR and tourists visiting the area to keep off from bursting deafening

crackers, Srikanth said that the sound of the crackers would not only irritate wild animals, but also drive away the birds in the forest.

Hence, in order to ensure the safety and tranquility in the jungles, foresters will act tough.

Tourists staying in hotels and lodges in the MTR periphery and in the buffer zone limits, should refrain from bursting crackers, he said and warned that strict action will be taken against those who try to disturb the jungle atmosphere by violating forest rules.

Regulating social media: Tread middle path

B. Vijayalakshmi

Viewpoint

With draft Information Technology Intermediaries Guidelines (Amendment) Rules, 2018, likely to be finalised by January 15, 2020, will internet usage be regulated and Facebook and WhatsApp be reined in? The draft aims at checking the misuse of social media platforms and direct them to share with probe agencies the decrypted messages of people under investigation. The hearing in Supreme Court this week saw the Central and Tamil Nadu governments asserting that intermediaries were mandated under the Information Technology Act to provide probe agencies with decrypted messages. However social media plat-

forms said they cannot not be tied down in this manner.

The internet penetration in the county has been so deep that there is a significant rise in the use of social media among Indians. While YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram are widely popular, they are also facing flak for data theft and spread of misinformation.

Last year, rumours and misinformation about child kidnapping through WhatsApp led to cases of mob lynching and death of several people in the country. The ministry of electronics and information technology wanted WhatsApp to curb the spread of fake news, hate speech and identify users responsible for spreading such rumours.

Also, the Cambridge Analytica scam revealed that FB had allegedly shared data of several thousand Indian users with a



consulting firm that had sought to influence Indian polls.

ByteDance's mobile app TikTok which allows its several million users to create and share short videos was banned by the Madurai bench of Madras high court. The court noted that children were exposed to inappropriate content including pornography through the app. TikTok argued that it was merely



Users demand a roof over the foot overbridge near Thiruvanniyur railway station. — DC

PUBLIC DEMAND

an intermediary on which users can generate and post content. However, the Madras high court lifted the ban and warned TikTok against obscenity. Similarly, Blue Whale game claimed several young lives. Widespread awareness made parents keep tabs on their wards against this deadly challenge. Google, FB and Twitter were asked to delete all Blue Whale links from their

said to be to the tune of about ₹120 crore as there is an apparent violation of the FEMA, which is a serious matter, informed sources said.

They said the I.T. raids yielded huge amount of money and precious metals, besides incriminating documents pointing to some illegal investments, including vast tracts of land in India and abroad. The total seizure and other evidence pointed to a possible illegal stash worth "anywhere between 600-800 crore

rupees".

"The huge haul of US dollars and clear evidence of hawala transactions automatically brings in the Enforcement Directorate into the investigation", said a source, adding that Naidu could be called in soon for questioning. It is most likely that his wife Padmavati, who claims she is 'Ammu Bhagavan' would also be quizzed. Son Krishna and daughter-in-law Preetha reportedly appeared before the investigation wing of the Income Tax department

at Chennai on Tuesday. Soon after the scam of the I.T. raids across some 30 ashrams and other premises of Naidu @ Kalki hit the headlines and flooded the devotees' social media, the 'Bhagavan' couple put out a video assuring the followers that they had not fled the country, as some reports had suggested, and they would continue to help and guide them, and that all the activities at the Nemam (Andhra Pradesh) ashram and other places continued as usual.

of the Income Tax department

as usual.

Both the BJP and the Hindu Munnani functionaries alleged that Karappan, a textile businessman, had during a meeting described certain Hindu dieties in poor light, prompting them to pursue police action against him. Based on the complaint lodged by the BJP and the Hindu Munnani functionaries, the case was registered.

Both the BJP and the Hindu Munnani functionaries alleged that Karappan, a textile businessman, had during a meeting described certain Hindu dieties in poor light, prompting them to pursue police action against him. Based on the complaint lodged by the BJP and the Hindu Munnani functionaries, the case was registered.

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Based on the complaint, Karappan was booked under IPC sections (505(1)(b) (intent to cause fear among public) and (295 (a) intent to outrage religious feelings.

Karappan had at a public meeting organised by the Dravidar Iyakkam Tamilar Peravai a few days ago, allegedly described Lord Krishna and Lord Athivaradar in poor light.

Meanwhile, Karappan apologised for his remarks, and circulated a video tendering the apology in the social media.

Investigations are on. —PTI

● Both the BJP and the Hindu Munnani functionaries alleged that Karappan, a textile businessman, during a meeting described certain Hindu dieties in poor light.

Small town youngster works actively towards 'Beggar free India'

SRIDEVI. V | DC COIMBATORE, OCT. 23

'Amma'... 'Thaaye' ... 'Pittha podunga ma' ... hearing this has made us cringe many times. Some spare money but many think it should not be encouraged. Youngster Naveen Kumar has reached out, sat with them, understood why and what made them beggars and counselled over 3,000 beggars so far. In an exclusive conversation with DC he shares his journey towards making India a beggar free nation. Hailing from a small town in Musiri

division in Tiruchirappalli district, he moved to Komarapalayam near Erode to pursue engineering and his life started to change from there. "I started to see elderly people roaming aimlessly in the streets and I wanted to do something for them. But pointing to the economic condition of my family, people asked me to concentrate on my studies rather than wasting time trying to reform others. This hurt me and the urge to change their lives got stuck inside my head," he says. He finished his studies like



everybody asked him to and got the 'best outgoing student award' but also worked simultaneously towards his dream. Along with like-minded friends in the college he formed the 'Athyayam Trust'. Apart from cleaning beggars and providing medical



care, he has also ensured their rehabilitation. His team has stopped over 350 people from begging by helping them set up small busi-

nesses. Initially, facing financial issues and lack of manpower, Naveen Kumar split beggars into various categories. "Some were differently-abled, some were old people thrown out from their homes, some were begging for drugs, some people were a specific group from Andhra Pradesh, some were begging to buy bus tickets to go back to their hometown. I also found beggars who got hit by vehicles on road and not having money to treat themselves, took to drugs to forget the pain. Some beggars even bought fevicol and

whitens from the money they got and took pleasure in smelling them," he says.

From this he says he selected categories that were possible to reform and went ahead with old people thrown out from their houses and enrolled them in an old age home. He also picked people who were on the verge of dying. Their blessings took me to the next level and motivated me, he added. In a journey of 7 years he has reformed 383 beggars till date, moving closer to his ambition every day.

A man who faced all odds,

ridiculed and shamed for being seen with beggars is today a recipient of various awards such as the national youth award given by the Union Ministry for Youth Affairs & Sports, Tamil Nadu CM's state youth award, Vikatan Nambikkai top 10 youngsters award and so on. He concludes by saying, "Rather than giving them money and food, try and give them the love and care they need. After all we all are living in this world depending on somebody's love and affection. Help them like they are your family."



Need rapid action

Electricity minister P. Thangamani has promised immediate action on complaints of power cuts during the monsoon



In a first in the country, to enhance safety, TN fishermen have been provided satellite phones — D. Jayakumar, Fisheries minister

SHORT TAKES

2 HELD FOR SNATCHING GOLD CHAIN FROM ELDERLY WOMAN

Chennai: The City police on Wednesday arrested two men for snatching a six sovereigns gold chain from an elderly woman in Palavanthangal.

Police identified the arrested as, P.Santhosh (26) and V.Abishek Raj (22) of Venkatapuram in Saidapet.

According to the police, the victim, R.Padmaja(66) a resident of Nanganallur was walking near Nehru School main road when two bike-borne men attacked the elderly and robbed her six sovereigns gold chain.

The Palavanthangal police registered a case and launched a search for the duo. Based on the recovered CCTV footages from the area, police on Wednesday nabbed the accused and recovered eight sovereigns gold from them. They were remanded in judicial custody.

COMMUNITY CHARGING STATIONS FOR EVs

Chennai: Engineering equipment providers Lynx Lawrence & Mayo are expanding their portfolio by associating with ChargeGrid, a pioneer in providing a range of safe, monitored and regulated-community electric vehicle chargers. The association will enable building an ecosystem for accelerated growth of Electronic Vehicles in India. They market and facilitate access to ChargeGrid's range of AC Charging Station products, which will be marketed and deployed by Lynx-Lawrence and Mayo and managed and monitored by ChargeGrid. The current range includes the ChargeGrid Pro - T2 and ChargeGrid PRO - 3P.

Speaking about the association, Mr Glenford D'Souza, Senior General Manager, Lynx - Lawrence & Mayo, said, "Making EV Charging stations available and accessible is a crucial step towards sustainable and environmentally responsible solutions. We look forward to building a greener and healthier world for the future."

The association will also provide 'made in India' solutions for EV Vehicle charging through convenient and technology enabled charging points that comply with the Ministry of Power's directive. The charging stations are fully automated, completely unmanned and have an integrated payment gateway enabled via open network.

Public will face no difficulty, party informs HC Cadres are restrained from erecting banners: AIADMK

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The AIADMK party has informed the Madras high court that it had restrained its party cadres from in any manner erecting cut outs, flex boards, banners, which would cause difficulty of any nature to the general public.

J. C. D. Prabhakar, Organising Secretary, News Bureau Co-ordinator and Minorities Welfare Wing Deputy Secretary of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam filed an affidavit to this effect on behalf of the party and also on behalf of its leaders, before a division bench comprising Justices M.Sathyarayanan and N.Seshasayee when the contempt petition filed by social activist Traffic Ramaswamy and suo motu taken up proceedings on the death of techie Subhasri came up for hearing on Wednesday.

In his affidavit, Prabhakar submitted that it is the solemn statement of our political party that it is against erection of banners of any nature that would cause hin-



drance in any manner to the general public and as such, they are against the display of such banners as well. "Our political party stands by the commitment and had restrained its party cadres from in any manner erecting cut outs, flex boards, banners, which would cause difficulty of any nature to the general public. In fact, our leaders had also called upon the cadres to strictly follow the direction and had also asked them not to put up any banners, cut outs, flex boards etc., even though it may be without fully understanding the consequences. Our political party affirms the above position before this court and shall ensure



that its cadres also strictly adhere to the joint statement made by the leaders of our political party", he added.

When suo motu proceedings on the death of Subhasri on the road due to an AIADMK banner falling on her and a tanker lorry running behind her ran over her on September 12 at Pallikaranai, taken up for hearing, Additional Advocate General C.Emmilias filed the status reports of Additional Commissioners of Police, Traffic and Law and Order respectively.

He said so far as the illegal erection of digital banner was concerned, the investigation was over

and final report has been filed. With regard to the accident, investigation was over and final report has been yet to be filed and it will be filed shortly since the bail petitions filed by the accused Jayagopal and his brother-in-law were pending, he added.

Recording the affidavit filed by the AIADMK party and the status report filed by the Additional Commissioners of Police, the bench posted to November 22, further hearing of the case.

Meanwhile, the bench also ordered notice to the authorities on a petition filed by R.Ravi, the father of the deceased Subhasri, seeking ₹1 crore as compensation and a Special Investigation Team probe against those who were directly and indirectly responsible for the death of his daughter. He also sought a direction to the state government to take necessary steps to enact a Special Act with maximum punishment to curb the menace of erecting unauthorized /illegal banners.



Students of Valliammal college for women, wearing masks, hold charts creating awareness on noise-free and smoke-free Deepavali.

Man held for damaging CCTVs

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

City police arrested a 22-year-old man for damaging CCTV cameras installed in Pozhichalur near Pallavaram. Police have also launched a search for four men.

The arrested was identified as A. Madhavan, an electrician and a resident of Mariamman Kovil Street in Pozhichalur. Police sources said that Madhavan and his

friends used to drink alcohol every night near the Mariamman temple in his neighbourhood. Recently, Shankar Nagar police had installed three CCTV cameras near the temple to help curb crimes. It is said that police officials warned Madhavan and his friends not to drink and create public nuisance. Irked by the police warning and installation of CCTV cameras in their boozing spot, Madhavan went on a

rampage on Tuesday night, damaging three CCTV cameras installed near the temple and allegedly threw them into a well before fleeing the spot. On being informed by residents, Shankar Nagar police came to the spot and arrested Madhavan. A case was registered by them. He was produced in Tambaram court and lodged at Puzhal prison. Police have also launched a search for Madhavan's friends. Investigations are on.

BCTP will conduct free coaching classes for aspiring civil judges

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

Pursuant to a notification issued by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission, inviting applications from the eligible candidates for direct recruitment to the post of Civil Judge in the Tamil Nadu State Judicial Service, the Bar Council of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry has decided to conduct free coaching classes at the meeting hall of the Madurai Bench of the Madras high court for the benefit of advocates, who are practicing in southern districts.

In a press release, the BCTP Chairman P.S.Amalraj said in view of the notification issued by the TNPS, the BCTP is successfully conducting free coaching classes in association with Manithaneyam Free Coaching Centre in the auditorium of BCTP with effect from September 23, 2019. Now, the BCTP has decided to conduct the similar type of coaching classes at the Madurai bench.

The object behind this decision taken by the BCTP is to give a golden opportunity to the aspirants, who are

not affordable to have a high class coaching for preparing the exam and also for the aspirants, who are in search and need of proper guidance for preparing for the exam or any practicing advocates who wish to equip themselves in legal profession, he added.

Amalraj said majority of the fresh law graduates are hailing from rural areas and poor economic background. To assist such candidates, the BCTP has decided to conduct free coaching classes for the aspiring practicing advocates and fresh law graduates.

The coaching will be provided by the highly skilled and efficient faculties.

The interested eligible candidates, who wish to use this opportunity are requested to register their name immediately by submitting the filled up application forms downloaded from the BCTP website in www.barcounciloftamilnadupuducherry.org and send the same through e-mail to tnbarcouncil@yahoo.com or contact B. A. S h o k , C o - Chairman, Bar Council, Madurai, he added.



Students of Don Bosco matriculation higher secondary school, Egmore, take out a plastic awareness rally.

NCRB report: TN second in road accident deaths

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The latest annual crime data, "Crime in India-2017", released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), has revealed that TN ranks second in the number of road accident deaths in 2017.

Tamil Nadu has ranked number two in the terms of road accident deaths due to negligence, with Uttar Pradesh ranking number one with 17,701 deaths. Tamil Nadu has seen 16,661 deaths in 2017.

According to the NCRB data released on Monday, Delhi stood first with 1,451 victims in 1,317 accidents

caused due to negligence, Chennai was in second place with 1,404 victims in 1,312 road accidents. Of these, 176 were hit-and-run cases and the vehicles that caused the accidents could not be traced. The city also ranked second in rash driving on a public way, with 6,204 cases and 7,420 victims. Of these, 4,295 persons sustained grievous injuries in 3,578 cases, and this is the highest among cities. Besides, 2,609 persons also got hurt in 2,163 incidents of reckless driving.

In just January this year, 993 persons died in 5,173 road accidents. And over 70% reportedly happened on state and national high-

ways. The condition of these roads and the lack of safety features have been blamed for a large number of accidents in the state. Police sources, however, allege that the main cause for deaths is due to rampant violation of traffic rules by the public. This includes over-speeding, disobeying traffic signals and refusal to wear helmets.

CRIME AGAINST THE ELDERLY:

The state of Tamil Nadu has topped the country in reporting grave crimes, particularly murder, against senior citizens. The state stood second after

Maharashtra in reporting incidents of robbery and snatching targeting elders.

The statistics released by NCRB revealed that 188 senior citizens were murdered in Tamil Nadu, followed by 152 in Maharashtra and 127 in Uttar Pradesh. As many as 62 senior citizens were victims of attempt-to-murder cases in Tamil Nadu, which is the second-highest in the country after Maharashtra that reported 66 such cases.

FOREIGN NATIONALS BOOKED FOR ASSAULT HIGHEST IN TN :

Tamil Nadu had the most number of foreign nation-

als involved in crimes, especially those of assault, theft and attempt to murder, in 2017. Six foreign nationals were involved in assault cases in the state, followed by two in Karnataka. Goa and Maharashtra police had booked one foreign national for assault.

While three foreigners were booked for attempt to murder in Karnataka, two cases each were booked in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra under Section 307 of the IPC.

Tamil Nadu police have registered five theft cases against foreign nationals, followed by Mizoram and Maharashtra, three cases.



A stone inscription belonging to Sadhasiva Maharayar of Vijayanagar empire says Mavalavadi village was donated to Tindivanam Lakshmi Narasimhar temple. —K.Senthil Nathan

Plea to permit Karthigai month poojas at Velliangiri

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

A Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court, which sought a direction to the authorities to grant permission to conduct the pooja during the month of Karthigai more specifically from November 17, 2019 to December 16, 2019 and also to lit the Maha Karthigai Deepam from December 10, 2019 to December 12, 2019 at the 7th hills, Velliangiri Suyambu Aandavar (Kappukkadu Block II Reserve Forest Area), Poluvampatti Range, Perur Taluk, Coimbatore.

A division bench comprising Justices M.Sathyarayanan and N.Seshasayee before whom the PIL filed by D.Saravanan of Dindigul district, came up for hearing ordered notice to the state government and HR & CE and posted to November 13, further hearing of the case.

According to petitioner, he is

an ardent devotee of Arulmigu Thenkayilai Andavar temple and an office bearer of the said temple devotees welfare association called Anaiyaatheepakkulu. The temple situated in Velliangiri in Western Ghats is called Arulmigu Velliangiri Malai Andavar Temple. The temple was situated at 7th hills and 6,000 meters above the sea level. The idol is believed to be self manifested (Suyambu). The temple is considered to be 3,000 years old. The devotees used to pray in the Tamil month of Karthigai and lighting the traditional devotional lamp called Karthigai Deepam. This tradition of lighting the Karthigai Deepam was being followed by devotees for many generations without any hindrance or interference whatsoever, he added.

He said their devotees' welfare association was formed 20 years back to assist and help the devotees of the temple to participate in the Karthigai Deepam traditional prayer and safely

arrange their journey and Annadhanam to the devotees of the temple. There was no donation being collected by the Anaiyaatheepakkulu but the expenses were shared by the members and the members voluntarily serving the devotees without any commercial interest. The Anaiyaatheepakkulu had been performing and conducting the lighting of Karthigai Deepam during the month of Karthigai after obtaining proper and due permission from the forest department. "Therefore, for the smooth conduct of Karthigai Deepam, he gave representation dated August 20, 2019 to the authorities to permit the devotees of the Arulmigu Velliangiri Malai Andavar temple to perform religious ceremonies such as poojas and lighting of Karthigai Deepam during the month of Karthigai. But, there was no response. Hence, he filed the present petition, he added.



Civics body officials conduct anti-dengue raid in a lodge on Babu street in Vellore. Four lodges in the area were found to be breeding ground for mosquitoes and the owners were slapped a fine of ₹10,000. — K. Senthil Nathan

Police seize ganja, one peddler held

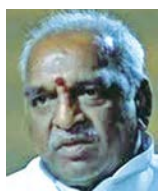
DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The city police on Tuesday seized ganja and arrested a peddler from Palavanthangal

According to the sources, the police who were on patrol duty on Tuesday night nabbed one Ganesh Kamal (26)

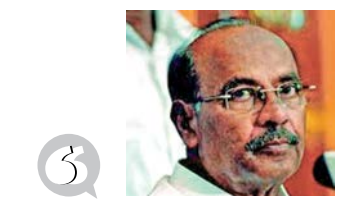
and found 250 grams of ganja in his possession. He was taken into police custody for interrogation, when confessed that he smuggled the contraband from Andhra Pradesh.

The police arrested him, produced in Aalandur court and lodged at Puzhal prison.



Liquor-less festival

Government should declare three days holiday for liquor outlets for Deepavali to make it a liquor-less festival this year, said former Union minister Pon Radhakrishnan



Government should provide loans to cane farmers cheated by sugar mills

— Dr S. Ramadoss, PMK founder

SHORT TAKES

Small hurdle for Nilgiris will be sorted out soon

FROM P1

He said there was "a small hurdle" in respect of Nilgiris, which was sorted out by the state health secretary meeting the concerned officials at Delhi. All the six new colleges would come up and become functional "in the shortest possible time, hopefully by the next academic year". He said adding medical colleges and increasing the number of graduates would significantly improve the doctor-patient ratio and consequently the healthcare in the state, which has already been world-class.

Perambalur achieves 100% voting: CEO

FROM P1

A total of 1,88,659 votes have been polled. In Nanguneri 1,70,629 votes including 80,500 men and 90,122 women, were polled. To a question, the CEO replied that under the Electors Verification Programme in Perambalur 100% is achieved. Ariyalur follows next with 97%, Erode: 92% and 70% in 15 districts. In Chennai, the percentage is very low 18%, he said and added that this has to be improved.



WAGE HIKE STR

Doctors stage A protest for wage hike at Madras Medical College in the city on Wednesday.

— DC

Stalin warns BJP on Panchami land issue

D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, OCT. 23

BJP state secretary Dr R Srinivasan on Wednesday said the National Commission for Scheduled Castes has asked the state Chief Secretary to respond to his petition on DMK organ Murasoli allegedly being built on Panchami land. "I gather from the Commission that they have sought the response from the Chief Secretary on my petition. I am waiting for the state's response", he told DC. Dr Srinivasan had written to the NCSC on Monday drawing attention to the reports accusing the DMK of building its Murasoli office on Panchami land, which he argued was "illegal" since such land originally allotted to the Scheduled Caste people "for their livelihood" cannot be sold on any grounds.

As the DMK had not come out with any "concrete solid proof" that Murasoli was not built on Panchami land, there was "strong suspicion among the public" that the party had committed illegality in this issue, said Dr Srinivasan in his petition to the NCSC asking it to take it up "seriously" with the TN government. "DMK is a political party which claims that they are the champions of social justice. Such self-claiming champions should not be allowed to go scot free if they have grabbed the land belonging to the Scheduled Caste people", the BJP functionary said in his petition to the NCSC. DMK president MK Stalin has hit back saying Dr Srinivasan has got into the issue without basis and by blindly believing PMK chief Dr

S Ramadoss. "I have already challenged Dr Ramadoss if he would quit politics if I produced the original documents relating to the Murasoli land. He remains silent. And now this BJP functionary has latched on to that charge and petitioned the NCSC", Stalin said in a statement. "Srinivasan is behaving like Ramadoss' handmaid. He has got onto a mud horse hoping to cross the stream", said the DMK chief. Responding, Dr Srinivasan wondered why Stalin was upset with him when all that he had done was merely to raise the issue and seek a probe to establish truth. "This Murasoli land issue was actually first raised by Vaiko, who is with Stalin now", the BJP functionary told Deccan Chronicle.

Release performance grant, TN urges Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The state government has sought the Centre to immediately release the Performance Grant of ₹2,029.22 crore besides basic grant of ₹4,345.47 crore for the year 2019-20 for the Rural and Urban Local Bodies as recommended by the 14th Central Finance Commission. In a memorandum submitted to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in New Delhi on Wednesday, Municipal Administration Minister S.P.Velumani said this fund release would greatly benefit the State in providing the basic amenities, such as water supply, sanitation, waste management, street lights etc., and also to settle

Performance Grant of ₹2,029.22 crore besides basic grant of ₹4,345.47 crore for the year 2019-20 for the Rural and Urban Local Bodies as recommended by the 14th Central Finance Commission. Various utility bills of the Urban Local Bodies. "In view of progress made in election process like publishing of delimitation notification and reservation of seats and offices, and in the context of the State Election Commission's affidavit before the Supreme Court of India that the notification announcing the schedule of the election will be published in the last week of October 2019, I request you to kindly recommend for the release of the Performance Grant of

₹2,029.22 crore for 2017-18 to 2019-20 and Basic Grant of ₹4,345.47 crore for 2019-20 for the Rural and Urban Local Bodies as recommended by the 14th Central Finance Commission," he said. Mr. Velumani assured that the State government would implement all the Rural and Urban Development schemes of Government of India "in letter and spirit and all the guidelines are scrupulously followed." While thanking the Centre for sanctioning ₹1,608.03 crore as 2nd installment of Basic Grant of 14th Central Finance Commission for 2018-19, the Minister said this has paved the way for providing quality services to the people of Tamil Nadu

and helped the local bodies in discharging their basic duties and civic functions effectively. "I profoundly thank you on behalf of the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and the people of Tamil Nadu for taking great efforts in releasing the amount," he said. Also, he thanked the Union Minister for taking efforts to reduce GST rate from 18% to 12% on Mached Job Work, reducing GST from 12% to 5% for wet grinders. He urged the Centre to treat all Mached Job Orders, where material input is not involved to be taxed at the same level of 12%. Besides reduce the GST rate for Mached job order items from 12% to 5%, which will benefit many Micro and Small Scale industries.

Spl bus reservation counters to be opened today

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

State Transport Minister M.R. Vijayabaskar will inaugurate the special bus reservation counters on Thursday at Puratchi Thalivar Dr. M.G.R. bus stand in Koyambedu in view of Deepavali. The buses will be operated from Puratchi Thalavar Dr.M.G.R Bus Stand, Madhavaram New Bus stand, K.K Nagar MTC Bus Stand, Arignar Anna Bus Stand, Tambaram-Sanatorium (MEPZ) and Tambaram Railway Station Bus Stand, Poonamallee Municipal Bus Stand, Poonamallee during the Deepavali from Oct. 24 to 26.

CM: TN's good L&O attracts investors, praise from Xi

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

Although several factors may trigger economic growth, the public peace and tranquility besides efficient maintenance of law and order in the State, is what is sustaining development in Tamil Nadu. In fact, these have not only attracted global investors to the State but also won praise from the Chinese authorities, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami has said. "Even if there are factors conducive for economic progress, there would be no progress if peace is disturbed. Hence, Amma's government has been according importance to public peace and tranquility, security and maintenance of law and order. These have attracted several global investors and won praise even from Chinese authorities," Mr. Palaniswami said.



Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami presents medal to DGP J.K. Tripathy in Chennai on Wednesday. — DC

Speaking after presenting the President of India Medals and the Chief Minister's Medals and Special Service Medals to police personnel here on Wednesday, the CM said the Chinese authorities praised the State police force for providing good security during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping for the India China summit at Mamallapuram near here. They were "amazed" at the security arrangements that were in place during Mr. Xi's visit on October 11 and 12. Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese authorities had appreciated the State police force for the security arrangements provided then. Pointing out that

Jinping travelled to Mamallapuram from here by road on both the days, Mr. Palaniswami, who holds the Home portfolio, said providing security to the President for such a long distance was a challenge. But the police rose up to the occasion. "It was challenging to provide security for a big leader undertaking such a long trip by road. Our police force successfully accomplished it with their experience and skills," Mr. Palaniswami, said. "The Chinese authorities were amazed at the security strategy adopted by our police personnel, besides their skills. They lauded our police force, saying they had exceeded their (Chinese) expectations.

This is a grand endorsement of the work of the police department," he added. Praising the police force, he said it was working diligently to ensure all-round peace in the state. His Amma's government was functioning in the spirit of "peace, prosperity and progress" a catchphrase coined by former AIADMK supremo and late CM J. Jayalalithaa. "People have to prosper in order for the State to progress. And for the people to prosper the State's economy should progress. Though there may be many factors triggering economic growth, above all, what is of paramount importance is public peace and tranquility besides security," he emphasised.



Municipal Administration Minister S. P. Velumani receives e-Panchayat Puraskar award from Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Narendra Singh Tomar in New Delhi on Wednesday during the distribution of national Panchayat Awards, 2019. The e-Panchayat Puraskar is given to states / UTs or promoting e-enablement of PRIs for bringing in efficiency, transparency and accountability in their functioning. The award is meant to encourage panchayats for the use of information and communication technology.

Keeladi was amazingly urban with open water channel, strainer

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, OCT. 23

The exposure of the open water channel, strainer/filter attached to terracotta pipes and spiral shaped terracotta pipes at the Keeladi excavation site on the banks of Vaigai River in Sivaganga district in the State, suggest that the Sangam Age people had the critical knowledge and technology of the water management system. The people of those times are far more urban and tech driven than thought of.

Udayachandran. The findings during the fifth phase of excavation at Keeladi, that was wrapped up on Oct. 13 after four months of intense digging, indicate the presence of advanced town planning and infrastructure including water management practices. According to the Department of Archaeology, Tamil Nadu, which is carrying out the excavation at Keeladi located near Madurai. Over 900 artefacts were unearthed during this phase from about 51 pits that were dug up.



An open water channel made of brick, spiral shaped terracotta pipes and a terracotta strainer found at Keeladi excavation site on the banks of Vaigai river in Sivagangai district in the state, suggest that the Sangam Age people had the critical knowledge and technology of the water management system.

The rich find indirectly indicate the existence of well-developed and structured society. "The available evidences indicate the existence of urbanisation at Keeladi. The size of the settlement, internal and external trade contacts, advanced technology, industries, the existence of multi ethnic social groups, usage of multiple languages and scripts, level of literacy, art, usage of elite or luxury objects, brick structures and other cultural items are considered as characteristic features of urbanisation. Most of these characteristic features are exposed at Keeladi," says Commissioner of Archaeology T.

Pots of different sizes, ceramic shells with inscriptions and semi-precious, engraved stone were among the artefacts unearthed during the fifth phase of excavation. During the excavation, an object having a rim-like portion of a pot was found at a depth of 47 cm in a trench. The rim portion is of red slipped ware and beautifully finished. It is found to be a beautifully made two terracotta pipes well-fitted with each other and the pipes measure 60 cm in length and 20 cm in diameter at the mouth. "Each terracotta pipe had a five spiral-like projections at regular interval on its

outer surface and looks like spiral-shaped terracotta pipes. The pipes fixed perfectly mouth to mouth suggest that they might have been used to carry or drain water or any other liquid item," says TN Archaeology Department Deputy Director R. Sivanandam. The mouth of the pipe had three holes, probably, to tie some objects at the mouth. The excavation extended

horizontally close to the terracotta pipes. A few roof tiles vertically piled-up were also exposed at the depth of 52 cm. Besides, a brick structure also found close to the above said objects. Digging deeper, the archaeologists found that the terracotta pipes met with three more barrel-shaped terracotta pipes, which vary in shape and

size, suggesting that they were used for different purposes. A terracotta strainer (looks like perforated dish/bowl) was found at the mouth portion of the barrel-shaped terracotta pipes. Only three-fourth of the strainer was recovered. The placement of the strainer at the mouth of pipe clearly suggests that it might have been used to filter the

unwanted material of the liquid that flew through these pipes. Interestingly, another end of the pipe met at the mouth portion of two pots kept one above the other. The arrangement of the pipe, strainer/filter and two pots clearly indicates that some kind of liquid item or water would have passed through these pipes and collected in the pot.

Further, an open water channel made of brick was unearthed at the same site, at a depth of 50 cm. This brick structure measuring 5.80 m in length and 1.60 m in breadth that has been dexterously dug out, has eleven courses. The floor of the water channel is paved with roof-tiles which facilitate the flow of the water. The significance of these struc-

tures is that the water channel and the brick structure were exposed to the south of the brick tank and water channel unearthed in the second seasons of the excavation carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India. It suggests that the water channel is extending further south and its final position would be known in the future excavations.



Women workers at Keeladi excavation site on the banks of Vaigai river in Sivagangai district. — DC



Bihar law & order

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav slams Nitish Kumar over law and order situation in Bihar



The JeM is trying to coordinate with every militant group in Kashmir

— Dilbag Singh, J&K DGP

SHORT TAKES

Raj IAS officer duped of ₹6.10L

Jaipur: A conman committed a cyber fraud with an IAS officer posted in Udaipur by sending a fake Know Your Customer (KYC) link on her mobile phone and allegedly siphoned-off ₹6.10 lakh from her bank account. Dr T. Shubhamangla, presently posted as sub-divisional magistrate Jhadol of Rajasthan's Udaipur district, had received a message link on her mobile phone on October 21. "The incident had happened on Monday. I had filled personal information on the KYC link which appeared to be from SBI," Shubhamangla said. — PTI

Lady doc alleges sexual abuse

Bhubaneswar: A lady doctor in Boudh district on Tuesday lodged a police complaint against a man for allegedly sexually harassing her in the pretext of marriage. According to the complaint by the lady doctor, one Amulya Kumar Padhi, who worked as a Block Programme Manager, developed love relationship with her two years ago and even promised her to marry her. However, as days continued to pass, when the lady insisted him for marriage, Amulya reportedly rejected her proposal and even threatened to kill her. Dejected, the lady doctor on Wednesday approached the town police seeking justice.



PRIYANKA TO VISIT AMETHI TOMORROW

Amethi (UP): Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will visit Amethi on Thursday to attend a party programme, a spokesperson said. Priyanka will arrive at the Amethi office in the afternoon and take part in the swearing-in function of newly-appointed district unit president Pradeep Singhal, party spokesperson Anil Singh said. Besides addressing the party workers, she is also likely to meet them individually, Singh said. s would be Priyanka's second visit to the constituency after the defeat of her brother, Rahul Gandhi, in the Lok Sabha election. She was here on September 27 to meet the family members of Ram Autar who had allegedly died in police custody. — PTI

Top cop made same claim 5 months ago J&K DG: Qaeda offshoot wiped out from Kashmir

YUSUF JAMEEL SRINAGAR, OCT. 23

Jammu and Kashmir police on Wednesday claimed that Ansar Gazwat-Ul-Hind (AGH), Al Qaeda's offshoot in India, has been wiped out from Kashmir after the killing of its local chief along with his two associates during a gunfight with the security forces in Rajpora area of southern Pulwama district a day ago.

"The Ansar Gazwat-Ul-Hind has been wiped out but some elements, who are over-ground workers (OGW) of the outfit, are there. They suddenly crop up and join militant ranks. But, as of now, it (AGH) has been wiped out from Kashmir," J&K's director general of police, Dilbag Singh said at a press conference here.

The police chief said that among the AGH militants killed in Wednesday's fire fight was its chief Hameed Lone. Lehari alias Haroon Abbad. The two other slain militants were identified by as Naveed Ahmed Tak and Junaid Rashid Bhat.

Lehari had replaced Zakir Rashid Bhat alias Zakir Musa, who headed Al Qaeda's India cell AGH, after he was killed in a gunfight that took place in Dadasara village of Tral on May 23, this year.



AGH chief Lehari

Even then, Mr Singh had claimed that he was the last surviving cadre of "Ansar Ghazwat-Ul-Hind." He had also said that a new idea of militancy primarily to establish Islamic Caliphate in the restive state introduced by Zakir Musa has ended with his killing.

The police chief said on Wednesday that all the three militants killed on Tuesday were residents of Pulwama district and as per police records, were part of the Zakir Musa group and were wanted by law for their complicity in a series of terror crimes.

He also said that this group of militants was working closely with the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) outfit which is trying to coordinate with other groups in the Valley to carry out attacks.

He said, "The JeM is trying to coordinate with every militant group in Kashmir. The JeM and the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) get their

The Ansar Gazwat-Ul-Hind has been wiped out but some elements, who are over-ground workers of the outfit, are there.

— Dilbag Singh, J&K DGP

direction from Pakistan on who to target, what type of violence to incite and at which level." He further said, "So, the JeM and the LeT are both trying to coordinate with every group. If you remember, two Gujjar brothers were killed in Tral and Pakistani militant Yasir of the JeM was involved in that. He was in contact with this group."

In June this year, a video circulated by AGH through its media channel al-Hurra Media had named Lehari as its new chief and Ghazi Ibrahim Khalid as his deputy. This came two weeks after the security forces had killed top Kashmiri militant commander Zakir Musa, who had in 2017 revolted against J&K's main indigenous militant outfit Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and was subsequently appointed by Al-Qaeda as the head of its newly created cell in India.

Pakistan singer posts pic with suicide jacket, threatens Modi

Islamabad, Oct. 23: A provocative photo posted by Pakistani singer Rabi Pirzada in which she was seen wearing a suicide jacket and threatening Prime Minister Narendra Modi for revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir has gone viral in social media.

As the photo appeared on social networking site Twitter, it attracted huge attention with some praising her for her bravery, while others reprimanding the Lahore-based singer-actress for projecting a bad image of the country to the outside world, the urdupoint.Com reported.

In the photo, 27-year-old Pirzada was seen wearing a jacket with explosives attached to it. The provocative picture came at a time when Pakistan has launched an anti-India campaign over the Kashmir issue.

In September, Pirzada had posted a video clip on Twitter in which she was seen posing with pythons and an alligator and threatening to unleash the reptiles on Prime Minister Modi.

After the video went viral, the Punjab Wildlife Protection and Parks Department took legal action against her for keeping wild animals as pets in violation of law. — PTI

Justice Mishra won't recuse from land case

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said that Justice Arun Mishra would not recuse from hearing a matter relating to the correctness of the two conflicting judgments on the payment of compensation to the landowners whose lands were acquired prior to 2013 under the old land acquisition law and were yet to be paid compensation.

"I am not recusing", said Justice Mishra heading a five-judge constitution bench also comprising Justice Indira Banerjee, Justice Vineet Saran, Justice M. R. Shah and Justice S. Ravindra Bhat.

Justice Shah said, "We have given a concurring judgment..." While five-judge constitution bench rejected the plea by certain landowners seeking the recusal of Justice Mishra, the court today framed question relating to the interpretation of Section 24(2) of the 2013 law — The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act.

The question framed on Wednesday by the five-judge constitution



Justice Arun Mishra

bench would be addressed by both the sides in the course of the hearing that would commence from November 6, 2019. The question finalised by the court are based on the questions suggested by the Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and senior counsel Shyam Divan.

The Section 24(2) of the 2013 land acquisition law, the interpretation of which is under consideration of the constitution bench, says that if an award for acquiring land under 1894 land acquisition law has been made five years or more prior to the commencement of 2013 law but physical possession of the acquired land has not been taken or compensation for the same has not been paid then same would stand lapsed. And if government still wants to acquire that land then fresh proceedings under the 2013 land law had to be initiated.

expanded to introduce further restrictions on the freedom of speech of a minister. At this Justice Mishra queried whether free speech could be restricted by invoking right to life under Article 21 of the constitution on the grounds that affects another person's right to lead a dignified life.

Saying that instead of introducing new restrictions on the right to free speech of a minister, Justice Bhat said that there should be a statutory regime and recourse could be taken under Article 226 to deal with such situation.

'File FIR against SIT members'

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, OCT. 23

A court in Jammu on Tuesday directed the Jammu and Kashmir police to register an FIR against six members of its Special Investigation Team (SIT) that probed the gangrape-and-murder of an eight-year-old nomad girl in the state's Kathua district in January 2018 for allegedly torturing and coercing witnesses to give false statements.

Judicial magistrate Prem

KATHUA GANGRAPE AND MURDER CASE

Sagar gave the direction to senior superintendent of police (SSP) of Jammu on an application by Sachin Sharma, Neeraj Sharma and Sahil Sharma, who were witnesses in the case, saying cognizable offences are made out against the six.

In his order, the sub-judge asked the police to register the FIR against Ramesh Kumar Jalla (former SSP Crime Branch, Jammu), Peerzada Naveed (addition-

al superintendent of police Crime Branch, Jammu), Shwetambari Sharma (deputy SP crime branch, Jammu), Nassir Hussain (deputy SP crime branch Jammu) Urfan Wani (sub-inspector crime branch Jammu) and Kewal Kishore (crime branch).

The court order reads, "From the gist of the complaint, cognisable offences are made out against the members of the SIT. Therefore, application of

the applicant under section 153 (3) CrPc is allowed with the direction to SSP Jammu to register FIR against the non-applicants under relevant provisions of law and report compliance by next date of hearing on November 11."

The specially convened Pathankot fast-track court headed by district and sessions judge Tejwinder Singh had in June, this year awarded life imprisonment to the three main convicts in the gangrape-and-murder case.

Extremely heavy rain likely in coastal Maha, K'tka & Goa

Mumbai, Oct. 23: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday put out a red alert, forecasting "extremely heavy rainfall" over the coastal Konkan and Goa as well as coastal Karnataka for Friday.

Precipitation of 204.5 mm or more within 24 hours is considered as extremely heavy rainfall.

The Met department's Mumbai Centre issued the advisory for Konkan, Goa and coastal Karnataka after the signs of intensification of cyclonic circulation in the Arabian Sea.

The IMD Goa, meanwhile, has issued a red alert for Thursday.

"A cyclonic circulation has already brought rains into central parts of Maharashtra including Marathwada region as well as in western Maharashtra and Konkan in last some days. The situation is escalating further as it would concentrate into a 'depression' during next 24 hours in the Arabian Sea," said an

It seems our stars are not good: CM BSY on rain-fury

Bengaluru, Oct. 23: As rains pounded the regions battered by flood havoc two months back, Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yediyurappa wondered on Wednesday whether the stars are to be blamed for nature's fury again. "There was downpour last time. It seems our stars are not good," he said.

official of IMD, Mumbai. "A red alert, which means the area would receive extremely heavy rainfall, has been issued for Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri districts in Konkan region of Maharashtra. Other areas would receive comparatively less intense showers on Thursday and Friday," he said. An official of the Maharashtra State Disaster

Management Cell said they had alerted district disaster management bodies of Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg, asking them to undertake necessary steps to face heavy downpour.

In Goa, the local IMD centre issued a red alert for Thursday. In a press statement issued on Wednesday, IMD Goa advised people to stay indoors. — PTI

Kerala nun moves NHRC, claims bishop harassing her

Kochi, Oct. 23: A nun, who filed a rape case against Bishop Franco Mulakkal, has approached the National and State Women's Commissions besides the National Human Rights Commission, accusing the priest and his supporters of "harassing" her through various online platforms. Acting swiftly, the Kerala Women's Commission registered a case on the basis of the complaint and directed the cyber wing of the Kerala police to investigate the matter.

The commission observed that the nun's complaint was "very serious" in nature and directed the state police chief and the cyber wing of Kerala police to submit a report in 10 days. Chairperson of the Kerala Women's Commission M.C. Josephine said no woman should be harassed through social media and directed police to take strong action against the culprits.

In her complaint, the nun alleged the Bishop and his supporters were humiliating and defaming her and her fellow nuns who are witness in the case through social media and Youtube channels. "From the time the sexual assault was reported, I have been subjected to extreme humiliation and intimidations in various forms," the nun said in her complaint to the National Human Rights Commission.

She further alleged that from the time the sexual assault FIR was registered, she and her fellow nuns have been "subjected to the vilest forms of character assassination." — PTI



Army Chief General Bipin Rawat during the collective training conducted by troops of Eastern Command at Sela, approximately 90 kms from the Line of Actual Control (LAC), in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh on Wednesday. — PTI

UP to seek fast-track trial of Tiwari's killers

Lucknow, Oct 23: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Wednesday asked officials to seek trial by a fast-track court of the main suspects in the murder of Hindutva outfit leader Kamlesh Tiwari, found in a pool of blood last week at his home here. Ashfaq Sheikh (34)

and Moinuddin Pathan (27), the two men who allegedly killed him, were arrested by the Gujarat anti-terror squad (ATS) on Tuesday evening. The victim's body bore 15 stab or cut wounds and a gunshot injury, according to a post-mortem report. Adityanath Wednesday

announced immediate financial help of Rs 15 lakh to Kamlesh Tiwari's wife and sanctioned a house for the family in Sitapur district's tehsil Mehmoodabad, an official said.

Expressing satisfaction over the arrest of the two men, Tiwari's family called for capital punishment. — PTI

"I am very happy with the arrest of the killers. Now, they should be hanged," victim's mother Kusum Tiwari told reporters.

The chief minister directed officials that the main accused should be tried in a fast-track court, a UP government statement said. — PTI

Freedom of speech is not absolute, says A-G Venugopal SC to examine if free speech can be curtailed

PARMOD KUMAR NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

The Supreme Court on Wednesday commenced hearing on the question whether a minister in a government or a person holding a public office could be saddled with additional restrictions, beyond those provided under the Constitution, on his freedom of speech curbing him from commenting on the matters being investigated by the state agencies.

The core issue being examined by the court is whether the right conferred under Article 19(1)(a) is to be controlled

singularly by the restrictions under Article 19(2) or whether Article 21 too would have any impact on it.

Addressing the question whether "reasonable restriction" spelled out under Article 19(2) could be enlarged to restrict a minister from commenting on sensitive matters being probed by investing agencies, Attorney General K.K. Venugopal pointed to a five-judge constitution bench about the collective responsibility of the government including for the acts of individual ministers. Headed by Justice Arun

Mishra, five-judge constitution bench has Justice Indira Banerjee, Justice Vineet Saran, Justice M.R. Shah and Justice S. Ravindra Bhat.

Addressing the questions to be examined in the course of the hearing Attorney General said could State proceed against an individual on the ground that his statement violated the fundamental right to life including right to life with dignity of another individual.

Saying that freedom of speech was not "absolute", the AG wondered whether existing restrictions under the Article 19(2) could be

VALLABHAI PATEL CHEST INSTITUTE
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VPCI is a pioneer Post Graduate Medical Institute funded by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India and maintained by the University of Delhi. The Institute is looking for dynamic and result-oriented persons for filling up teaching positions as shown below:

S. No.	Department	Professor Pay Level-13 (Rs. 1,18,500-2,14,100)						Associate Professor Pay Level-12 (Rs. 78,800-2,09,200)						Assistant Professor Pay Level-11 (Rs. 67,700-2,08,700)					
		UR	SC	ST	OBC	EWS	PwBD (LD)	UR	SC	ST	OBC	EWS	PwBD (LD)	UR	SC	ST	OBC	EWS	PwBD (LD)
01	Anesthesiology	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
02	Biochemistry	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
03	Biostatistics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
04	Cardio Vascular & Thoracic Surgery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
05	Microbiology	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
06	Medical Mycology	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
07	Respiratory Virology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
08	Pathology	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
09	Pharmacology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Physiology	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Pulmonary Medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	For DM course	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
13	For MD course	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
14	Radio-diagnosis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Note: UR - Unreserved, SC - Scheduled Caste, ST - Scheduled Tribe, OBC - Other Backward Classes, EWS - Economically Weaker Section, PwBD - Person with Benchmark Disability and LD - Locomotor disability including leprosy cured, dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy.

Interested candidates should apply on prescribed application form with details of qualification & other specifications along with a non-refundable fee of Rs.2,000/- (No fee in case of SC/ST/Women/PwD candidates) in the form of Nationalized Bank Demand Draft payable at Delhi & drawn in favour of 'Director, VPCI', in person/by registered post/by speed post on working days between 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The application form & other details can also be downloaded from our website www.vpci.org.in. The application form to be submitted to the Joint Registrar, V.P. Chest Institute, University of Delhi, North Campus, Delhi-110 007. **The last date for issue of application form and submission thereof duly completed in all respect is 30 days from the date of publication of advertisement in the Employment News.** If 30th day falls on holiday, the next working day will be last date of issue/submission. The Institute reserves the right to increase/decrease or not to fill the above posts if the circumstance so warrant. Any addendum/dedendum/corrigendum shall be posted on the Institute's website only.

Davp:17169/11/0013/1920

DIRECTOR



Strategic ties

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will pay a three-day visit to India beginning October 31

Assam expands insurance plan ambit

Atal Amrit cashless treatment benefits to Japanese Encephalitis, trauma, ICU care too

MANOJ ANAND GUWAHATI, OCT. 23 In a significant move, the BJP-led Assam government has decided to expand the Atal Amrit Abhiyan, a health assurance scheme launched in 2016 to cover six diseases and critical care like Japanese Encephalitis, non-cancer bone marrow transplantation and admission in Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

Pointing out that extension of the scheme to six new diseases, including Japanese Encephalitis (JE) was necessary, Mr Sarma said JE is a major killer in Assam, particularly during the monsoon season. It is significant that 154 people died due to this disease caused by mosquito bite till September, this year.

Mr. Sarma said that 1.61 crore people have enrolled under the Atal Amrit scheme in the past 18 months but 57,257 received cashless treatment.

"The number is less because most BPL patients were shifted to the Ayushman Bharat scheme launched in between, leaving the APL people comprising lower-middle and middle classes with a household income of up to ₹5 lakh in Atal Amrit," he said.

He also informed that cancer patients accounted for 27,424, out of the total cashless beneficiaries followed by kidney patients at 20,263 and heart patients 6,470. The cashless treatment involved a total amount worth ₹136.99 crore.

Govt asks Indians visiting Turkey to exercise caution

VINEETA PANDEY NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

In what clearly seems to be the fallout of Turkey's stand against India on Kashmir, the Indian government on Wednesday asked its citizens to "exercise extreme caution" while travelling to the West Asian nation.

Though the Indian mission in Ankara has mentioned "situation in the region" as the reason behind the advisory, the alert comes amidst strained diplomatic ties between the two countries

Tayyip Erdogan had made a statement at the United Nations general Assembly against the scrapping of special status in Jammu and Kashmir by India. "One of the problems to which the international community still does not devote enough attention is the Kashmir conflict, which awaits a solution for 72 years," he said.

ITBP trains over 200 men in Mandarin

New Delhi, Oct. 23: Over 200 ITBP officers and jawans have been trained in Mandarin for "better interaction" during border standoffs with Chinese troops, a top official said on Wednesday.

ITBP director-general Surjeet Singh Deswal, while interacting with reporters on the eve of the 58th Raising Day of the force, also rejected reports that said the operational command of the Indo-Tibetan border police could be given to the Army.

"We have trained more than 200 personnel in speaking and understanding the Mandarin language. We are regularly training our personnel. This step will help them remove misunderstanding and better the interaction-level during stand-offs," he said.

Asked what is the view of the force on reports that its operational command should be given to the Army, Mr Deswal said his force was "as good as the Army."

Plank for army veterans to get reskilled

PAWAN BALI NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

Indian Army and IT and BPO industry association NASSCOM is coming together to find modern-day jobs in the IT sector for army veterans.

Indian army and NASSCOM have entered into a partnership under which the IT body will provide regular advice and guidance to the army which will undertake the skill upgradation of veterans to make them industry-ready.

This partnership will also lead to the formation of a "NASSCOM Veteran Cell" that will act as a platform and an interface for companies interested to take army veterans.

"NASSCOM would provide constant guidance and create a platform for visibility for the army veterans through reskilling initiatives as per the ongoing industry requirements. Veterans have the right experience and discipline when it comes to their work ethic, and thus would add a valuable contribution to the industry," said Ashok Pamidi, CEO, NASSCOM Foundation.

TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD. NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (E-TENDERING PROCESS)

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE The Chief Administrative Officer/Construction, Northern Railways, Kashmir gate, Delhi- 110006 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Expression of Interest for the following work.

MOUNT ROAD BRANCH: No.105, G.P Road, Mount Road, Chennai - 600002. Ph. 044-28601285 / 2860 0417

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable property) (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that part and parcel of Plot No.B-5, Sri Ambar Nagar Extension, CMDA Planning Permit No.1445/2008 dated 31.12.2008, comprised in Survey No.170/1A & 70/2A of Kovoor Village, Sriperumbudur Taluk, Kancheepuram District, measuring East to West on the Northern Side: 60 Feet, East to West on the Southern Side: 66 Feet, North to South on the Eastern Side: 56 Feet, North to South on the Western Side: 26.9 Feet, in all measuring an area of 2482.5 sq.ft. and a building on the ground, first & second floor thereon, and bounded on the North by Plot No. B-4, East by 24 Feet Road, South by Survey No. 169, West by Survey No.171, and lying within the Registration District of South Chennai and Sub-Registration District of Kundrathur (hereinafter referred to as the Scheduled Property). The property is standing in the name of Smt. D. Pappa.

HDFC BANK Regd. Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400 013. Branch Office: Ceebross Building, 4th Floor, No.110, Nelson Manickam Road, Aminjikarai, Chennai-29

HDFC BANK Regd. Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400 013. Branch Office: Ceebross Building, 4th Floor, No.110, Nelson Manickam Road, Aminjikarai, Chennai-29

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU SATHYAMANGALAM MUNICIPALITY Tender Notice (Two Cover System) Date: 21.10.2019

CITY UNION BANK LTD. Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. Phone : 0435-2402322, 2401622 Fax : 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002 The following properties mortgaged to City Union Bank Limited will be sold in Re-Tender-Cum-Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of Rs.1,11,45,920/- (Rupees One Crore Eleven Lakh Forty Five Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Only) as on 04-07-2019 together with further interest to be charged from 05-07-2019 onwards, other expenses and any other dues to the bank by the borrowers / guarantors No.1) M/s. Sri Paachiamman Enterprises, No.2, Gandhi Street, Chittipakkam, Chennai - 600 064. No.2) Mrs. N. Umayal, W/o. Mr. M. Nagappan, No.4, New No.17, Haridasapuram Main Road, Chittipakkam, Chennai - 600 064. No.3) Mr. M. Nagappan, S/o. Mr. Manickam, No.4, New No.17, Haridasapuram Main Road, Chittipakkam, Chennai - 600 064.

Reserve Price: Rs.55,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty Five Lakh Only) AUCTION DETAILS Date of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale: 12-11-2019 Venue: City Union Bank Limited, Chennai-Chromepet Branch, No.57, Rajendra Prasad Road, Hasthinapuram, Chromepet, Chennai - 600 044.

Terms and Conditions of Re-Tender-cum-Auction Sale: (1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Chennai-Chromepet Branch, No.57, Rajendra Prasad Road, Hasthinapuram, Chromepet, Chennai - 600 044.

City Union Bank Ltd. Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. Phone : 0435-2402322, 2401622 Fax : 0435-2431746

TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002 The following properties mortgaged to City Union Bank Limited will be sold in Tender-Cum-Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of Rs.25,51,765/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh Fifty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Five Only) as on 21-10-2019 together with further interest to be charged from 22-10-2019 onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the Bank by the borrowers / guarantors No.1) M/s. Kavin Agencies, No.14A/1, Veera Raghava Subader Street, Walajabad, Kanchipuram - 631 605. No.2) Mrs. B. Radha, W/o. Mr. V. Baskar, No.10, Kulambarakottam Kammala Street, Uthiramerur, Kanchipuram - 603 406. No.3) Mr. V. Baskar, S/o. Mr. E. Vedachalam, No.10, Kulambarakottam Kammala Street, Uthiramerur, Kanchipuram - 603 406.

Reserve Price: Rs.27,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Only) AUCTION DETAILS Date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale: 30-11-2019 Venue: City Union Bank Limited, Uthiramerur Branch, No.66, Senguntha Pillar Kol Street (Near Ponvizha Mandapam), Uthiramerur - 603 406.

Reserve Price: Rs.27,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Only) AUCTION DETAILS Date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale: 30-11-2019 Venue: City Union Bank Limited, Uthiramerur Branch, No.66, Senguntha Pillar Kol Street (Near Ponvizha Mandapam), Uthiramerur - 603 406.

Terms and Conditions of Tender-cum-Auction Sale: (1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Uthiramerur Branch, No.66, Senguntha Pillar Kol Street (Near Ponvizha Mandapam), Uthiramerur - 603 406. (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd., together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of 10% of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of "City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact Telephone No.044-27272818, Cell No.7604883208.

Terms and Conditions of Tender-cum-Auction Sale: (1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself / herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Uthiramerur Branch, No.66, Senguntha Pillar Kol Street (Near Ponvizha Mandapam), Uthiramerur - 603 406. (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd., together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of 10% of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of "City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact Telephone No.044-27272818, Cell No.7604883208. (5) The purchaser's bid is valid only if it is accompanied by "As-is-where-is" and "what-ever-there-is" basis. (6) The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the intending bidders at 01.00 p.m. on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. (7) The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% (inclusive of EMD paid) of the sale amount immediately on completion of sale and the balance amount of 75% within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of 25% shall be forfeited. (8) The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. (9) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (10) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (11) The purchaser shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever. (12) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (13) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (lawful house tax, electricity charges and other dues), TDS, GST if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (14) The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever. Place: Kumbakonam, Date: 23-10-2019 Authorised Officer

REGIONAL OFFICE-II, No.2/13, Sri Guru Misri Complex, 2nd Floor, Kamarajar Street, Tamabaram West, Chennai-600045, E-mail: ro2.chennai@syndicatebank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE (Appendix IV under the Act - Rule-8(1)) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Syndicate Bank, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Sec 13 (2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice on the dates mentioned below calling upon the borrowers and owners of the property and the sureties mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

S.No.1 (CHENGALPATTU BRANCH): Borrower/Surety/Owner of the property: M/s Akshaya Medicals, Partners: Smt.N.Ramya, Mr.Romio P F and Guarantor: Mr.Dhiliip Kumar D; Demand Notice Date: 31.07.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: ₹ 21,08,145.41; Amount outstanding: ₹ 21,71,944.35 and future interest thereon costs, etc.

S.No.2 (SRIPERUMBUDUR BRANCH): Borrower/Owner of the property: M/s.New City Max Partners: Mr.Nazurudeen A S/o.N.K.Abdullah and Mrs.Mumtaz Begam, W/o.A.Nazurudeen; Demand Notice Date: 29.07.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: ₹ 4,60,534.45 as on 30.06.2019; Amount outstanding: ₹ 4,67,230.80 as on 30.09.2019 and future interest thereon costs, etc.

S.No.1 (CHENGALPATTU BRANCH): Borrower/Surety/Owner of the property: M/s Akshaya Medicals, Partners: Smt.N.Ramya, Mr.Romio P F and Guarantor: Mr.Dhiliip Kumar D; Demand Notice Date: 31.07.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: ₹ 21,08,145.41; Amount outstanding: ₹ 21,71,944.35 and future interest thereon costs, etc.

HDFC Bank Limited Head Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai - 400 013

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE (u/s 13(4) & As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the HDFC Bank Ltd., under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice on the dates mentioned below, calling upon the following borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

S.No.1: Borrowers: 1. M/s. YVN Logistics, Door No.G 2 Streeing, Dwalakabamaga, 5 Giri Road, T.nagar, Chennai-600017. 2. Mr. YV.Nagaraj. 3. Mrs.V.Vijayalakshmi, Both at, Flat No. S3, Gokul Apartment, R K Mutt Road, Mandaveli, Chennai-600028; Demand Notice Date: 23.07.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: Rs.47,50,902.32 (Rupees Forty Seven Lakh Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred And Two Point Thirty Two Paise only) along with interest, charges, costs etc., Possession Taken Date: 21.10.2019; Total Amount Outstanding: Rs.48,87,602/- (Rupees Forty Eight Lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Six Hundred and Two only) along with interest, charges, costs, accrued as on 21.10.2019.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY: Schedule-A: Flats Allotted To The Sahre Of The Flat Seller

Table with columns: S.No., Flat No., Block, Total Area (Sq.ft.), Floor

S.No.2: Borrowers: 1.Mr.A.Velankannan, 2.Mrs.V.Yuvarani, Both at, No.3, Valmigi Street, Kamban Nagar, Chennai-600082, 3.M/s.Roshini Constructions, C90, Jagannathan Street, Periyar Nagar, Chennai-600082, 4.Also At Property Address A Velan Kannan, Plot No.226, Masilamani Grand Line, Maharaja Nagar, Kavangarai, Chennai-600052; Demand Notice Date: 26.06.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: Rs.15,19,138.14 (Rupees Fifteen Lakhs Nineteen Thousand One Hundred and Thirty Eight Point Fourteen Only) along with interest, charges, costs etc., Possession Taken Date: 21.10.2019; Total Amount Outstanding: Rs.15,83,830/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakhs Eighty Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty only) along with interest, charges, costs, accrued as on 21.10.2019.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY: Schedule-A: All that Vacant house site bearing Plot No.226 North part, Maharaja Nagar, comprised in S.No.41/1, of Grandlyon Village, Ambattur Taluk, Thiruvallur District, measuring East to West on Northern Side: 30 Feet, East to West on Southern Side 30 Feet, North to South on Eastern Side 30 Feet, North to South on Western Side 30 Feet, In all measuring an total extent of 900 Sq.ft. and bounded on the North by: Plot No.209, South by: Plot No.226 South Part Belongs to the Purchaser, East by: 40 Feet Road, West by: Plot No.225, Situated within the Registration District of North Chennai, Sub Registration District of Red Hills.

S.No.3: Borrowers: 1.Mr.Sam Amirthar, 2.Mr.Petter Samson, Both at, No.5A, Indira Nagar Extn, Tiruvellore St, Poonamalle, Chennai-600056; Demand Notice Date: 16.08.2019; Amount claimed as per Demand Notice: Rs.20,85,023/- (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand and Twenty Three Only) along with interest, charges, costs etc., Possession Taken Date: 22.10.2019; Total Amount Outstanding: Rs.20,08,591/- (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Eight Thousand Five Hundred and Ninety One only) along with interest, charges, costs, accrued as on 22.10.2019.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY: All that piece and parcel of Land and Building, Land measuring 1386 Sq.ft., comprised in S.No.114/1B & 112/1, New S.No.114/35, Poonamalle Village, Bearing Flat No.5A, Door No.29, (Indira Nagar), Srinivas Nagar, Poonamalle, Poonamalle Taluk, Tiruvellore District and the land bounded on the North by: Property Allotted to Balakrishnan, South by: Common Passage, East by: Plot No.4, West by: 10 Feet Common Passage.

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GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU SATHYAMANGALAM MUNICIPALITY Tender Notice (Two Cover System) Date: 21.10.2019



Brexit delay

European Council president Donald Tusk recommended that EU leaders postpone Britain's departure from the bloc



Governments were not able to recognise this situation in all its magnitude

— Sebastian Pinera Chile President

BRIEF

Protests in Bolivia over poll results

La Paz: A general strike began on Wednesday in Bolivia to protest election results signaling long-time President Evo Morales will likely secure another term. With more than 95 percent of the vote counted, Morales had 46.4 per cent compared to 37 per cent for his main rival, centrist Carlos Mesa, just shy of the 10 point lead necessary to avoid a runoff. Opposition supporters reacted with fury to delayed results that showed Morales, Latin America's longest-serving president, edging towards the 10 percentage-point margin. That flew in the face of preliminary results released earlier that showed Mesa coming in a close second in Sunday's polls and forcing a run-off. The slow official vote count continued overnight from Tuesday to Wednesday.

Kim to remove S. Korea facilities

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said South Korean facilities in the North Mt Kumgang tourist resort must be removed and rebuilt in a modern way, state media reported, underscoring the cooling of relations between the two countries. Mt Kumgang was one of two major inter-Korean economic projects, along with the Kaesong industrial zone, and an important token of cooperation between the two Koreas during decades of hostilities following the Korean War. But Kim, while inspecting the tourist spot on the east coast of North Korea, said it was a "mistaken idea" for Mt Kumgang to be viewed as a symbol of North-South relations. The resort is on North Korean soil, and tourism there must not be under the control of South Korea, Kim said. "We will always welcome our compatriots from the South if they want to come to Mt Kumgang after it is wonderfully built as the world-level tourist destination," Kim added. Seoul's unification ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs said it was examining the North's intentions.

LION AIR LINKS DESIGN FLAWS TO CRASH

Jakarta, Oct. 23: Mechanical and design issues contributed to the crash of a Lion Air 737 MAX jet last October, Indonesian investigators told victims' families in a briefing on Wednesday ahead of the release of a final report.

Contributing factors to the crash of the new Boeing (BA.N) jet, which killed all 189 on board, included incorrect assumptions on how an anti-stall device called the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System functioned and how pilots would react, slides in the presentation showed.

The briefing slides showed that a lack of documentation about how systems would behave in a crash scenario, including the activation of a "stick shaker" device that warned pilots of a dangerous loss of lift, also contributed.

"Deficiencies" in the flight crew's communication and manual control of the aircraft contributed as well, the slides showed, as did alerts and distractions in the cockpit.

The deficiencies had been "identified during training," the slides said, without elaborating.

Reliance on a single angle-of-attack sensor made MCAS more vulnerable to failure, while the sensor on the plane that crashed had been miscalibrated during an earlier repair, according to the slides.

Some relatives of the victims at the briefing in Jakarta expressed disappointment.

Turkey, Russia strike Syria deal

Trump to lift sanctions in conflict-hit region, Russian forces in Syria

Sochi, Oct. 23: Russia and Turkey have agreed to ensure Kurdish forces withdraw from areas close to Syria's border with Turkey and to launch joint patrols, in a deal hailed as "historic" by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

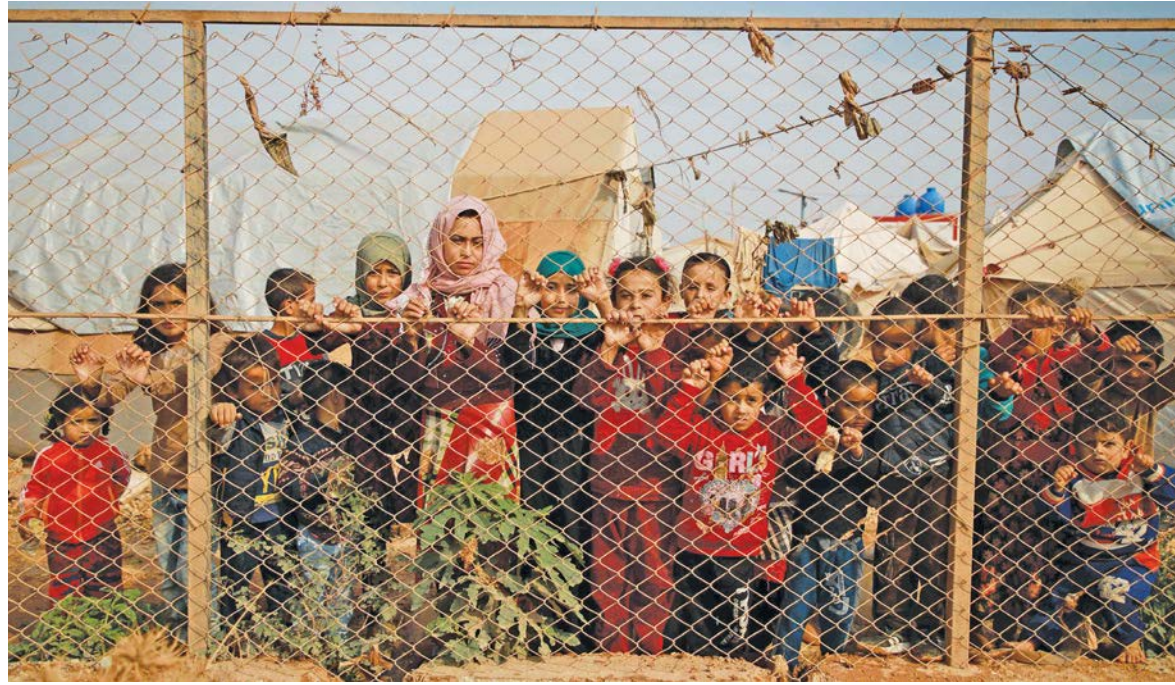
After marathon talks in Russia's southern city of Sochi, Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin announced the deal late Tuesday just hours ahead of a deadline for Turkey to restart its assault on Syrian Kurdish forces.

As the evening deadline passed, Turkey said there was "no need" to relaunch the offensive.

The agreement cements Russia and Turkey's roles as the main foreign players in Syria, after US President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of American forces from the country's north earlier this month.

That announcement cleared the way for Turkey to launch a cross-border military push on October 9 against the Kurdish YPG militia, viewed by Ankara as "terrorists" linked to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Turkey has seized control of a "safe zone" inside Syria about 120 kilometres long and 32 kilometres deep. Tuesday's agreement with Moscow will



Displaced Syrian children stand behind a fence outside their tents a camp set up near the village of Kafr Lusin, near the Syria-Turkey border.

see it preserve that zone between the towns of Tal Abyad and Ras al-Ain, giving Ankara a crucial presence inside the country.

From noon (0900 GMT) on Wednesday, Russian military police and Syrian border guards will "facilitate the removal" of Kurdish fighters and their weapons from within 30 kilometres of the border.

This withdrawal must be finalised within 150 hours, according to a text of the agreement released after the talks. Russian and Turkish forces will then begin joint patrols along the Turkish-controlled zone. Turkey said it had been informed by the United States that their withdrawal from the border areas had been completed.

The Russian forces in Syria headed towards the Turkish border on Wednesday to ensure Kurdish fighters withdraw under a deal between Moscow and Ankara ousting them from the minority's entire heartland.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump announced that the United States was lifting sanc-

tions on Turkey, hailing the success of a ceasefire along its border with Syria. Trump, who has been under fire for abruptly withdrawing US troops from northern Syria, paving the way for Turkey to launch a deadly offensive against the Kurds, added that a "small number" of US troops would remain in the country.

Protesters are also calling for her to stand down and for an independent inquiry into perceived police brutality during a long hot summer of running battles on the streets.

"There aren't any big differences between suspension and withdrawal (of the extradition bill). It's too little, too late," said 27-year-old protester Connie, hours before the bill was withdrawn.

"There are still other demands the government needs to meet, especially the problem of police brutality."

Police have responded to the violence with water cannon, tear gas, rubber bullets and several live rounds.

Protesters are angry at what they see as Beijing encroaching on the former British colony's "one country, two systems" formula enshrined during the handover in 1997, which permits the city wide-ranging freedoms not available on the mainland such as an independ-

Hong Kong kills Extradition Bill

Hong Kong, Oct. 23: Hong Kong's legislature on Wednesday formally withdrew planned legislation that would have allowed extraditions to mainland China, but the move was unlikely to end months of unrest as it met just one of five demands of pro-democracy protesters.

The rallying cry of the protesters, who have trashed public buildings in the Chinese-ruled city, set street fires and thrown petrol bombs at police, have "five demands, not one less", meaning the withdrawal of the bill make no difference.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam had said many times the bill was as good as dead and said that other demands, including universal suffrage and an amnesty for all those charged with rioting, were beyond her control.

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Chan Tong-kai

CATALYST FOR HONG KONG PROTESTS FREED

Hong Kong, Oct. 23: A murder suspect whose proposed deportation to Taiwan was a catalyst for huge anti-extradition protests in Hong Kong was released from prison on Wednesday but, despite saying he wanted to face justice, will remain in the city as a diplomatic spat continues.

Months of increasingly violent pro-democracy demonstrations in the financial hub were sparked by protests against a now-cancelled extradition law, which would have allowed suspects to be extradited to the authoritarian mainland China. Hong Konger Chan Tong-kai, 20, is wanted in Taiwan for the 2018 murder of his pregnant girlfriend Poon Hiu-wing. Chan, who spent 18 months in custody over money laundering charges, apologised to the victim's family and the city as he left the maximum security prison.

ent judiciary.

The bill was seen as the latest move by Beijing to erode those freedoms. China has denied these claims and accuses foreign countries of fomenting trouble.

Pak singer calls Modi 'Hitler'

Islamabad, Oct. 23: A provocative photo posted by Pakistani pop singer Rabi Pirzada in which she was seen wearing a suicide jacket and threatening Prime Minister Narendra Modi for revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, calling him a Hitler, has gone viral.

As the photo appeared on social networking site Twitter, it attracted huge attention with some praising her for her bravery,

while others reprimanding the Lahore-based singer-actress for projecting a bad image of the country to the outside world. In the photo, 27-year-old Pirzada was seen wearing a jacket with explosives attached to it.

The provocative picture came at a time when Pakistan has launched an anti-India campaign over the Kashmir issue.

Her Twitter account now shows that the singer has deleted the offensive

picture. In September, Pirzada had posted a video clip on Twitter in which she was seen posing with pythons and an alligator and threatening to unleash the reptiles on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

After the video went viral, the Punjab wildlife protection and parks department took legal action against her for keeping wild animals as pets in violation of law.

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT

Diplomat reveals explosive details

Washington, Oct. 23: The top US diplomat in Ukraine poured fuel on Donald Trump's impeachment probe with a detailed account of how the president pushed Kiev to discredit one of his main political rivals, withholding US military aid to exert pressure.

Democrats said the congressional testimony by Bill Taylor was a stunning confirmation of their allegations that Trump abused his office by seeking foreign help to hurt Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election.

"It's all there. What's there left for me to say when you have such a clear and detailed statement?" said House Democrat Tom Malinowski, ex-diplomat.

Senior Republicans had no immediate response but the White House rejected what it called a 'coordinated smear campaign from far-left lawmakers and radical unelected bureaucrats'.

"Today was just more triple hearsay and selective leaks from the Democrats' politically-motivated, closed door, secretive hearings, (sic)," the administration said in a statement.

"Every day this nonsense continues more taxpayer time and money is wasted." In a 15-page opening statement quickly leaked to US media, Taylor recounted in deep detail how Ukraine's new president, Volodymyr Zelensky, came under sus-



Bill Taylor

tained pressure after taking office. Taylor said he was told Trump wanted Zelensky "to state publicly" that he would investigate Biden and his son Hunter for what he said was corruption in the ex-Soviet republic.

He said that the US ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland, told him that "everything" was dependent on such an announcement, including security assistance. Another carrot being dangled, Taylor said, was a proposed summit between Zelensky and Trump.

Emerging from the testimony, Democratic congressman Adriano Espaillat tweeted: "What I heard today from #BillTaylor was very troubling and explosive, (sic)." "At some point we're going to have to conclude our investigation and go forward with what we have, and what we have is incredibly damning right now," another Democratic legislator, Ted Lieu, said.

A new CNN/SSRS poll showed support for Trump's removal from office is now 50 percent to 43 against.

British cops find 39 bodies in truck

FROM PAGE 1

In August 2015, at the peak of Europe's migration crisis, the bodies of 71 migrants including a baby girl were found piled up in the back of a poultry refrigerator lorry left in Austria.

Investigations later revealed they had been transported along the Balkan migrant route and left to suffocate in the back of the truck after the driver dumped the vehicle near the Hungarian border.

The truck discovered on Thursday is left-hand drive, indicating that it was not British or Irish.

Police said it was thought the lorry entered Britain on Saturday at Holyhead on the north-west tip of Wales -- one of the main ports for ferries from Ireland.

The UK and the Republic of Ireland are not in the European Union's no-border Schengen zone but have their own historic Common Travel Area,



British Police officers work near a lorry found to be containing 39 bodies inside a police cordon at Waterglade Industrial Park in Grays, east of London.

meaning there are no checks on the movement of goods or people between the two.

Richard Burnett, chief executive of the Road Haulage Association which represents truck drivers in Britain, said: "Our thoughts are with

the families of the deceased but whatever the circumstances, it highlights the danger of migrant gangs people smuggling on lorries."

Jackie Doyle-Price, the MP representing the local Thurrock constituency surrounding Grays, said

the news was "sickening". "People trafficking is a vile and dangerous business," she said.

"Let's hope they bring these murderers to justice." - PM appalled -

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he was receiving regular updates

and sent his sympathies to the victims' families.

"I'm appalled by this tragic incident in Essex," he said.

"My thoughts are with all those who lost their lives and their loved ones."

Meanwhile, Home Secretary Priti Patel, Britain's interior minister, said she was "shocked and saddened".

"Home Office immigration officials will be working closely alongside them to establish how this horrific event came to happen."

Cases of this kind are rare in Britain.

In 2014, staff at the Tilbury container port -- next to Grays -- heard screaming and banging coming from inside a shipping container, and found 34 Afghan Sikhs alive inside suffering from severe dehydration, hypothermia and lack of air. One man was found dead, having passed away during the sea crossing from Belgium.

UNDER PRESSURE ■ EU could agree for a short extension to allow parliament more time to scrutinise the Bill

Brexit for sure, but uncertainty still looms over deal

London, Oct. 23: The British parliament rejected Prime Minister Boris Johnson's attempt to fast-track a Brexit law through parliament, making a delay beyond the October 31 exit date almost inevitable, and casting the entire EU divorce into doubt.

After agreeing a last-minute Brexit deal with the EU last week, Johnson was trying to pass the domestic law needed to enact it.

The 110-page Withdrawal Agreement Bill would typically be scrutinised over weeks and months, but Johnson proposed condensing the timetable to just a few days. That proposal was rejected by 322 votes to 308. The defeat leaves Johnson with no



EU and Union flags belonging to Brexit activists fly outside the Houses of Parliament in London.

clear way to deliver his Brexit deal on time. Losing the vote on the

timetable does not kill the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, but does make its pas-

sage before October 31 highly unlikely. On Saturday, parliament

forced Johnson to send a letter -- though he refused to sign it -- to the EU requesting a three-month delay to Brexit.

Nevertheless, he has made clear he does not want an extension. Speaking after the defeat, Johnson said he would pause the legislation while EU decides on the delay request.

The legislative process could be restarted if a new programme motion is agreed by parliament. If the process resumes, the government will still have to see off attempts to amend the bill, potentially changing the terms of Britain's withdrawal.

Lawmakers have proposed changes including adding in a requirement for a second referendum

and forcing the government to seek a long-term customs union with the EU.

Johnson said, "The EU must now make up their minds over how to answer parliament's request for a delay."

"I will speak to EU member states about their intentions. Until they have reached a decision we will pause this legislation. Let me be clear, our policy remains that we should not delay," he said.

"The government must take the only responsible course and accelerate our preparations for a no-deal outcome," he said.

Johnson had earlier warned lawmakers that he would abandon the legislation if the EU decides to delay Brexit until January

31, 2020. He would then try to get parliament to agree to hold an early election. However, he has not said he would ditch the bill if the EU granted a shorter extension.

This leaves open the possibility that the EU agrees a short extension to allow parliament more time to scrutinise the bill and Johnson proposes a new slightly longer timetable to lawmakers.

This would break Johnson's "do or die" pledge to leave the EU on October 31, but could still allow him to say in a subsequent election campaign that he had delivered Brexit. If the EU does not grant Britain more time, the country will leave without a deal on October 31.

DECCAN Chronicle

24 OCTOBER 2019

Fraud whiff: Will Infy go the Satyam way?

The IT major Infosys' dramatic meltdown after a whistleblower alleged questionable accounting practices, laying the company open to a potentially damaging class action suit in the United States, couldn't come at a worse time for the country's highest software exporter. Or, for that matter, the Indian economy, hit by an unprecedented slowdown, facing one financial crisis after another, with the latest corporate fraud disclosure coming from the state-run Punjab National Bank.

Infy stocks have crashed, and it's 9.19 lakh shareholders lost ₹52,922.18 crores — that's a wipeout of roughly US\$ 7 billion — in one day, with market capitalisation dipping from ₹3.28 lakh crore to ₹2.75 lakh crore.

Infosys chairman and co-founder Nandan Nilekani has stepped in to institute an in-house inquiry into the matter, keeping both CEO Salil Parikh and Chief Financial Officer, Nilanjjan Roy, the two men accused of indulging in "unethical practices to boost short-term revenue and profits", and whose conduct will be the primary focus of the inquiry, out of the investigation. And while that is the correct thing to do, IT insiders have raised questions on the ambit of the Infosys' Audit Committee and whether it will go far enough.

Second, in a sign that the company may have been slow to tackle the issue head-on, it took Infosys a full month since the whistleblowers sent the letter to the company's board on September 20 to institute an inquiry by an independent body, with some reporting it was not the first such complaint that the whistleblowers had made over the last two years. The company has also now admitted that it is in receipt of a further complaint dated October 3, which was written to the Office of the Whistleblower Protection Programme in the US.

If anything, this is an indication that in this reprise of 2017, few lessons had been learned from the setback two years ago when its then CEO Vishal Sikka stood accused of alleged irregularities in a \$200 million acquisition that finally saw founder Narayana Murthy step in and ultimately force Mr Sikka to leave, albeit with no charges ever being proven.

Clearly, the whistleblowers' accusations of impropriety against Mr Parekh and Mr Roy, for the second time in as many years, in a company that is synonymous with the IT boom in this southern tech hub could not have come at a worse time for Infosys, trying to keep one step ahead of younger and more nimble-footed rivals.

The whistleblowers' allegations of impropriety against Mr Parekh, who allegedly insisted that employees inflate profits on large deals as well as his own travel bills — none of which Mr Parekh has responded to, and is unlikely to, given Mr Nilekani's takedown on comment on the matter — is a signal that Asia's second biggest software exporter, should have acted faster on the many complaints sent to it, since Mr Parekh took over in January 2018.

Infosys founders, once a byword for financial probity, must clean house. Or go the way of outsourcing firm Satyam Computers, and its ₹7,000 crore accounting scam of 2009.

Kashmir 'internationalised'

The United States Congressional hearing on human rights in South Asia last Tuesday turned out to be principally about criticism of India in the context of Kashmir. Besides raising concerns in the US, the lockdown imposed on the Valley and the ensuing "humanitarian crisis" appears to be prejudicing ties with Malaysia and Turkey.

The leaders of these countries had sharply criticised India on the Kashmir issue from the floor of the UN General Assembly last month. Since then, the decision of our palm oil importers — presumably at the government's behest — to eschew imports from Malaysia, an important source for decades, threatens to complicate an otherwise smooth bilateral relationship with a leading Asean country.

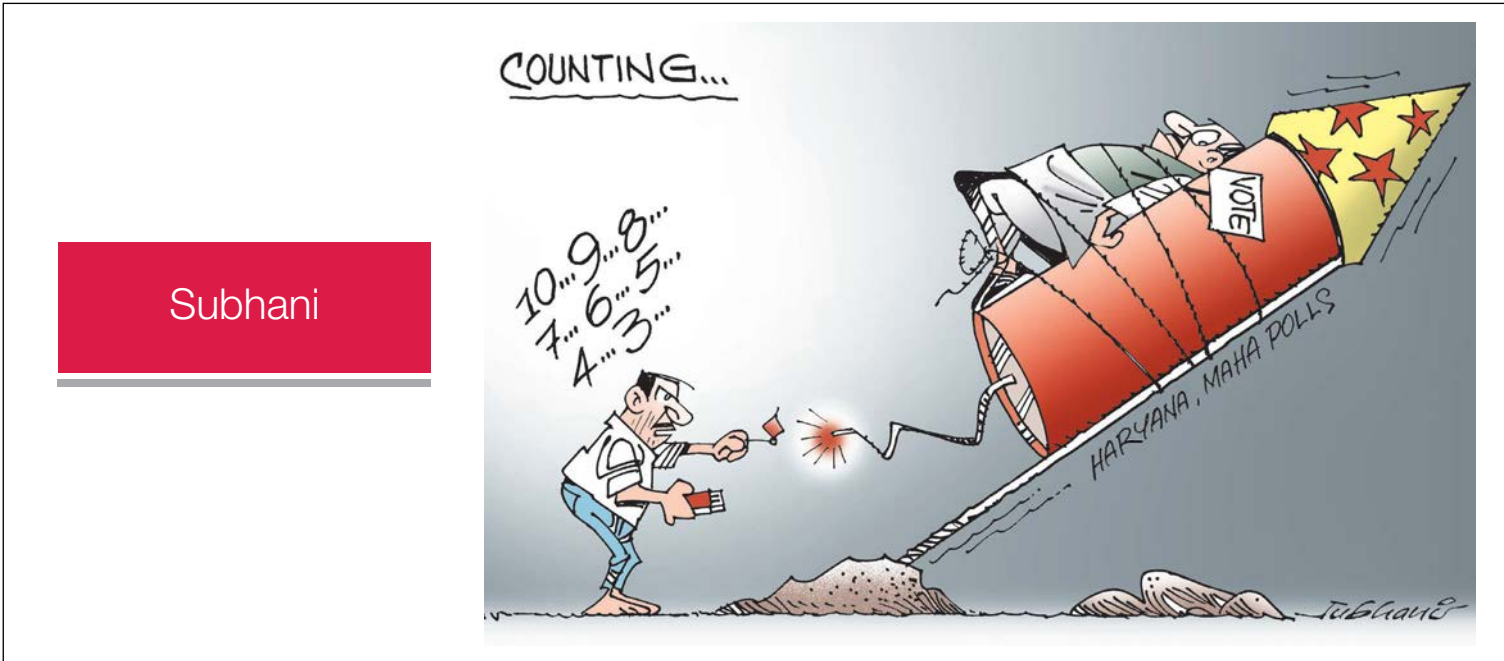
It also appears Prime Minister Narendra Modi is contemplating skipping a proposed visit to Turkey in order to show his displeasure. It is evident, however, that New Delhi cannot appear punitive with Washington.

While observations made during the Congressional hearings implied deep unhappiness with India's actions on Kashmir, assistant secretary of state Alice Wells, presenting the US State Department view to Congress, also asked Pakistan to "pull down" its terror infrastructure as a way to restore dialogue with New Delhi. This general advice is all that India could draw solace from.

When Congressman Jackson Lee asked another State Department official, Robert Destro, who appeared at the hearing, whether there was a "humanitarian crisis" in Kashmir, the official replied in the affirmative. Ms Wells said the US was "disappointed" New Delhi had not permitted it to send a delegation to Kashmir. She told the Congressional committee, "We are concerned about the detention of local politicians...We have been very persistent and urgent."

Unwittingly, the government's actions have internationalised Kashmir, something that New Delhi aims to avoid doing.

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Subhani

An empty accord won't usher in Naga peace



Bharat Bhushan

Are those who do not learn from history condemned to repeat it? It would certainly seem so in the case of the proposed Naga settlement that the Narendra Modi government hopes to reach with the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs). The main insurgent group with whom the government has been negotiating for 22 years is likely to stay out of the agreement.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, did something similar.

In July 1960, the Nehru government signed an agreement with the Naga Peoples' Convention instead of the underground insurgents led by Angami Zapu Phizo. Known as the 16-Point Agreement, it led to the merger of the Naga Hills District of Assam and the Tuensang Frontier Division of NEFA into a single administrative unit, the present state of Nagaland. The Naga Peoples' Convention was initially organised to facilitate dialogue between the armed insurgents and Delhi. However, the facilitators themselves became the main party to the agreement. That did not resolve the Naga insurgency.

The Modi government, reluctant to learn anything from the Nehru regime, may be headed towards a similar misadventure.

Three major hurdles have emerged: the Naga insurgents do not want to be a part of the "Indian Union"; they want a separate flag and a separate Constitution. The roots of these differences lie in an agreement reached in 2015 which has become different to sustain after the developments in Jammu and Kashmir after August 5.

After 18 years of prolonged negotiations with the largest armed insur-

gent group, the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) or NSCN(IM), a "Framework Agreement" was signed with them on August 3, 2015. It was precipitated by the ill-health of Isak Chishi Swu, chairman of the NSCN(IM), who was fighting for life in the Intensive Care Unit of a private hospital in Delhi. An agreement to guide future negotiations was hastily put together and Swu's signature appended to it from his hospital bed. As a Sema Naga from Nagaland, Swu's agreement indicated the wider acceptance of the peace process since Thuingaleng Muivah is from Manipur. The agreement was projected as historic and lent legitimacy to subsequent negotiations.

Perhaps it was the hasty drafting of the Framework Agreement that has led to the present impasse. Celebrating "better mutual understanding" between the two sides, the agreement notes that after "due appreciation of the imperatives of the contemporary realities and regard for future vision" they agreed to end violent confrontation to "usher in comprehensive progress in consonance with the genius of the Naga people".

Further, recognising that in democracies sovereignty lies with the people, the two sides committed themselves to respecting the peoples' wishes "for sharing the sovereign power as defined in competencies [referring to subjects in Union, State and Concurrent Lists of the Indian Constitution]".

This was followed by the statement that, "it is matter of great satisfaction that dialogue between the Government of India and NSCN has successfully concluded and we are confident it will provide for an

enduring inclusive new relationship of peaceful co-existence of the two entities (emphasis added)". This phrase is the nub of dispute now.

The use of the term "two entities" had created confusion earlier in a ceasefire agreement signed in June 14, 2001. Since then the standing instruction to Indian negotiators was to never use the term which suggests that India and Nagaland are two separate entities. It is difficult to understand why then it was used again in 2015.

By the term "two entities" the Indian side probably meant the two signatories to the agreement, India and the NSCN (IM). However, it is being interpreted by the Nagas to mean that India and the Nagas are different sovereign entities. And as two different entities they have decided to forge a new relationship by sharing sovereign power, they believe that they have a right to retain their own flag and Constitution.

Similarly by an "inclusive" relationship Delhi means inclusion of other Naga groups in negotiations. This was used to justify dealing with the NNPGs. The NSCN(IM) insists that "inclusive" means applicability of the agreement to all Nagas whether living in Nagaland or in contiguous states. Their fear is that the settlement could be with the state of Nagaland alone as the NNPGs are based there.

After removing the separate flag and Constitution of J&K, the Modi government cannot concede them to the Nagas. Since the Prime

If the people say that they are willing to convert the flag into a state insignia or emblem and that the peace agreement itself, incorporated in the Indian Constitution, can be called "Yehzabo" or the Naga Constitution, then that could be considered favourably.

Minister himself has apparently set a deadline to conclude the peace agreement by October 31, the attempt is to either bring the NSCN(IM) to heel or sign the agreement with those who were never a part of the 22-year-old negotiation but are eager to assume political power in Nagaland.

However, instead of trying to force a separate and meaningless "peace", the Modi government can still avoid repeating Nehru's mistake.

To begin with, it can admit that the framework agreement had been drafted in ambiguous language. Since that cannot now be undone, the government can suggest to the NSCN(IM) leadership that it take the draft final agreement of power sharing, which is indeed unique, to the Naga people through public consultations. The people may well conclude that the power sharing they can achieve through this agreement is sustainable, pragmatic and satisfies their political aspirations even without a separate flag and a Constitution. That may give the NSCN(IM) leadership the opportunity to sign the agreement citing the people's wishes.

If the people say that they are willing to convert the flag into a state insignia or emblem and that the peace agreement itself, incorporated in the Indian Constitution, can be called "Yehzabo" or the Naga Constitution, then that could be considered favourably. Then the "Naga Constitution" would become an Article of the Indian Constitution.

However, setting artificial deadlines and not allowing time for the NSCN(IM) to hold public consultation on the flag and Constitution would be unwise. Thuingaleng Muivah who has led the Naga peace negotiations with great patience and commitment is already 85 years old. Should these peace talks fail, it will take a few more decades for another visionary Naga leader to emerge.

The writer is a journalist based in New Delhi

LETTERS ABHIJIT ON BANKS

Mr Abhijit Banerjee recommends minority share holding for the Government of India in the public sector banks. This may be okay in the US where less government and more private sector business prevails. Such things can't be brought in overnight in India. Before doing this, let a law be brought in where depositors' money will be secured 100 per cent if any financial institution goes bust. Indians blindly deposit their savings in public sector banks, post offices, LIC etc., for safety sake even though the interest rates are less. Alternatively, let India unearth the gold in bank lockers of customers by floating I-T free gold bonds and invest that money in mass production of consumer goods. China is mass producing everything. Why in India it's automobiles only?

R. Ganesan, Chennai

SINGHVI IS CORRECT

Mr Abhishek 'Manu' Singhvi's stand on awarding Bharat Ratna to V.D. Savarkar, a reputed and devoted freedom fighter, is a correct one. Being a senior Congress leader, he deserves praise for his transcending political affiliations and recognising the nationally accepted eligibility of the leader. As a political leader and a powerful nationalist Veer Savarkar deserves the highest award even though he professed his own views on certain matters. The undeniable fact is that his dedication and service to the then vital issue of the country's freedom cannot be challenged. The award is in recognition of a person's dedication to the causes of the country's services and in the case of Veer Savarkar it is an indisputable fact and he does deserve the highest civilian award of 'Bharat Ratna'.

T.R.Anandan, Coimbatore

KUDOS TO TEAM INDIA

Heartiest congratulations to Team India for scripting yet another historic and epoch-making Test series victory over South Africa which has yet again been another glittering milestone in India's Test cricketing history. Coming as the ideal Deepavali gift to the nation, the unprecedented 3-0 whitewash of the formidable Proteas has ensured the continued presence of our team at the pinnacle of glory in Test cricket. Undoubtedly one of the best ever authoritative and memorable performances witnessed in recent times, the sparkling success can be attributed to the cohesiveness, commitment and team spirit coupled with that indomitable will to succeed led by the shrewd captaincy of Virat Kohli who has blossomed and matured both as a player and as a captain. The brilliance and consistency exhibited by Rohit Sharma in the series has proved beyond doubt that he is the pivotal pillar of the team.

B. Suresh Kumar, Coimbatore



Mahir Ali

Lessons from Lebanon, Chile: Hard to tell the last straw

Just a few days before his capital and several other cities descended into anarchy, Chile's billionaire president, Sebastián Piñera, was heard extolling his country's virtues as an oasis of stability in a region prone to chaos. It brought to mind a similar declaration at the cusp of the 1980s by General Ziaul Haq, who sought to advertise Pakistan as 'an island of stability' just as the nation was descending into the worst phase of its brief history. Piñera was evidently taken by surprise when a three per cent hike in public transport fares unleashed a youth rebellion that rapidly transmogrified into a much broader revolt against his right-wing government's policies.

Healthcare and education costs, and more generally the poor delivery of government services to those who most need them, have been cited by Chilean protesters as reasons for their angst. Piñera lost little time in rescinding the fare increase, declaring that he was bowing in humility to

the demands of his compatriots, while decrying the "violence and delinquency" of those who had taken to the streets.

The trouble with tipping points is that it's hard to tell when they will kick in. Hence the Lebanese elite, much like that of Chile, was taken entirely by surprise when a proposed tax on WhatsApp voice calls sparked a full-fledged rebellion against what is perceived, with considerable justification, as a corrupt, self-serving ruling class. It may or may not be a coincidence that Lebanon's prime minister, much like the Chilean president, is one of the richest men in his country. Saad Hariri has blamed the uprising in his nation on the recalcitrance of his ruling coalition partners towards economic reform.

In the lingua franca of the neoliberal upper crust, however, 'reform' all too often implies measures that target the poor at the expense of the rich. Perceptions of corruption are a key factor in the Lebanese uprising, which stands out not least because it

embraces all communities in a country whose polity is based on a sectarian division of power.

That's the basis on which the Lebanese civil war was concluded in 1990 after 15 years of strife. However, in recent weeks the Christian president, Michel Aoun, and the Shia parliamentary speaker, Nabih Berri, have been at the receiving end of popular wrath almost as much as Hariri, the Sunni prime minister who attracted much public sympathy after he was held hostage in Riyadh a couple of years ago at the behest of the Saudi crown prince.

Lebanon isn't the only Middle Eastern country, though, where perceptions of corruption at the highest level have lately led to outrage on the streets. Iraq has been coping with explosions of anger on the streets, as has Egypt, somewhat more surprisingly, given that Abdel Fattah el-Sisi brooks no dissent, much like his counterpart in Turkey.

The relatively small protests in Egypt, apparently launched partly

because of exhortations from a self-exiled former government contractor, were just hundreds strong, yet have led to an estimated 2,000 arrests. They have consequently petered out, but served as a useful reminder to the man Donald Trump describes as 'my favourite dictator' that his extraordinarily repressive status quo cannot indefinitely be maintained, regardless of what 'friends' such as the US, Israel or Saudi Arabia may favour.

The trend towards fascistic tendencies is by no means uniquely an Egyptian phenomenon, though, what with a number of European electorates leaning increasingly towards the far right. In almost every case, a backlash will inevitably follow in due course — even if no one knows for certain what the last straw may turn out to be.

It is notable, though, that the attempted implementation of self-harming agreements with the IMF all too often proves incendiary. It certainly did in the case of Ecuador,

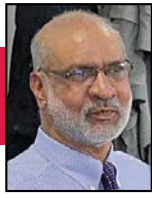
whose president, Lenin Moreno — who was elected on a centre-left platform but has since veered sharply to the right — was obliged to relocate his government after his indigenous compatriots revolted against an increase in fuel prices which affects the cost of living.

As Hong Kong's chief executive, Carrie Lam, discovered soon after proposing an unacceptable law that would enable the semi-autonomous territory to extradite people to the Chinese mainland, rescinding a proposed law that aggravates tensions is never enough. There is invariably a plethora of grievances in the minds of those who put their consciences and sometimes their lives on the line.

In a world that seems to be going to the dogs, whether or not ordained by the IMF, it's somewhat heartening to be reminded that the popular will frequently continues to gravitate towards amorphous but nonetheless preferable alternatives.

By arrangement with Dawn

To reform politics, ensure inner-party democracy



Mohan Guruswamy

A former chief election commissioner, T.S. Krishnamurthy, had recently plugged for state financing of political parties. This uncooked suggestion is fraught with huge consequences for the nation and its polity and is nothing more than a DBT to political clans and our little "fuhrrers". We now have no political parties in the constitutional conception of the term. What we have are mostly warring and then coalescing factions led by certain families and shadowy cabals. What has made this system solid and lost lasting are, ironically enough, the anti-defection laws enacted in the Rajiv Gandhi era by a dominant, yet insecure Congress Party, despite having over 400 MPs in its cattle pen.

I have been plugging for inner-party democracy to be made legally required as the first step to save democracy in India. Having periodic elections alone doesn't make a nation democratic. Democracy also means a government by

discussion. Discourse has almost entirely disappeared from our politics. Politics has come to be dominated by the political clans and families.

The debate on electoral reforms focuses almost entirely on the funding of political parties and the expenses incurred in campaigning — as if just taking care of these would ensure a clean polity. As usual, we are barking up the wrong tree.

Funding is a problem, but it is the lesser of the problems. Issues of inner-party democracy and the constitutional functioning of political parties almost never figure in any discussion. We never seem to consider whether many of our political parties are political parties in fact, or just disorganised assemblies driven by primitive impulses?

When Rajiv Gandhi introduced the anti-defection bill in Parliament soon after his massive electoral victory in 1984, Madhu Damodar welcomed it, exclaiming in the Lok Sabha that he felt he was "hearing the voice of Jawaharlal Nehru again!" He was to soon realise that the bill was only meant to

keep the party under the jackboots of a small coterie. This prompted him to make up for his misplaced initial enthusiasm by appending his name to a petition challenging the bill in court. His conversion provoked many to acidly comment that the poor man had thought he heard Jawaharlal Nehru's voice when, in fact, it was Indira Gandhi speaking!

My friend the late S. Jaipal Reddy, then a leading Opposition MP, had at that time publicly welcomed the bill in the Lok Sabha while privately criticising it. He justified his two-facedness by saying it was not the right time to oppose the bill, as public sentiment was in favour of it. Only Chandra Shekhar and Madhu Limaye had the vision and courage to attack the bill for what it was — an attempt to institutionalise the illegitimate power of undemocratically installed party leaderships over the elected representatives of the people.

The original bill was later somewhat modified to distinguish between a split and a defection, even though it did not address the main reasons for the opposition to the bill.

The Constitution of India does not recognise the institution of political parties, as is the case with the constitutions of other major democracies of the world. The term "political party" does not appear even once in any of them. Political parties are, therefore, extra- or non-constitutional arrangements to organ-

I have been plugging for inner-party democracy to be made legally required as the first step to save democracy in India. Having periodic elections alone doesn't make a nation democratic. Democracy also means government by discussion.

ise people on the basis of shared ideas, philosophies, perceptions and interests.

Members of Parliament or the legislatures are representatives of the people. That they are, or are not, members of a political party is only incidental. The elected members are intended to represent and protect the interests of the people who elect them, and not that of a handful of party leaders.

It follows that if a representative defies the party whip, the most the party must be allowed to do is to remove the member from the party. Expulsion of the member from Parliament can only be the right of the House or of the people. Each time that power is invoked, it must be for a specific reason, such as an act of receiving a bribe, for instance, which may be considered unbecoming of a member, or brings disrespect to the institution. In our case, we do not give the people the right of recall, possibly because it is seen as impractical. Even if a mechanism and a

set of conditionalities were codified to set the process of recall into action, would anyone among the present crop of MPs be willing to legislate it?

The argument that most members are elected because of the party has some validity, but only if it is a justly constituted and functioning party. If political parties are to be incorporated as constitutional institutions, the structure, functioning and working must be legislated too. Except for a few parties like the BJP and the CPI(M) that have off-and-on systems of inner-party democracy — somewhat assured by increasingly rare inner party elections, and consensual and collective decision-making — most other parties are very poor examples of democracy at work.

We know how the Congress Party conducts its internal "elections" or makes decisions by deferring them to the "high command". Leaders like the Thackerays, Lalu Prasad Yadav, the Karunanidhi clan, Jayalalithaa's acolytes, Mulyam Singh Yadav, the Badals and others like Mayawati consider these niceties as sheer hypocrisy and, as such, don't have even a single-page constitution to legitimise the workings of their parties.

Yet these "fuhrrers" have the authority and legitimacy to issue a diktat or a whip to suit their private interests and whims. Remember how a nominated Congress president, Sitaram Kesri, issued a directive to the elected leader of the

Congress Parliamentary Party, P.V. Narasimha Rao, ordering him to send in his resignation within 24 hours. Consider the implications — a leader chosen by popularly elected representatives is dismissed by a hand-picked courtiers' coup.

There are other implications to consider as well. What if a member of a party promising people the nationalisation of all property is directed to vote for a rich man's dream budget? Suppose the member was to vote as per the party's commitment to the people, and not in accordance with the convenience of its leaders? Who is more important — the people who elect the legislators, or the leaders who select them for party tickets?

The argument that if the law did not restrain members, anarchy would prevail, may still have some validity to it. The demands of this can be met by ensuring that whips are restricted to votes of confidence alone, with the rider that representatives voting against a whip must seek the confidence of the people within a stipulated period, say six months. To deny a minister to a "defecting" member is silly, as it implies that a ministership is somehow a reward to enjoy and not a call to service or recognition of ability.

Similarly, all this hair-splitting about what percentage constitutes a defection is equally silly.

That the Election Commission recognises these parties and the

authority of their leaders is evidence of its utter helplessness, indifference or ignorance on all these basic issues.

To give the anti-defection laws even the thinnest veneer of political and philosophical legitimacy, it is first essential that inner-party functioning conform to the letter and spirit of democracy. Parties have shown that they are incapable of doing this by themselves. The EC has made some noises in this regard. But adding to the cacophony is not enough. It must speak out loudly and insist that Parliament empowers it to oversee regular party elections and their compliance with the provisions of their registered constitutions.

State funding of political parties, too, has often been discussed as a solution. But can we allow the State to fund these political parties, which do not have any inner-party democracy or democratic structures — and some with husband and wife "high commands", if not father-son or mother-son "high commands"? Giving them State funding would only help make public money serve private purposes. With our democracy now preferring cobbled-up coalitions to single-party dominance, the issue of defections will always loom large.

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

A 'soft coup' in UK's Labour



Isabel Hardman

Over the past few weeks, rumours have swirled in Westminster that the Labour Party has acquired a new leader — that John McDonnell, the shadow chancellor, has almost completed a long, stealthy campaign having stolen more and more power from his beleaguered and exhausted boss. While there has been no announcement, plenty in the party believe that there certainly has been regime change: Jeremy Corbyn in office, but John McDonnell in power.

While Corbyn has always seemed like an eccentric grandad who potters about in his allotment, there is something steely and not altogether comforting about McDonnell. Even though he gives broadcast interviews from his sitting room, which looks like the backdrop to a Werther's Original ad, and even though his soft and sorrowful voice makes him sound like an uncle giving the eulogy at the funeral of a much-loved family pet, McDonnell can't quite hide a faint air of menace. When he recently mused about what might happen "if Jeremy got hit by the No. 57 bus", this well-known political phrase didn't sound quite as hypothetical as it normally does.

It would take an unusually menacing twist for the shadow chancellor to turn on his

"best friend" of several decades. But the struggle takes many forms. Last week Corbyn's chief of staff, Karie Murphy, and his political secretary, Amy Jackson, were moved out of his parliamentary office and sent to work at Labour headquarters instead. A gentle purge of Corbyn's wider office may soon be under way, with more than 30 staff summoned to informal interviews with Sir Bob Kerslake, a former head of the civil service (and McDonnell ally). This is supposedly part of a review into "management systems" — a review that's likely to find that the Labour HQ has too many chiefs, so more senior heads need to roll. Seumas Milne, Corbyn's highly influential director of communications, is next on McDonnell's hit list.

Many in Corbyn's team accept that the game is up, and welcome what McDonnell is doing. They worry more about how the party will do in a general election and regard McDonnell as hard-working and effective. "He really wants to get things done," says one aide. "He's clearly not plotting against Jeremy, he just sometimes thinks things move a bit slowly. He has very little time for the current bureaucratic processes, which stop things happening in a timely fashion." Those "bureaucratic

Many in Corbyn's team accept that the game is up, and welcome what McDonnell is doing. They worry more about how the party will do in a general election and regard McDonnell as hard-working and effective.

processes" are often devices for delay created by Corbynites who fear that they'll be out of a job if their boss goes.

At the peak of their powers, Murphy, Jackson and Milne controlled Corbyn so effectively that it was very difficult for anyone else to get access to him — let alone persuade him of their point of view on Brexit, how to handle anti-Semitism or foreign affairs.

It also meant the trio could claim to speak on Corbyn's behalf without anyone knowing that they were in fact advancing their own agendas. "They were routinely misleading colleagues, telling other people: 'Well, Jeremy is taking this decision.' But when John asked Jeremy himself, it turned out he wasn't," says one Labour insider.

McDonnell has been increasingly irritated by the way Corbyn's advisers handled the anti-Semitism row and the Salisbury attack last year. He no longer attempts to conceal his frustration about Corbyn's ambiguous stance on Brexit: he has now won his fight to nudge the party off the fence, so that it is better prepared to fight Remain-voting seats.

But time after time, he has

come up against Murphy, Milne and Jackson. Or did, before he managed to get Murphy and Jackson moved out of Labour HQ. Milne has proven the hardest to dislodge. McDonnell seems to have given up trying to depose Milne and instead now seeks to contain him, having him restricted to his communications role — and all but ending his influence on party policy.

But there is no *coup de grace*. McDonnell's manoeuvres appear far more geared towards controlling Corbyn than replacing him. There is no evidence that he really wants to take a shot at the king, let alone seize the throne himself. "Deep down, John thinks that if we can get back to the Jeremy of 2015 — when he was on the campaign trail and all that sort of thing — then we can get back to a winning position," one party worker remarks. "John has this slightly rose-tinted, romantic notion that we can turn the clock back, despite everything that's happened since."

But if he can't magic back the old Corbyn, what will McDonnell do? Like every one else in the party, he is

preoccupied with the succession and is expected to endorse Rebecca Long-Bailey, the left-wing shadow business secretary. She'll face stiff competition from Emily Thornberry, shadow foreign secretary, who has taken great care to parade her Remain credentials. Shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer, meanwhile, has started giving wide-ranging interviews about his "backstory". (He needs to work a little harder on his "outsider" credentials. He recently told a meeting of Labour activists that he couldn't be considered a member of the north London set because his parents lived on the Surrey/Kent border. While true, it doesn't exactly scream *viva la revolution*.)

A sympathetic colleague says McDonnell sees himself as being "a new father figure for the party", which would fit his Werther's Original persona. But whoever does take over from Corbyn will find him a pretty strict parent, keen to make sure that the right sort of people are in control.

By arrangement with the Spectator



'I bet we leave first.'

National, anti-national and the new politics in Kashmir



Anand K. Sahay

TROUBLE IN PARADISE-4

Srinagar/Baramulla/Shopian : In an extraordinary display of deployment amidst nationalistic fervour, not seen since the militancy of the early 1990s, the country's armed forces are spread across the towns and villages of the Kashmir Valley, guns at the ready. Men of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, doing duty alongside them in urban areas, no longer carry a weapon.

Apparently, since August 5 this year — the date which has gone into history for stripping J&K of its statehood and its unique status — the police is only issued the innocuous staff or small "danda".

The Kashmir police has been "disarmed", the locals believe.

On a drive from Baramulla in the Valley's north to Shopian in the south, past the capital Srinagar, I made it a point to observe carefully, just to be sure. There wasn't a single policeman with a gun anywhere on the 120-km drive.

Before 1989-90, when militancy burst out in Kashmir, the police force in the state was sloppy, and poorly equipped and trained. But in only a few years, it became a crack anti-insurgency unit, often leading the way in the fight against terrorism.

If people here are to be believed, a shadow has now been cast on the loyalty of the J&K Police when on duty in the Valley, although they have given no cause for doubt.

I ask an old friend, who was a victim of militant violence in the early 1990s, how he would compare the pervasive presence of the security forces then and now. He says spontaneously, "The forces did some terrible things back then too, but the widely shared feeling was that they were around to deal with Pakistan-encouraged militancy. Today, the sense is they are here to watch us."

These stinging words are a testimony to the dichotomous "national", "anti-national" perception that finds preference in policy quarters in Delhi.

Military fixation, and throwing out the old, is the new politics for Kashmir that the Centre is busy crafting. This is all too evident. Hence, the incarceration for an indefinite period of established mainstream politicians, notably Farooq and Omar Abdullah, and Mehbooba Mufti — all former chief ministers of J&K. They are not wanted anymore by Delhi, which is on the lookout for new politicians and a new politics.

Security merges seamlessly with politics in Kashmir. This is why, while the many are impris-

oned, a few will be contesting elections on October 24 — for chairmen of block development councils (BDC). There is an obvious agenda — everyone thinks.

"If India can't trust even Farooq Abdullah, who will it ever trust?" I am asked everywhere — by villagers in Baramulla; by an articulate M.L.A. (a former M.L.A., really, since the Assembly was ruthlessly dissolved before time last year — to prepare for the present moment, it seems in retrospect) who is under house-arrest but is not in the glare of the state and can beat the system and receive an occasional visitor; by high and low alike in Srinagar; and everywhere in Shopian, where one treads carefully on account of potential militant trouble.

In the eyes of Kashmir, the senior Abdullah is the most "committed" votary of India imaginable, and he too has been cast aside along with the leaders of the separatist Hurriyat Conference. No crime, but the same punishment.

Whenever the Abdullahs and other "mainstream" leaders might be released, with the substance of Article 370 extinguished, Kashmir's India-centric political actors would be without an agenda. (Will they choose new paths?) There can't be better preparation for the BDC polls.

BDC elections are being held for the first time in Kashmir — and in sneaky circumstances. The state is under lockdown, leaders of all parties except the BJP are in jail. Yet, the Election Commission has announced these polls on "party lines". People wonder about the fairness of the poll body. Perhaps this is the way to get one-party dominance for the BJP in the Kashmir Valley — so far a no-go area for it — and Assembly elections, people suspect, might be held on similar lines.

BDC polls are indirect elections in which the panch and sarpanch "elected" in November 2018 will now elect a chairman for their respective blocks. In 61 per cent of the panchayats, polls could not be held. In most of the remaining seats, a single candidate filed his nomination and was declared elected. For some seats, two votes were cast. In general, the "candidates" were from among former drug addicts or peddlers, it is said, or petty criminals who were duly incentivised to file their nominations. These characters will now be "electing" block chairmen. Welcome to the new politics in Kashmir.

(To be concluded)

'Park & Pray' and 'eRosary': New ways to pray



Dominic Emmanuel

Cycling by far is one of the common means that Westerners use as exercise. It was thus not surprising when last year someone in my church in Austria approached me about a new initiative called "Park & Pray". "Oh! Sure. That is an attractive way of inviting people to pray", said I. And a board with those words was hung at our church immediately.

Apart from bringing solace to the poor and the needy, one of the important tasks that the Church engages in is to help people find God

through different means — but especially through prayers. Jesus demonstrated through his life that despite being busy ministering to people during the day, he would find time at "night to go and pray in a lonely place". Though churches, temples, mosques and gurdwaras provide good environments to pray and meditate, one can actually, like Jesus, find any quiet place to pray.

Unfortunately, the word prayer itself sometimes poses a challenge, solely because as one often hears people saying, "I don't know how to pray", or "the moment I begin praying, my thoughts start wandering all over". Probably, with these problems in mind, I was pleasantly surprised to learn last week, that a Pope's network has introduced a novel but techno-friendly method of praying the Rosary.

The Vatican website interestingly describes this new venture thus: "The 'Click To Pray eRosary', is an interactive, smart and app-driven wearable device that serves as a tool for learning how to pray the rosary for peace in the world. It can be worn as a bracelet and is activated by making the sign of the cross. It is synchronised with a free app of the same name, which allows access to an audio guide, exclusive images and personalised content about the praying of the Rosary". This innovation was launched by the "Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network".

Organisers of this network say that it is within everyone's reach. "Aimed at the peripheral frontiers of the digital world where young people dwell, the 'Click To Pray eRosary', serves as a technology-based teaching tool to help young

people pray the Rosary for peace and to contemplate the Gospel".

Incidentally, the Church designates the month of October as Rosary month. The tradition of praying the Rosary goes back to the 13th century. Even though down the centuries its original form has changed, the Rosary remains one of the most popular ways for ordinary people to pray.

The eRosary is a new way to capture the imagination of the tech-savvy generation to pray for peace in the world. Though the Rosary is only one way of prayer, all of us, regardless of our religion and faith, can always pray for the urgent need of peace in the world, including while cycling, driving and indeed after parking.

Father Dominic Emmanuel, a founder-member of the Parliament of Religions, can be contacted at frdominic@gmail.com



Real-time insurance for farm credit helps Kenyans

FADA to sue UM Lohia for closing operations



Overleaf

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	39,058.83	+0.24
Nifty 50	11,604.10	+0.14
S&P 500	3,000.20	+0.14
Dollar (₹)	70.93	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	91.21	-0.79
Euro (₹)	78.89	-0.21
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	38,040.159	+0.42
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	\$60.35	+0.65
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.678	-0.022
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	+1.738	-0.028

* As of 9:30 pm IST

Kolkata, B'uru to join WB's doing biz report

The World Bank will now include Kolkata and Bengaluru, besides Delhi and Mumbai, for preparing the ease of doing business report. "The country of the size of India was not properly represented by just two cities, and now with the inclusion of Kolkata and Bengaluru, Indian ranking in the report will present a much better picture," an official said.

Maharatna status for HPCL, Power Grid Corp



The Union government accorded 'Maharatna' status to Hindustan Petroleum and Power Grid Corporation, thus giving them greater operational and financial autonomy. Two separate orders to this effect were issued by the Department of Public Enterprises, under the Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises.

Housing sales up 16% at ₹1.5L cr during Jan-Sep

Housing sales rose by 16 per cent in value terms during the January-September period of this year to Rs 1.54 lakh crore across seven major cities, according to property consultant Anarock. Sales increased to nearly 2.02 lakh units during the nine-month period from 1.78 lakh units last year, Anarock Consulting's Chairman Anuj Puri said.

Amazon India, Rlys tie up to carry packages

Amazon India said it has partnered with the Indian Railways for a pilot programme to carry out inter-city transport of e-commerce packages. Amazon India would transport customer packages with the Railways on three routes from New Delhi to Mumbai, Mumbai to New Delhi and New Delhi to Kolkata. Amazon India is working with the Railways to build an e-commerce transportation product.

■ New rules allow any firm with ₹250-cr net worth to enter field

Govt throws open fuel retailing to all players

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

In a landmark oil sector reform, the government on Wednesday relaxed rules for setting up petrol pumps and allowed non-oil companies to venture into the business in the world's fastest-growing fuel retailing market. The relaxed rules, which includes a far lower investment threshold for entering fuel retailing, is expected to help private and foreign firms to move into this lucrative market. At present, to obtain a fuel retailing license in India, a company needs to invest Rs 2,000 crore in either hydrocarbon exploration and production, refining, pipelines or liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals. However, this rule has now been changed.

"Companies with a net worth of Rs 250 crore will be allowed to sell petrol and diesel subject to the condition that they install facilities for marketing of at least one new generation alternate fuel such as CNG, LNG, biofuels or electric vehicle charging within three years of start of operations," Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, briefing reporters about the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



The retailers will have to set up 5 per cent of the total outlets in rural areas within five years, he said. "The new policy will bring in more investment and give a fillip to 'Ease of Doing Business'. It will boost direct and indirect employment in the sector. Setting up of more retail outlets (ROs) will result in better competition and better services for consumers," Javadekar said.

The government had last set fuel marketing conditions in 2002 and the review now is based on the recommendation of a high-level expert committee.

The move will facilitate entry of global giants such as Total SA of France, Saudi Arabia's Aramco, BP Plc of UK and Trafigura's downstream arm Puma Energy.

Total in partnership with Adani Group had in November 2018 applied for a licence to retail petrol and diesel through 1,500 outlets. BP, too, has formed a partnership with Reliance Industries to set up petrol pumps, but is yet to make a formal application.

While Puma Energy had applied for a retail license, Aramco was in talks to enter the sector.

State-owned oil marketing companies Indian Oil (IOC), Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL) own most of 65,554 petrol pumps in the country.

Reliance Industries, Nayara Energy - formerly Essar Oil - and Royal Dutch Shell are the private players in the market but with limited presence. Reliance, which operates

the world's largest oil refining complex, has less than 1,400 outlets.

Nayara has 5,344 outlets while Shell has just 160 pumps. BP of UK had a couple of years back secured a licence to set up 3,500 pumps but hasn't yet started operations. It is now venturing into the business with Reliance with plans to scale up Reliance's present network strength to 5,500.

"The entities seeking market authorisation for petrol and diesel are allowed to apply for retail and bulk authorisation separately or both," an official statement issued on the CCEA decision said.

The companies have been given flexibility in setting up a joint venture or subsidiary for market authorisation.

"In addition to conventional fuels, the authorised entities are required to install facilities for marketing at least one new generation alternate fuel, like CNG, LNG, biofuels, electric charging, etc. at their proposed retail outlets within three years of operationalisation of the said outlet," it said.

"An individual may be allowed to obtain a dealership of more than one marketing company in case of open dealerships of PSU oil marketing companies but at different sites."

The high-level expert committee while suggesting scrapping of the Rs 2,000 crore investment norm for setting up petrol pumps had proposed grant of authorisation on submission of a bank guarantee that could be encashed in case of failure to perform stipulated conditions.

Currently, IOC is the market leader with 27,981 petrol pumps in the country, followed by HPCL with 15,584 outlets, and BPCL with 15,078 fuel stations.

The expert committee was set up in October last year and was asked to "look at various issues related to the implementation of existing guidelines for grant of the marketing authorisation of market fuels - petrol, diesel, and aviation turbine fuel."

The panel includes economist Kirit Parikh, former oil secretary G C

Infosys in mess over disclosure

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
with agency inputs
MUMBAI, OCT. 23



Troubles seem mounting for Infosys. The software major faces more trouble ahead as it has failed to inform the stock exchanges about the complaints received from whistleblowers, which could lead to more trouble at the hands of market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India.

The Sebi has reportedly begun its probe into alleged non-disclosure of price-sensitive information by the Infosys management and also corporate governance lapses alleged by the whistleblower group. The regulator is also examining possible insider trading in the company's securities.

The regulator has reportedly asked the stock exchanges to collate trading data of Infosys shares as well as derivative positions, while details are being sought about alleged non-disclosure of key information.

The regulator may also summon the company's top management and others, while information might be sought from some board committees, including those dealing with audit and other financial matters at the company, depending on progress in the investigation.

The role of independent directors may also come under the scanner

in case it is found they did not press for timely disclosure and other necessary actions after receipt of the whistleblower complaint.

Stock exchange BSE has sought clarifications from Infosys, for which the reply was awaited at the press time. The BSE has sought clarifications from the company about the non-disclosure of the whistleblower complaint, which it received earlier last month and was announced by company Chairman Nandan Nilekani on October 22.

"It is observed that Infosys has not made any disclosures under Regulation 30 of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015, with respect to receipt of whistleblower complaint mentioned in the announcement (made by Nilekani)," the BSE communication said.

The Infosys stock was in focus for second consecutive session. In volatile trading, the stock dipped to a low of Rs 615 on the BSE, but later recovered to touch a high of Rs 656.40 before finally closing 1.16 per cent up at Rs 650.75.

Support price for rabi crops raised

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, OCT. 23

The Centre on Wednesday announced higher minimum support price (MSP) for rabi crops, or winter crops, for the marketing season 2020-21. The crops will be marketed from next April.

The Union Cabinet cleared the MSP hike for wheat by Rs 85 to Rs 1,925 a quintal and for pulses by up to Rs 325 per quintal. While the MSP of barley has been raised from Rs 1,440 to Rs 1,525, support prices for rapeseed and mustard oil, gram, safflower and lentils have also been increased.

The pro-farmer's decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "In a move to increase farmers' income, the Cabinet has increased the MSP of rabi or winter-sown crops for the current year," Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters.

The MSP announced for this year is in line with the recommendation of



the government's farm price advisory body, the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP).

Wheat has been taken as a top priority, as this rabi crop will be sown next month.

In order to encourage farmers to cultivate more pulses, the government has hiked the support price of masoor by Rs 325 to Rs 4,800 per quintal from Rs 4,475 last year. The MSP for gram has also been increased by Rs 255 to Rs 4,875 per quintal from Rs 4,620.

Among oilseeds, the MSP of rapeseed, or mustard, has been increased by Rs 225 to Rs 4,425 per quintal from Rs 4,200 and that of safflower by Rs 270 to Rs 5,215 per quintal from Rs 4,945.

Datsun brand set to go as Nissan spikes Ghosn plans

NORIHICO SHIROUZU
YOKOHAMA, JAPAN,
OCT. 23

Nissan Motor Co Ltd is likely to axe its Datsun brand, drop some unprofitable products and close a number of assembly lines worldwide as it seeks to boost profits by getting smaller, two company sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Known internally as the "performance recovery plan", the proposed steps mark a sharp break with Nissan's strategy under ousted leader Carlos Ghosn, who pursued ambitious vehicle sales targets in the United States and other major markets.

The plan is the Yokohama-based automaker's latest attempt to pull itself out of crisis after Ghosn was arrested for financial misconduct—charges he denies. The scandal has further strained an already dysfunctional alliance with Renault SA and thrown Nissan into disarray as it finds itself on course to book its lowest operating profit in 11 years.

The sources said Nissan will likely kill loss-making

variants for the Titan full-size pickup. Unprofitable variants include the singlecab and diesel versions.

A planned shuttering of under-utilised production lines will most probably hit plants in emerging markets building Datsun and other small cars hardest, they added.

"We need to chart a recovery but the rot goes deep," one of the sources said of the many problems facing Nissan.

The second source said all markets with factories except China were being looked at for possible reductions in production capacity. That source also said, however, that there were no plans to close an

entire plant or withdraw completely from any country.

A team led by Jun Seki, a Senior Vice President and incoming Vice Chief Operating officer, is expected to unveil the wide-ranging plan this month though some aspects are still being finalised, said the sources, who were not authorised to speak to media and declined to be identified.

Nissan declined to comment.

Seki is part of a new management team that will see Makoto Uchida, Nissan's head of China operations, take the helm—an appointment that is expected to take effect by Jan. 1.

The new steps follow

plans unveiled in July to cut headcount by 12,500 globally by early 2023.

Overall, the plan's aim is to free up resources to focus more on the US and China, the sources said.

To that end it will roll back an aggressive expansionist strategy Ghosn set in motion under a five-year plan called Power 88 which aimed to raise profit margins and global market share to 8 percent by fiscal 2016—goals which were never achieved.

The Datsun brand—revived for emerging markets under Ghosn after being phased out in the 1980s—will likely bear the brunt of the restructuring. The models are manufactured in Indonesia, India and Russia.

The sources said problems emerged after Nissan began deploying the no-frills cars in 2014 in small markets such as Indonesia, India, Russia and South Africa where it also sells vehicles under its mainstay Nissan brand.

In Indonesia, for example, after a relatively good start, Datsun cars soon began eating into Nissan sales.

—Reuters

IMF sees growth rebounding to 7% in FY21

GURDIP SINGH
SINGAPORE, OCT. 23

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) sees Indian economic growth rebounding to around 7 per cent in the next financial year, supported by measures like monetary policy stimulus and corporate income tax cuts.

"We see the Indian economy rebounding from our projected 6.1 per cent growth this fiscal year to something like 7 per cent in the next fiscal year (2020). We see the factors that will support growth, including monetary policy stimulus, working their way through the pipeline," Jonathan Ostry, Deputy Director, Asia Pacific Department at the IMF, told reporters.

The recent tax cuts, government's progress in addressing lingering weaknesses in the financial sector and measures to support growth sectors as seen as factors underpinning growth in the near term, Ostry said.

Talking about the slowdown in Indian economy in recent quarters, he said: "indeed (it) took many of us by surprise, including the IMF."

"There wasn't a single cause for the slow-down... there were many different causes at work including corporate and regulatory environmental uncertainties, the stresses in the non-bank financial sector, (and) stresses in the rural sector, among others," he said. Asked about the RECP, he underlined the importance of having services included in the free-trade partnership pact. —PTI

Season is a wash-out for Kashmir tourism

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, OCT. 23

Despite the government opening up the destination for travellers, this season could be a wash-out for Kashmir. Both tourists and travel operators are going slow with bookings.

After remaining locked down for around two months, on October 10 the government had opened Kashmir for tourists. But the uncertainties still continue, finds the trade.

"This season has been

wiped out. Though officially tourists are allowed, several clearances are needed. Before taking tourists to the place we will have to make inspection visits so that we are confident enough," said Rajeev Kale, President and Country Head - Holidays, MICE, Visa, Thomas Cook India.

With the season already on, tour operators do not expect much from Kashmir. However, the travel operators are receiving messages from the tourism department,



house boat owners and travel agents assuring that it is safe to travel to the place.

"This December will not be like those in the past. But we are receiving messages from the local trade and government. After

Diwali, we will make our inspection of the place," said Kapil Goswamy, MD, Big Breaks.com.

As a silver lining, BigBreaks.com has started receiving some enquiries from tourists, including foreigners. But tourists do

not want to venture out of Srinagar due to security concerns.

Kashmir usually has 20 to 25 per cent share of the country's tourist arrivals. In 2018, Kashmir witnessed the lowest arrivals in seven years. Only 8.5 lakh domestic and foreign tourists visited the valley last year, a decline of 23 per cent from 2017. Tourist arrivals have been declining since 2016 due to the political unrest. In 2012, the state had received 13 lakh visitors.

Summer is the biggest tourist season for Kashmir. Unfortunately, this summer turned out to be cold for Kashmir tourism after the Pulwama attack and the Balakot strike in February. Some of the key source countries like the US, UK and Canada had released travel advisories for their citizens visiting the region. Both tourists and travel operators were slightly reluctant to make bookings for the destination in the summer.

Strides' ranitidine gets Oz nod

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, OCT. 23

As many as 20 batches of heartburn drug ranitidine manufactured by Strides Pharma for the Australian market have been found to have N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) within permissible limits. These batches are now back on the retail shelves in that country. Meanwhile, Dr Reddy's Laboratories have recalled all its ranitidine medications in the US.

Strides had suspended the manufacturing and sale of its ranitidine tablets for the US and Australian markets on September 27, 2019 due to the concerns about the presence of NDMA, which is associated with an increased risk of cancer. On 13 September, the US FDA had issued a safety alert citing traces of NDMA in ranitidine.

Dr Reddy's meanwhile said it had initiated a voluntary nationwide recall on October 1 of all of its ranitidine medications sold in US due to confirmed contamination with NDMA above levels established by the FDA.

SoftBank confirms WeWork deal

Tokyo, Oct. 23: SoftBank announced on Wednesday it will pump billions of dollars into struggling office-sharing start-up WeWork, in a deal that will see co-founder Adam Neumann taking a huge payout and exiting the board.

The package, which involves new financing, speeds up already pledged money and includes a new tender offer for existing shareholders, is worth a total of \$9.5 billion.

Neumann, who has already been forced to step down as chief executive, will exit the board for an "observer" role, but is said to be receiving more than \$1.5 billion as he departs.

SoftBank Group's Marcelo Claure will take over as executive chairman of the board. The agreement caps a turbulent period for the once-vaunted start-up, which was valued by some at around \$47 billion at the start of the year, and represents a significant shot in the arm as the company haemorrhages money.

—AFP

US electronics factories hurt by tariffs

Oct. 23: U.S. electronics factories are investing less and slowing hiring or laying off workers in some cases due to the rising costs of trade tariffs, according to an industry survey set for release on Wednesday.

The IPC, a global electronic industries trade association, found that nearly a third of all the dollar value of what its members with U.S. operations import has been hit by increased costs from the protracted U.S.-China trade war.

The electronics industry has increasingly sourced raw materials, components and manufacturing equipment from Chinese factories. They are then assembled into final products, ranging from control panels for tractors to medical imaging machines, in factories closer to customers, including in the United States.

The survey from the IPC, based in Bannockburn, Illinois, found that one in five companies with US operations said they were investing less in the United States due to the new tariffs.

—Reuters

Legal notice says firm caused ₹150 cr loss to its 80 dealers

FADA to sue UM Lohia for closing operations

MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, OCT. 23

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Association or FADA on Wednesday issued a legal notice to premium Delhi-based bike maker UM Lohia Two Wheelers (UM Lohia), alleging fraud that caused a loss of Rs 150 crore to 80 dealers across the country in setting up the infrastructure.

There is also a direct job loss of 2,500 people at these dealerships, with many shutting down operation and burdened with five to 10 bikes unsold at each dealership.

"We will be responding to the legal notice legally and it takes time," Ayush Kumar Lohia, founding partner of UM Lohia told *Financial Chronicle*, adding that he had committed no fraud.

"We had some difficulties with our American partner who did all the research and development and produced bikes for the Indian market which were not BS IV emission norms compliant," he said, stating that he was left alone to face the heat from the dealers.



UM Lohia, a joint venture (JV) between the Delhi-based Lohia Group and US-based UM Motorcycles, which started retail sales in 2016, stopped operations in India abruptly last October, leaving around 80 dealers in the lurch. UM Lohia was started by Ayush Kumar Lohia and Jose Miguel Villegas of the US in an equal joint venture with an investment of Rs 100 crore.

It claimed to manufacture and sell "American style, American Made" motorcycles under the brand UM Motorcycles and attracted dealers by showcasing its models at an automobile exhibition.

US-based UM Motorcycles, promoted by the Villegas

Family, produces several models of motorcycles and cruisers, including the Renegade range of motorcycles.

Soon after the India JV's dealerships were signed, it emerged that the motorcycles were made using Chinese components assembled at a manufacturing plant in Kashipur, Uttar Pradesh, allege dealers. This resulted in the brand losing its value and customers avoiding purchase.

The company also launched vehicles compliant with BS-III emission norms in the second half of 2016, even as the regulation mandating BS-IV was already scheduled to come into force from April 2017.

The dealers were not able to sell once the deadline was crossed and the company allegedly refused to take back the vehicles.

Amid mounting pressure, the company later agreed to come out with BS-IV compliant vehicles, and collected further deposits from some dealers.

However, the vehicles produced later were substandard, with basic components like gear breaking down within a few days of use. "To make the matters worse, UM Lohia has now surreptitiously folded up its operations and shut down its warehouse for spare parts, making it impossible for dealers to service the warranty claims on defective UM motorcycles. As a result, many dealers have been exposed to litigation from customers," FADA said.

"These dealers have invested around Rs 150 crore in establishing requisite infrastructure alone," Saharsh Damani, CEO at FADA said, adding that it has served legal notice to the US and Indian directors of the entity.

ITC Fabelle truffles come at a record ₹1 lakh

RITWIK MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA, OCT. 23

A set of 15 truffles come with an indulgent price tag of Rs 1 lakh. Hyperbole? Not really. Not at least, if you consider what Fabelle Exquisite Chocolates, the home-grown luxury chocolate brand from the stable of ITC Ltd, has just done to enter into the Guinness Book of World Records. Fabelle has now come up with the world's most expensive chocolate - Fabelle Trinity-Truffles.

The limited edition offering will be encased in a unique, hand-made wooden box, each containing 15 truffles, each weighing about 15 gms. The made-to-order box will be available at an indulgent price of Rs 1 lakh (inclusive of taxes), the company said.

"We at Fabelle have now

set new benchmarks not just in the Indian luxury chocolate market but also now in the world with achieving the Guinness World Record feat," said Anuj Rustagi, Chief Operating Officer—Chocolates, Confectionary, Coffee and New Categories—Food Division, ITC Limited.

He said that this master piece is a reflection of best of both the worlds coming together. With Chef Philippe Conticini's international expertise and Fabelle's understanding of Indian chocolate consumer preferences and institutional strength, the company has been able to deliver a world-class product.

The chocolate was unveiled in the presence of the Legendary, Michelin Star Chef Philippe Conticini, who is the co-creator of Fabelle's Trinity - Truffles Extraordinaire.

Luxury chocolate brand from ITC has entered the Guinness Book of World Records

PERFORMANCE STREET

HCL Tech Q2 net up 6.9%

HCL Technologies posted a 6.9 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 2,711 crore for the September quarter, and raised its revenue growth forecast to 17 per cent for 2019-20. The company also announced a bonus share offer. Its revenue from operations grew 18 per cent to Rs 17,527 crore in the quarter under review, from Rs 14,860 crore a year ago.

L&T Q2 profit rises 13%

Larsen & Toubro posted over 13 per cent rise in its consolidated profit after tax at Rs 2,527.26 crore for the September quarter. The consolidated total income increased to Rs 35,924.89 crore, over Rs 31,086.59 crore in the year-ago period. Consolidated PAT from continuing operations was Rs 2,309 crore, registering a growth of 10.3 per cent.

Indian Bank profit zooms

Indian Bank reported over a two-fold rise in net profit at Rs 358.56 crore for the second quarter. It had posted a net profit of Rs 150.1 crore in the year-ago quarter. Total income increased to Rs 6,045.32 crore from Rs 5,129.16 crore. Asset quality remained stable with the gross NPAs marginally rising 7.20 per cent of the advances against 7.16 per cent a year ago.

Hero MotoCorp net down 10%

Hero MotoCorp reported a 10 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 883.78 crore in the September quarter from Rs 981.99 crore a year ago. Revenue from operations stood at Rs 7,660.60 crore compared to Rs 9,168.24 crore. During the quarter, the company said it sold 16,91,420 units against 21,34,051 units in the same period last year, down 20.7 per cent.

Bajaj Auto net rises 22%

Bajaj Auto's second-quarter profit beat estimates on higher other income, lower tax expense and better operational performance. The firm reported a 22 per cent rise in its net profit at Rs 1,402.42 crore, aided by a tax expense reversal of Rs 182 crore due to the recent lowering of corporate tax rate. Revenue from operations dipped 4 per cent YoY to Rs 7,707 crore.

JSW Steel net jumps 21%

JSW Steel reported a 21.51 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 2,536 crore for the September quarter. Total income dropped to Rs 17,728 crore, compared with Rs 21,608 crore in the year-ago period. However, its total expenses during the quarter fell to Rs 17,025 crore, against Rs 18,583 crore a year ago.

—FC BUREAU

Real-time insurance for farm credit helps Kenyans

WESLEY LANGAT
MACHAKOS, KENYA, OCT. 23

For the past two years, Beatrice Ndavi, a 56-year-old farmer in central Kenya, has received vouchers for good-quality seeds and fertiliser, as well as training to improve her yields.

The support is offered on credit as part of an insurance scheme that provides security for the farmer's loan by paying it down if her harvest is damaged by extreme weather.

Ndavi, a mother of six from Masii village in Machakos County, explained that in the past, farmers ended up taking out cash loans to cover their needs in an emergency, which they then struggled to pay back.

But under the Risk-Contingent Credit (RCC) scheme she is part of, it has become easier for her to keep going, even if the weather is bad, she said.

"I get the right farm inputs - quality seeds and fertilisers on time - and I'm not worried about how to repay the loan as it's insured," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Millions of rural households in Kenya rely on agriculture for their income, but a warming climate is bringing more intense and frequent droughts, disrupting production.

Recurring losses due to sometimes consecutive years of drought, coupled with the high cost of certified seeds and other inputs, have made poor farmers reluctant to invest in their land, organisations working on the RCC project found.

Apurba Shee, lead researcher with the Natural Resources Institute at Britain's University of Greenwich, said the credit scheme differs from traditional insurance as it takes into account rainfall patterns as they unfold rather

Tap seeds used in tribal, hilly areas: Study

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO
NEW DELHI, OCT 23

In India's agriculture sector, the seed delivery system suffers severe deficiency, as over 60 per cent of seeds in use is unlabelled. However, the system can be significantly strengthened through investments in the formal sector and by channelising high-quality seed varieties used by tribal and hilly communities into the informal seed chain.

A recent joint study, titled, 'Sowing the policy seeds of a flourishing agriculture sector', conducted by ASSOCHAM and PwC, found that about 60-65 per cent of seeds in use in the country is unlabelled. To overcome this handicap, the study suggested that "high-quality seed varieties used by tribal and hilly communities be brought into the informal seed chain with some



amount of genetic purity."

"These farmer varieties are important for future breeding programmes, as they possess useful traits developed through natural evolution. Their integration would enable effective seed delivery to farmers at affordable costs," it said.

When asked about this, an official in the agriculture ministry said, "The agri sector has huge potential for growth supported by seed policies in favour of seed producers and

exporters... We are aware of the fact of deficiency and the government is working on it"

India has a share of four per cent in the global seed market. The Indian seed market had a value of \$3.6 billion in 2017, exhibiting a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 17 per cent during 2010-2017.

The Indian seed market is dominated by maize, cotton, paddy, wheat, sorghum, sunflower and millets.

The study also said strengthening the seed village programme will improve seed delivery. It suggested putting in place a measure to improve seed traceability to control the distribution of spurious seeds. "Besides deterring spurious seeds, using a unique code could also help in tracing their origin in case of quality issues," suggested the study.

than paying out only when harvests fail.

Remote-sensing satellite technology is used to track rainfall in real-time, and if the average drops below a set threshold in any 21-day period during the growing season, it triggers digital payouts that cover farmers' loans.

The system allows for multiple payments spread throughout the season, as rain volumes fluctuate, Shee said.

The RCC programme aims to tackle both credit constraints and risks linked to drought, he said in an interview.

"We are getting clear positive indications in term of increased farming invest-

ments (and) farmers going back to farming more often, even after a devastating drought," he added.

According to a 2018 survey, nearly 1,200 farmers in Machakos had enrolled in the RCC scheme, with 40% taking out insured loans to buy farm inputs.

The average amount they received was 8,500 Kenyan shillings (\$82), compared with 6,000 shillings (\$58) for traditional loans.

In the neighbouring county of Embu, about 800 farmers are taking part in the US government-backed project.

Shee said the RCC scheme had now proved itself to be commercially viable and had the potential to be expanded to other parts of

Kenya and semi-arid regions across southern and eastern Africa, as well as along the borders of the Sahara.

Before joining the scheme, Ndavi struggled when persistent drought brought water shortages, as she - like many other farmers in Kenya's drylands - relies on regular rainfall to keep her crops in good health.

In 2017, she lost five acres of planted maize worth \$100 because of drought.

More severe droughts are leaving many farmers vulnerable, said Sarfaraz Shah, project manager at Nairobi-based APA Insurance, which underwrites the RCC scheme.

—Reuters

OPENING BELL

Domestic cues point to volatility

The market made a recovery after a volatile trading session to close in the green with several blue chips announcing their second quarter performance during the trading session. Infosys recovered after dipping further to Rs 615 intraday, as it closed at Rs 650.75 up 1.16 per cent which boosted market sentiments.

The Sensex closed 94.99 points up at 39058.83 gaining 0.24 per cent while the broader Nifty-50 index closed just 15.75 points or 0.14 per cent up at 11,604.10. The broader market too closed flat with BSE Mid Cap Index down 0.08 per cent while the BSE Small Cap Index was up 0.25 per cent.

Profit taking continued for the second session by the domestic institutions as well as the foreign portfolio investors as they were net sellers of equities worth Rs 137.38 crore and Rs 213.23 crore respectively as per the provisional data.

Technical View

Mustafa Nadeem, CEO, Epic Research, said, "Nifty seems to be struggling at 11700 because it is an important swing high. Global markets haven't been supportive while the domestic cues are pointing to volatility."

"The earnings are yet to come from some of the heavyweights like SBI and Maruti. So the market is actually seen oscillating between a range of 11,700 and 11,500. With that, we have seen Infy weighing on the Index as it fell almost 15 per cent. A rebound today helped the index to sustain the lower levels."

"This is a very important level for Nifty and important in the sense as it will give us a short term view for the next few weeks. Above 11,700 we don't see any resistance till 12,000 or previous all-time high and if we are not able to take out 11,700, the bears may take advantage of a low-risk opportunity. So this is going to be a tug of war and whoever wins at this point may be controlling the index for the next few weeks."

Market View

Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said, "Market was lacklustre, with Nifty closing marginally in green at 11,604, amid weak global cues and FPIs outflow. Market sentiments turned a little negative as hopes are waning on conclusion of Brexit deal by next week...Market is also cautious ahead of state assembly poll results."

—RAVI RANAJAN PRASHAD

Autocracy is no model for developing economies

SAM HILL

It's hard to believe, but in the early 1960s, Singapore and Sierra Leone were in pretty much the same place economically. And Sierra Leone, rich in resources and with a stable democracy, appeared to be on the rise.

Instead, Singapore has since become one of the most successful countries in the world, with a GDP per capita of \$94,000 (according to the CIA's World Factbook). Sierra Leone has remained one of the most woeful, with a GDP per capita of \$1,600. Singapore is ranked seventh in the world. Sierra Leone is ranked 200 places lower, near the bottom.

During a speech I gave recently, a former high-level American intelligence official interrupted me to make the case that the primary reason for Singapore's success was autocracy. When I disagreed, he stomped out. He's not

alone in his opinion.

Autocracy is very much in vogue. Perhaps it's just the pendulum swinging. We're coming off a 30-year trend toward democratic, or at least elected, governments and have an entire generation with no firsthand knowledge of failed socialist dictatorships. Or perhaps it's the economic success of China over the last few decades that explains the shift.

Whatever the reason, autocracy is now often put forward as the solution for the developing world, and Singapore is the model often used. (South Korea and China are the others.) It's a compelling example. Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's authoritarian first leader, was arguably the greatest economic leader of the 20th century. What Lee accomplished for a swampy, cobra-infested, war-torn island with no resources (while fighting a Communist insurgency) was nothing short of

phenomenal. However, his success doesn't mean that autocracy is a good thing.

Autocracy is a high beta solution. It can turn out very good, as it did in Singapore's case, or it can turn out very badly. It turns out badly 99% of the time, measured both by the rights of people in those countries and their economies.

That's math, not hyperbole. As the world's leading development economist, Paul Collier of Oxford, told me, "If autocracy were a formula for success, African nations would be rich." I tested his argument. I analyzed 53 African countries since independence, which for most was in the early 1960s, to see just how many have had dictators and whether they'd been more successful than countries with democratically elected governments. I defined autocrats as those who

came to power and held on to it through undemocratic means. I found 117 autocrats, and that is almost certainly an undercount. Some of these countries have had dozens of coup attempts, so my count may not be exhaustive. It may also undercount because not all democratically elected governments are democ-

racies. I found 47 of the 53 African nations had at least one stretch of autocracy since independence. The exceptions are Cape Verde, Botswana, Djibouti, Namibia, Sao Tome and South Africa. I found only one autocratic leader who might conceivably be compared to Lee Kuan Yew, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and that comparison isn't clear cut.

The takeaway? Countries that trade freedom for prosperity are going to regret it most of the

time, and likely for a long time. Unlike democracies, dictatorships allow for no do-overs.

Further, although neither group has done well, on average countries with a democratic tradition ranked 130 on the UN's Human Development Index (2018 Report.) While the others have ranked 156 (of 189). Any simple analysis like this raises all sorts of questions.

Daron Acemoglu of MIT and James Robinson of the University of Chicago have dug much deeper in their bestsellers "Why Nations Fail" and "The Narrow Corridor." Their conclusion is that some countries get a short-term boost under authoritarian governments that turn from socialism to capitalism, but it doesn't last. Long-term success, under any measure including economic, requires democracy.

Autocracy or authoritarianism is an easy answer. And it's easy to

make the case by cherry-picking Asian examples like Singapore, South Korea and China. It works especially well if those banging the drum for autocracy leave out non-autocratic nations that have performed well economically, like Japan and Taiwan. (And, by the way, South Korea is now rated as free as Japan on the Freedom House rankings.) And also if they leave out regimes with a history of authoritarianism that haven't done so well, like Myanmar, the Philippines, Indonesia and North Korea. Or that since independence in the 1960s, Singapore has had 25 years of autocracy. Sierra Leone has had 32.

Anecdotes and selective sampling don't replace analysis, and the numbers say autocracy isn't a good solution - even for those countries desperate enough to try it.

—Bloomberg

Column



On top

Slovenia's Primoz Roglic ends 2019 top of the rankings as cycling's world No.1, winning the World Tour ahead of Frenchman Julian Alaphilippe and Denmark's Jakob Fuglsang

Clippers sizzle

Leonard's team outfox Lakers in Los Angeles battle

Los Angeles, Oct. 23: Kawhi Leonard and the Clippers won the opening round of Los Angeles's revitalised battle for basketball supremacy on Tuesday, defeating LeBron James and the Lakers 112-102 in a pulsating season-opening clash at the Staples Center.

Leonard, who arrived at the Clippers in the off-season after leading Toronto to the NBA title last season, wasted no time roaring back into action, leading the scoring with 30 points.

"It was great. A lot of emotions, game one," said Leonard, who grew up in Riverside, 50 miles east of Los Angeles.

"I am just happy we came out and got a victory. We had great practices and some carry over from that tonight."

The Clippers attacked the rim, forced easy turnovers, used a stingy defence to keep James and his new sidekick Anthony Davis in check.

Leonard also had six rebounds and five assists, reserve guard Lou Williams finished with 21 points and power forward Montrezl Harrell tallied 17 points and seven rebounds.

James shot seven-of-19 for 18 points and Davis shot eight-of-21 for 25 points for the Lakers who are hoping their offseason changes will boost the team's fortunes after they finished a disappointing 37-45 and failed to qualify for the postseason for the sixth season in a row.

"It is the first game," said James. "It was a huge test. We have a lot of room to improve. We are a new group with a new system. We did some good things and we did some not so



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James (right) is defended by Los Angeles Clippers' Kawhi Leonard during the first half of an NBA game on Tuesday.

good things. "We look forward to getting some film and seeing some of the mistakes we made."

The one bright spot for the Lakers was newcomer Danny Green who scored 28 points by hitting 10 of his 14 field-goal attempts, including seven of nine from beyond the arc.

Junior Varsity barb

The two Los Angeles teams made some of the most significant changes but the Clippers appeared to have added more value. Every one of their bench players reached double figures on Tuesday as they outscored the Laker

reserves 60-19. Williams outscored the Lakers reserves by himself.

He said the Clippers didn't want to just win. That they are tied of playing second fiddle to the Lakers and wanted nothing more than to dominate their city rivals.

"We always play with a chip on our shoulder," Williams said.

"For last two months all the talk has been about the Lakers versus the Clippers."

"We hear that we are the Junior Varsity team, or little brother, or whatever. We are pros too. That's why we have a chip on our shoulder." —AFP

RAPTORS START TITLE DEFENCE WITH WIN

Los Angeles, Oct. 23: Fred VanVleet scored a career-high 34 points as the Toronto Raptors got their NBA title defence off to a winning start with a 130-122 overtime win over the New Orleans Pelicans on Tuesday.

Pascal Siakam also tallied 34 points and added 18 rebounds before fouling out of the NBA's season-opening contest at Scotiabank Arena which featured the Raptors' championship banner and ring ceremony.

Both teams were missing some big names as the Raptors began life without Kawhi Leonard and the Pelicans lost Anthony Davis in a trade and were missing injured first pick Zion Williamson.

"We had to reach into our bag of tricks," said Raptors coach Nick Nurse. —AFP

Zverev crashes out in first Rd

Basel (Switzerland), Oct. 23: World number six Alexander Zverev lost a 7-6(9/7), 6-4 battle at the first round of the ATP Swiss Indoors to Taylor Fritz on Tuesday as the American hit 14 aces.

The defeat for the German to the 21-year-old came barely a week after losing in the Shanghai Masters final to Daniil Medvedev.

With Zverev next in the queue to qualify for November's eight-man ATP Finals in London - the seventh-ranked player has his work cut out to make it into the year-ending showpiece.

Zverev, a semi-finalist last year in Basel, fought in the opening set to take it into a tiebreaker but was overwhelmed in the second by his American opponent in 86 minutes.

Fritz, ranked 31st and a winner at Eastbourne in June, saved both break points against his serve. Fabio Fognini picked up his London qualifying

pace with a 6-2, 6-4 defeat of Australian Alexei Popyrin.

The Italian winner reached the second round in 78 minutes to reinforce his year-end bid.

The Monte Carlo Masters champion stands 11th in the chase for one of the remaining eight spots in the field and is duelling with compatriot Matteo Berrettini.

Fognini said he is not particularly bothered about the race outcome. "I'm 11th and that is still far away. If I qualify — fine. If not, then I can spend more time with the family, that's the most important thing anyway."

"I'm not a huge fan of playing all the big servers of today, for me it's not tennis. But I'm glad to still be playing at 33," he added.

The US' Riley Opelka hammered 27 aces in his 7-6(7/5), 7-6 (12/10) defeat of Chile's Christian Garin and will face either sixth seed David Goffin or Marin Cilic. —AFP



Germany's Alexander Zverev returns to Taylor Fritz of the United States during their first round match.

GOLF ROUND-UP

Woods, Spieth, McIlroy in lead

Inzai City (Japan), Oct. 23: With a field that includes Tiger Woods, Jordan Spieth and Rory McIlroy, the PGA Tour's first tournament in Japan has plenty of star power.

The Zozo Championship, which begins on Thursday, will be held at the Accordia Golf Narashino Country Club, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) east of Tokyo in Inzai City.

It is part of three tournaments that make up the PGA Tour's Asia Swing, including the CJ Cup in South Korea won last week by Justin Thomas and the HSBC Champions in Shanghai next week.

The Japanese tournament, co-sanctioned with the Japan Golf Tour, is a 78-man, no-cut field with a \$9.75 million purse.

The weather could prove to be a factor on the weekend. Japan is bracing for two more storms heading its way a week after a typhoon devastated the country's central and northern regions. A forecast for another typhoon has been downgraded to a

tropical storm. Woods last played in an official tournament in Japan in 2006 at the Dunlop Phoenix, where he lost in a playoff to Padraig Harrington. He won the Dunlop Phoenix the two previous years.

"It's going to be a lot of fun to be back here in front of fans that really understand and respect the game of golf," Woods said in a pre-tournament interview. "The game of golf is so strong here in Japan, and to have seen it grow like it has over 20-some odd years that I've been playing is very special."

The Masters champion is making his first start in his 23rd season on the PGA Tour, needing one victory to reach 82 wins and tie the career record held by Sam Snead.

Jason Day, who beat Woods in the Skins game, is also part of the field as well as Japanese star Hideki Matsuyama and Thomas, whose win in the CJ Cup was his 11th PGA Tour event and his second in South Korea. —AP



Sometimes when you don't know a course, that's a better thing.

— Star golfer Rory McIlroy who is playing in Japan for the first time in 11 years

SHORT TAKES

Serie A looking into more abuse

Milan: Italian soccer authorities have opened an investigation after another player was racially abused during a Serie A match this past weekend. Sampdoria midfielder Ronaldo Vieira was subjected to racist chants by Roma fans during the teams' 0-0 draw but the league's sporting judge said Tuesday that he has asked for more information before deciding on a possible punishment. Roma has already said it "will support the authorities in identifying and subsequently banning any individuals found guilty of racially abusing the midfielder." Vieira, who was born in Guinea Bissau and is black, plays for England's Under-21 team. Offensive chants have also been aimed at Romelu Lukaku, Franck Kessie, Dalbert Henrique and Miralem Pjanic this season. — AP

Spain women to go on strike

Madrid: Women soccer players in Spain plan to go on strike after failing to reach a deal with clubs over working hours and minimum wages. About 200 players met in Madrid late Tuesday and voted in favor of the strike, which is expected to begin in November after legal requirements are met. More than 90% of voting players favored the strike. The players' and clubs' associations have been in negotiations for a collective agreement over the last year. They disagree over issues including the clubs' decision to limit working hours to 20 per week. Players want at least 30 hours to be guaranteed. — AP

Red Bulls tamed since F1's break

Mexico City: Max Verstappen and Red Bull were riding high at Formula One's summer break. The driver and team have been in a funk ever since. And returning to a favorite track in Mexico City may not get them out. Not with Ferrari and Mercedes flying around the track and Lewis Hamilton taking aim at a career sixth season championship. Red Bull and Verstappen appeared ready to rumble with Mercedes over the stretch run of the season when Verstappen stormed to wins in Austria and Germany, then took pole position in Hungary. Only a strategic move for new tires allowed Hamilton to snatch victory in Budapest. — AP

PARIS LOGO GETS ONLINE RIDICULE

Paris: The new 2024 Olympics logo is supposed to evoke French history but has instead earned ridicule online for its apparent resemblance to a stereotypical Parisian woman. Unveiled on Monday, the design incorporates the art deco style in vogue the last time Paris hosted the Games in 1924, depicting an Olympic flame within a gold medal. It also incorporates the lips and outline of Marianne, the personification of liberty and the French Republic since the revolution of 1789 — an addition that some mocked for adding an unnecessarily seductive character to the motif. "The French Olympic logo tumbles out of bed on a Parisian morning," wrote Paris-based journalist Megan Clement on Twitter. "She tousles her messy bob, dons breton stripes and ballet flats and whisks down the stairs from her fifth-floor apartment to grab a baguette before enigmatically texting two men who are pursuing her romantically." (She) has an espresso and a cigarette for lunch. She hops on a vintage bicycle and pedals past the Eiffel Tower on her way to a cafe where she will sit and read Baudelaire with her fluffy white dog at her feet." — AFP

108 non-USA players in NBA

Los Angeles, Oct. 23: The 2019-20 NBA season opened on Tuesday with 108 international players from 38 nations, including 16 Canadians a record for the most players from any non-US nation, the league announced.

It is the sixth consecutive season the NBA has opened with more than 100 players from beyond US borders. The league set records with 113 global players from 42 non-US nations to begin the 2016-17 and 2017-18 campaigns.

Nine Australians, eight Frenchman, seven Croatians and six Serbians are the

biggest groups from other nations on NBA opening night rosters.

Six Canadians were taken in June's NBA Draft, breaking the record of five French players in 2016.

Among NBA clubs, the Dallas Mavericks have an NBA-high seven international players. Philadelphia and Phoenix each have six. Memphis, Utah, San Antonio, Toronto, Oklahoma City, Sacramento and Washington all have five.

The NBA's 74th campaign began with a 30 players who took part in the development program. —AFP

Shaquille backs Rockets' GM over China-NBA row

Los Angeles, Oct. 23: NBA legend Shaquille O'Neal gave his support to Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey on Tuesday, saying the executive "was right" in his comments that ignited a furore between the NBA and China.

Speaking on TNT television's Inside the NBA show, former Los Angeles Lakers star O'Neal said Morey was entitled to tweet support for Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters earlier this month.

"Daryl Morey was right," O'Neal said. "Whenever you see something wrong going on anywhere in the world, you should have the right to say 'That's not right' and that's what he



Shaquille O'Neal

did." O'Neal said nothing should inhibit free speech.

"We as American people do a lot of business in China," O'Neal said.

"They know and understand our values, and we understand their values. "And one of our best val-

ues here in America is free speech.

"We're allowed to say what we want to say and we're allowed to speak up about injustices, and that's just how it goes.

"And if people don't understand that, that's something that they have to deal with."

Morey triggered a crisis earlier this month after tweeting an image captioned "Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong."

It came right before the LA Lakers and Brooklyn Nets arrived in China for what proved to be a tense exhibition tour, with broadcasters refusing to air the games, public anger raging, and local sponsors cutting ties with the NBA. —AFP

PARALYMPIC ATHLETICS

Vervoort dies by euthanasia

Brussels, Oct. 23: Belgian Paralympic champion Marieke Vervoort ended her life through euthanasia at the age of 40 on Tuesday, Belgian media reported.

Euthanasia is legal in Belgium and the spiky-haired athlete announced her intentions after the Rio Games in 2016 to follow that path if her degenerative condition worsened her suffering.

But she said at the time that sport had given her a reason to keep living.

"I'm still enjoying every little moment. When the moment comes when I have more bad days than good days, then I have my euthanasia papers, but the time is not there yet," she told a news conference during the 2016 Paralympic Games.

Vervoort suffered a degenerative muscle disease that caused constant pain, paralysis in her legs and left her barely able to sleep, and gradually her life became torture.

She was just 14 years old when diagnosed but Vervoort pursued a sporting life with passion — playing wheelchair bas-



In this file pic, Belgium's Marieke Vervoort reacts after winning the silver medal for the women's 400 m (T52) of the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

ketball, swimming and racing in triathlons.

She won the 100m gold and 200m silver wheelchair races at the 2012 London Games, as well as the 400m silver and 100m bronze in Brazil four years later.

By then her eyesight had deteriorated and she suffered from epileptic attacks, and she said that

Rio would be her last competition.

"After the Paralympic Games, when I quit, I'm going to enjoy every little moment in my life and I'm going to put more energy in my family and friends, which I couldn't do with top sports because I had to train every day," she said in 2016.

Vervoort signed the paperwork to be euthanised back in 2008.

She said in Rio that access to legal assisted dying had given her the courage to continue living for as long as she had, and insisted the practice should not be characterised as "murder."

"It gives a feeling of rest to people." —AFP

RIVER REACHES COPA FINAL DESPITE LOSS

Buenos Aires, Oct. 23: Argentinian powerhouse River Plate will defend its Copa Libertadores title after eliminating archrivals Boca Juniors in the semifinals.

River Plate lost to Boca 1-0 on Tuesday at La Bombonera stadium, but advanced thanks to a 2-0 win in the first leg at the Monumental de Nunez earlier in October.

Venezuelan Jan Hurtado scored the only goal of the match at 80 minutes after a free kick from the right wing. It was one of the few opportunities Boca had in the entire match.

River seeks its fifth South American crown in the single-match final in Santiago on Nov. 23.

Street protests against transportation rises have rocked the Chilean capital, but South America's soccer body CONMEBOL said it does not have an alternate plan for the Copa Libertadores decider.

River's opponent will be known on Wednesday, when Brazil's Flamengo hosts Gremio. —AP

Postage stamp on US great Palmer

Washington, Oct. 23: Iconic golf champion Arnold Palmer, a seven-time major winner and sports marketing pioneer, will be recognized with a US postage stamp in 2020, the US Postal Service announced on Tuesday.

Palmer, who died in 2016 at age 87, was a four-time Masters champion from 1958-1964 who also won the 1960 US Open and 1961 and 1962 British Opens. He won 62 US PGA Tour events and was a 1974 inductee into the World Golf Hall of Fame.

The US Postal Service will pay tribute to Palmer for his positive impact and rise from humble beginnings to global champion, noting, "with drive and charisma, he helped transform a game once seen as a pastime for the elite into a sport enjoyed by the masses."

The stamp, designed by art director Antonio

Alcala, features a photo by James Drake of Palmer competing at the 1964 US Open at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland, with Palmer's name in the top left corner. "To have my father celebrated in this way is a true honor," said Amy Saunders, Palmer's daughter and chairwoman of the Arnold and Winnie Palmer Foundation.

"It's something I think he would be proud of as both an individual and as an American and it's a wonderful way to preserve his legacy." The "Forever" stamp, set to always be equal in value to the US first class mail price, will be the second for a Latrobe, Pennsylvania, native after children's television show host "Mr. Rogers", Fred Rogers, was honored in 2018.

An exact date and site for First Day of Issue will be declared later. —AFP



Honour

Former South Africa skipper Graeme Smith has been elected an Honorary Life Member of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), custodians of the game's law

Dada takes fresh guard

Ganguly vows corruption-free BCCI after becoming president

Mumbai, Oct. 23: Clad in his captain's navy blue blazer, Sourav Ganguly on Wednesday promised a "corruption-free, same-for-all BCCI", a philosophy that, he said, guided his tenure as India skipper from 2000 to 2005. Elected unopposed to the top position in the world's richest cricket Board, the bespectacled 47-year-old also gave enough indications that he would run the show the way he wants and is unlikely to be influenced. "I will do it the way I know, I will do it the way which I feel is best for the BCCI with no compromise on credibility. Corruption-free and same for all BCCI. That's the way I led India and that's the way I will take this organisation forward," said the man with more than 18,000 international runs under his belt. Hard to miss at his maiden press interaction after taking charge was the India blazer that he was wearing. "I got it when I was captain of India but I did not realise that it is so loose. But I decided I will wear it," he said.

He will be at the helm for nine months because the Supreme Court-mandated reforms require a cooling off period after a six-year run as an office-bearer. Ganguly has already been Cricket Association of Bengal Secretary and President. Ganguly couldn't help but recall the time he took over as team captain. The sport's integrity was in tatters that year after the 2000 match-fixing scandal and Ganguly was handed the responsibility of resurrecting it. Resurrection is once again what is required after three years of administrative limbo, incidentally also caused by corruption — the 2013 IPL spot-fixing scandal. Ironically, Mohammed Azharuddin was at the centre of the 2000 scandal and will now be his Board colleague as Hyderabad Cricket Association President. The two former teammates hugged each other after Wednesday's meeting. "Coincidentally, fortunately or unfortunately, there was a similar situation when I took over as captain and captained India for six years," Ganguly said referring to, what are widely considered, the dark days of Indian cricket. "It's a similar sort of a situation where things need to be brought back to place, reforms need to be done, huge amount of money to be paid to state associations so it's a lot of work," he added.

'Here to make Kohli's life easier'

Laying down his immediate priorities, Ganguly said a call to current skipper Virat Kohli is in order. "Virat Kohli is the most important man in Indian cricket, we will listen to him. I will speak to Virat Kohli tomorrow, we will support him in every possible way whatever he wants," he said. "We are here to work for Indian cricket. We will do that to the best of our ability," he added. Ganguly said he will also sit with the team management which also includes head coach Ravi Shastri. "It will be a proper discussion and everything will be mutually discussed but be rest assured, we are here to make their life easier, not make their life difficult. Everything is on the basis of performance," the BCCI president was clear.

'Conflict is still an issue'

Ganguly was recently caught in the conflict of interest turmoil that has plagued the game and was asked to explain his multiple roles — CAB President and Delhi IPL franchise mentor — by the Board's Ethics Officer. He acknowledged the issue is noteworthy but said it won't come in the way of appointing the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), which handles appointments of coaches, support staff and other committees. "Conflict is still an issue... (But) we have to create CAC because they will appoint a lot of selectors and other members which are important part of Indian cricket, so we will do that and we will make sure that they don't have any conflict of interest," he asserted.

'Dhoni's stature will be given respect'

Ganguly said the matter of Mahendra Singh Dhoni's future in international cricket will be addressed but vowed to accord the two-time World Cup winning captain respect during his tenure. Ganguly said he doesn't know what is in Dhoni's mind but promised that a player of his stature will be given respect. "It depends on him. Even when I was left out and when the entire world said he will never make it, I believed in myself and came back and played for four years,"

Ganguly said. "You know champions don't finish quickly. I don't know what's in his mind and what he thinks about his career. So we will deal with that you know," he added.

'Focus on relationship with ICC'

The relationship with the International Cricket Council will also be in focus during his tenure and Ganguly is confident of getting India its due. "India is to get \$372 million from the ICC in the five-year cycle. Till now we have got whatever it is and we will make sure we get our due. We will work with the ICC and take this forward," he said. He reiterated his commitment to improving the domestic cricket structure. "The structures are there, the tournaments are there. In the last three years the matches have doubled actually. When I played for Bengal and some of my colleagues played for the other states there were about 1000 games to be played at. Now there are 2000 games between states and the affiliates.

"So we have to account for it. We have to make sure the best tournament in the country is competitive, and it remains important to everyone now because that's where you get the Kohlis and MS Dhonis, Ajinkya Rahanes and Rohit Sharmas of Indian cricket," he said. In the end, Ganguly said it is about respect and everybody would get that. "Till the time I am around."

'Hopeful of Bangla tour'

Ganguly expressed optimism that Bangladesh's tour of India will go ahead as planned as their Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has "given her consent". The upcoming tour 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. However, Ganguly has maintained that Bangladesh will turn up for the tour starting November 3. "It's their internal matter. (But) the Bangladesh PM has said she will turn up for the Test in Kolkata. If she has given her consent, I don't see how the national team won't," Ganguly said.

— PTI



I'm absolutely satisfied with my career. I have no regrets.

— Abhishek Nayar, veteran Mumbai all-rounder after announcing his retirement from all forms of cricket

SHORT TAKES

Rohit enters top 10 in all three formats

Dubai: Rohit Sharma has become the third India batsman to reach the top 10 of ICC rankings in all three formats after a memorable series against South Africa in which he donned the new role of Test opener. Rohit emulated captain Virat Kohli and retired opener Gautam Gambhir as his knock of 212 in the third Test in Ranchi helped him advance 12 places to 10th position in the ICC Test Player Rankings. Ajinkya Rahane's knock of 116 in Ranchi has helped him equal his career-high rank of fifth place, achieved earlier in November 2016. He remains the third-best Indian batsman in terms of Test rankings after Kohli and Pujara. With Mayanka Agarwal in 18th position, India have finished the series with five batsmen in the top 20. Rohit's player of the series effort of 529 runs helped him make huge strides from 44th place before the series. The 'Hitman' has held a career-high ranking of second in ODIs (in February 2018) and seventh in T20Is (November 2018).

— PTI

Mortaza named Bangla mediator

Dhaka: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has reportedly appointed ODI captain Mashrafe Mortaza as the mediator to resolve the dispute between country's cricket board and its cricketers, who have gone on an indefinite strike over pay and benefits. According to a report in 'ESPNCricinfo', the players are likely to meet with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials later on Wednesday. "After the media conference last evening, I spoke to a senior player who told me that they would get back to us at any time after discussing among themselves. We expect to sit with them at 5pm today," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury said in a press briefing at noon. Samakal, a local daily, quoted BCB Director Mahbubul Anam as saying that Hasina enquired about the crisis with Mortaza, who led the team in the 2019 World Cup. "She wanted to know the latest about cricket's situation," he said. Then she asked Mashrafe to tell the players to return to the field. — PTI

GUHA TURNS DOWN BCCI PAYMENT

New Delhi: Noted historian Ramchandra Guha on Wednesday said he didn't expect to be paid for his tenure in the outgoing Committee of Administrators and had made this clear in the CoA's very first meeting. Guha declined a payment of Rs 40 lakh along with another former CoA member, banker Vikram Limaye, who was to be paid Rs 50.5 lakh. "I had indicated in the first meeting itself that I did not expect or want any payment," Guha said. Limaye has also refused to accept the payment due to him, citing the same reason. "I had mentioned this in the first CoA meeting itself that I won't be taking any compensation for this. It is not my current position, I had articulated this... It is a personal thing. It has got nothing to do with anything else,"

Limaye said. The Vinod Rai-led CoA, which demits office on Wednesday, was originally a four-member panel appointed by the Supreme Court on January 30, 2017. Rai and fellow panel member Diana Edulji will be getting around Rs 3.5 crore each for their 33-month tenure. The 61-year-old Guha resigned from the CoA in July 2017, citing personal reasons, while Limaye also put in his papers subsequently to take charge as the Managing Director and CEO of National Stock Exchange (NSE). — PTI



Ramchandra Guha



Sourav Ganguly with the newly elected apex council members.

— BCCI

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly needs no introduction but the four other office-bearers who were elected unopposed here on Wednesday do. Following is the synopsis of their journey in cricket administration.

JAY SHAH, secretary

The 31-year-old is the youngest office-bearer in the BCCI. Jay, who is Home Minister Amit Shah's son, has been with the Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA) since 2009. He was elected GCA joint-secretary in September 2013.



ARUN SINGH DHUMAL, treasurer

He too hails from a political family with his elder brother Anurag Thakur currently being a Minister of State (Finance and Corporate Affairs). Thakur was removed as BCCI president in January 2017. Dhumal, 44, served as vice-president of Himachal cricket body, HPCA between 2012 and 2015 when Thakur was its president. Dhumal also led a three-member ad-hoc committee which was formed to run HPCA in the wake of Lodha panel recommendations to reform Indian cricket. He also has the experience of representing HPCA in the BCCI.



JAYESH GEORGE, joint secretary

The 50-year-old has years of experience in cricket administration, having been part of Kerala Cricket Association (KCA) as its secretary, joint secretary, treasurer and most recently the president. He has been part of the KCA since 2005.



MAHIM VERMA, vice-president

His father P C Verma has served as secretary of the Cricket Association of Uttarakhand (CAU). Mahim, 45, himself was CAU's joint-secretary for 10 years until September when he was elected the association's secretary, soon after the body got BCCI's recognition.



ROLL OF HONOUR (SINCE THE MILLENNIUM)

AC Muthiah	(1999-2001)
Jagmohan Dalmiya	(2001-2004)
Ranbir Singh Mahendra	(2004-2005)
Sharad Pawar	(2005-2008)
Shashank Manohar	(2008-2011)
N. Srinivasan	(2011-2013)
Jagmohan Dalmiya (Interim)	(2013-2013)
N. Srinivasan	(2013-2014)
Shivlal Yadav (Interim)	(2014-2014)
Sunil Gavaskar (IPL Interim)	(2014-2014)
Jagmohan Dalmiya (died in office)	(2015-2015)
Shashank Manohar (Resigned)	(2015-2016)
Anurag Thakur (Sacked)	(2016-2017)
CK Khanna (Interim)	(2017-2019)
Sourav Ganguly	(2019-Present)

DADA'S CHALLENGES

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly will have his hands full during his nine-month tenure as he deals with the impending challenges both cricketing as well as administrative. Here are the issues that the former India captain will need to tackle as the head of world cricket's richest body.

- Position of India in the ICC
- Tax rebates for 2016 World T20 and future ICC events in India
- Payment of domestic cricketers
- Domestic Structure
- Day/Night Test cricket
- Conflict of Interest Issue

TN to meet Karnataka in title round

Bengaluru, Oct. 23: K L Rahul hit 88 (111 balls, 6 fours, 1 six) and shared a century partnership with fellow opener Devdutt Padikkal (92) to power Karnataka to a nine-wicket over Chhattisgarh and into the final of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Wednesday, where it will face Tamil Nadu, which beat Gujarat by five wickets in the other semifinal. In the Tamil Nadu-Gujarat encounter, the Dinesh Karthik led side chased down the rival's 177 for 9 in a game reduced

to 40 overs due to a late start owing to overnight rain and a wet outfield, with an over to spare, thanks to an enterprising half-century by the talented M Shahruckh Khan. Gujarat couldn't recover from the early loss of their batting mainstays-Parthiv Patel and Priyank Panchal and could only make 177 for 9 in 40 overs. India off-spinner R. Ashwin, who joined the Tamil Nadu team after being part of the squad that whitewashed South Africa in the 3-test series,

struck the first blow, dismissing Panchal for 3. He bowled well to finish with 1/21 from his quota of eight overs. Sundar struck a big blow for TN by getting rid of Parthiv Patel for 13 to leave Gujarat at 16/2 in the fifth over. Dhruv Raval was the top-scorer with 40 while Axar Patel and tail-ender CT Gaja were the other important contributors. For Tamil Nadu, medium-pacer M Mohammed with 3/33 was the best bowler, while Sundar, R

Ashwin and leggie Murugan Ashwin and T Natarajan scalped a wicket each. In reply, Tamil Nadu saw the experienced and in-form Murali Vijay depart early, bowled by Gaja. The prolific Baba Aparajith didn't last too long, caught by Parthiv off Axar Patel for 6. Abhinav Mukund, who has been in good form in the league phase and Dinesh Karthik steadied the ship. However, the loss of three quick wickets put Tamil Nadu under pres-

sure before Sundar and Shahruckh took the team home in style, winning with an over to spare. — PTI

Brief scores: Chhattisgarh 223 in 49.4 overs (Amandeep Khare 78, Sumit Ruhikar 40, V. Koushik 4/46) lost to Karnataka 229/1 in 41 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 92, KL Rahul 88*, Ajay Mandal 1/51). Gujarat 177/9 in 40 overs (Dhruv Raval 40, Axar Patel 37, M. Mohammed 3/23) lost to Tamil Nadu 181/5 in 39 overs (Shahruckh Khan 56*, Dinesh Karthik 47).

BANGLADESH SERIES: SAMSON SET TO BE INCLUDED AS COVER FOR PANT

Mumbai, Oct. 23: India skipper Virat Kohli's workload could be a topic of discussion while Rishabh Pant could have prolific Sanju Samson for cover during three T20s when the selection committee picks the squad for the upcoming series against Bangladesh here on Thursday. Kohli has featured in 48 out of the 56 games India have played across formats since October 2018. However, the selection committee will leave it on Kohli to decide whether he

needs a break or continue playing. There is expected to be serious discussions about rookie Mumbai all-rounder Shivam Dubey, who might replace an injured Hardik Pandya for the all-rounder's slot, primarily based on his big-hitting prowess. Apart from the three-match T20 series which starts in New Delhi on November 3, followed by matches at Rajkot and Nagpur, Bangladesh will also play two Tests. — PTI



Newly-elected president of the BCCI Sourav Ganguly during a press conference at BCCI headquarters at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

— Debashish Dey



Kane-ology

Tottenham's skipper Harry Kane wants his team to carry on the momentum from their 5-0 win over Red Star into the upcoming matches



All the credit is for him. He's a guy whose physicality is incredible.

— Pep Guardiola, Manchester City coach, on Raheem Sterling's heroics in their Champions League game against Atalanta

SHORT TAKES

Sai moves up to 11th, Sindhu 6th

New Delhi: Top Indian shuttler B. Sai Praneeth jumped one place to reach career-best 11th spot while world champion P.V. Sindhu remained unchanged at sixth in the BWF world rankings released on Tuesday.

Praneeth, who won a bronze in the World Championships in August, had a best men's singles career rank of 12th before Tuesday. He had beaten Olympic champion Lin Dan in the Denmark Open last week in the round of 32 before losing to Kento Momota of Japan in the pre-quarterfinals.

Kidambi Srikanth dropped one place to 10th while Sameer Verma also slipped one spot to be 18th in the list headed by Momota.

In the women's singles, Sindhu remained static at sixth while another Olympic medallist Saina Nehwal moved down one place to be ninth in the list headed by Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei.

Bayern fans are beaten in Greece

Piraeus, Greece: A UEFA Youth League match between Olympiakos and Bayern Munich in Athens was abandoned on Tuesday after a masked gang attacked visiting fans leaving at least seven people injured. Police said 80 people arrived at the Rentis Athletic Centre in Piraeus on 40 scooters. About 30 of them, wearing masks or helmets, invaded the venue and assaulted Bayern fans with clubs.

The attack came with Bayern Munich leading 4-0 after 84 minutes. The match was abandoned. Six Bayern Munich fans were injured as well as one Greek security guard. Two of the visiting fans were taken to the hospital for treatment. The few police at the venue were unable to stop the attack or make arrests. After the incident, Olympiakos players went into the stands and asked the Bayern Munich supporters for forgiveness. "Olympiakos FC strongly condemns today's hooligan attack at the Rentis Athletic Centre during the match," a statement from the club said. — AFP

SPANISH BODY APPROVES EL CLASICO DATE

Madrid: The rearranged Clasic between Barcelona and Real Madrid will be played on December 18 despite opposition from La Liga, the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) confirmed on Tuesday. Spain's most prestigious fixture, which was due to take place at Camp Nou on Saturday, was postponed last week because of violent pro-independence protests in Catalonia. La Liga had proposed December 4 or 7 and may decide to appeal. "The decision of the Competition Committee has taken place after analysing in recent days the proposals of both clubs, who were invited to agree a date and decided on December 18," an RFEF statement read. "It has also analysed a report from the RFEF Competitions Area as well as numerous reports submitted by La Liga, which are not binding." — AFP

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Manchester City's midfielder Raheem Sterling (left) scores his side's fifth goal during their UEFA Champions League Group 'C' match against Atalanta at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, northwest England, on Tuesday. City won 5-1. — AFP

Sterling steers Man city

Citizens' midfielder scores hat-trick; Five-star PSG bash up Brugge

Manchester, Oct. 23: Pep Guardiola saluted the "extraordinary" Raheem Sterling after Manchester City's majestic winger hit a brilliant 11-minute hat-trick in Tuesday's 5-1 thrashing of Atalanta.

Guardiola's side were rocked by Ruslan Malinovsky's first half penalty in the Champions League clash at the Etihad Stadium. But City responded superbly as Sergio Agüero struck twice before the interval. Sterling had provided the assists for both of Agüero's goals, but the England star was just getting warmed up.

After the interval, Sterling struck three times to complete a personal masterclass that underlined his rise in the Guardiola era from enigmatic playmaker to lethal finisher. Sterling has emerged as City's driving force over the last 18 months and his second hat-trick of the season confirmed his place among the world's best players.

DYBALA SLAMS TWO TO HELP JUVE WIN

Maurizio Sarri praised Juventus for not losing their heads as Paulo Dybala's quick-fire second-half double rescued a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Lokomotiv Moscow in their Champions League Group D clash in Turin on Tuesday. Dybala pulled the hosts level on 77 minutes and added a second two minutes later to keep Juventus on course in Group D with seven points after three games. Sarri's side had drawn with Atletico Madrid and beaten Bayer Leverkusen 3-0 in the last two games. — Agencies



Paris Saint-Germain's French forward Kylian Mbappe (centre) scores during their UEFA Champions League Group 'A' match against Brugge at the Jan Breydel stadium in Bruges on Tuesday. PSG won the match 5-0. — AFP

Mbappe serves triple treat

Bruges (Belgium), Oct. 23: Substitute Kylian Mbappe scored a hat-trick as Paris Saint-Germain moved a step closer to the Champions League last 16 with a 5-0 victory over previously unbeaten Club Brugge on Tuesday.

The World Cup winner, who has only started four games this season because of thigh and hamstring injuries, netted three times in the space of 20 minutes to help PSG go five points clear of Real Madrid going five points clear in the Group A.

Mauro Icardi netted the other two goals as fellow Argentinian Angel Di Maria directly set-up three of his side's efforts. For the third time in Europe this season PSG's Thomas Tuchel was unable to start his first-choice attacking trio of Neymar, who is

suspended in Europe, Mbappe and Edinson Cavani who is injured. Brugge coach Philippe Clement, who has guided the club to the top of the Belgian Pro League, was without captain Ruud Vormer as the Netherlands midfielder served a suspension for a red card he received in the draw at Real.

The visitors claimed an early lead as Di Maria received a long-range ball on the right flank. The Argentinian winger curled in an early cross with the outside of his left foot and Icardi beat Simon Mignolet at his near

post after seven minutes. Champions League debutant Charles De Ketelaere missed a good chance to equalise after half an hour but the 18-year-old failed to worry Keylor Navas. Icardi had a chance to double the Parisians' advantage six minutes into the second-half but his effort was well-saved by Mignolet. The Ballon d'Or candidate repeated his feats from Friday's Ligue 1 victory over Nice by scoring and claiming an assist within 30 minutes. — AFP

Istanbul, Oct. 23: Real Madrid came away from Istanbul with three crucial Champions League points on Tuesday with a 1-0 away win at Galatasaray thanks to a first-half Toni Kroos goal and Eden Hazard's threatening creativity. Pressure on coach Zinedine Zidane will be alleviated after Madrid had been beaten in their first European game by PSG, before they had to fight back from 2-0 down at home to Club Brugge to snatch a point in their second match of the campaign. — AFP

Spurs spray goals at Star

London, Oct. 23: Tottenham's 5-0 Champions League mauling of Red Star Belgrade will count for little unless they use it as a catalyst to turn around their miserable Premier League form. Tuesday's result at home against the Serbian champions revives Mauricio Pochettino's sides hopes of European progress after a humiliating 2-7 defeat by Bayern Munich earlier this month.

Spurs are second in Group B with four points after three matches, behind leaders Bayern. Kane hopes Tottenham would take the momentum from their win into their upcoming games. "At home we were expected to win this game so we can't get too carried away with it," he said. "We have to stay focused and take the positives and take them into the Premier League," the skipper added.

LEWANDOWSKI DOES THE RESCUE ACT

The Germans needed two Robert Lewandowski goals to dig themselves out of trouble in their 3-2 win at Olympiakos in the Champions League on Tuesday. Lewandowski maintained his phenomenal record, scoring for his 12th game in a row, to leave him with 18 goals in 13 games in all competitions. — Agencies



Tottenham's Son Heung-min (left) celebrates after scoring his side's third goal during their Champions League, Group 'B', match against Red Star Belgrade at Tottenham Hotspur stadium in London on Tuesday. Spurs won 5-0. — AP

RUSSIA BRACE FOR LENGTHY OLYMPIC BAN

Moscow, Oct. 23: Russia's anti-doping chief is predicting a lengthy Olympic ban for the national squad, lashing out at Moscow authorities who he says handed over falsified lab data to international investigators.

The accusations are the latest scandal to hit Russian sport after the country was banned from competing in several international competitions over state-sponsored doping.

"Russia's Olympic squad will be prevented from participating fully in the Olympic Games in Tokyo... I think that this will also happen at the (Winter Olympic) Games in China," the head of Russia's RUSADA agency, Yuri Ganus said.

The best-case scenario in his view is very limited participation "by certain athletes, by invitation", as happened at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. He expects other penalties too, including restrictions on holding international tournaments in Russia, exclusion of Russians from international sports federations and fines.

In September, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) demanded Russia explain "inconsistencies" in electronic data it handed over which listed results of tests carried out under the laboratory's previous leadership. — AFP

● The previous Russian body had submitted falsified lab data to international investigators. Now, the RUSADA head expects a long ban.

Praveen 1st to clinch Wushu gold

Shanghai, Oct. 23: Praveen Kumar on Wednesday became the first Indian man to win a wushu World Championships gold, beating Russel Diaz of Philippines in the 48kg category here.

The Indian saw off his Filipino opponent 2-1 in the men's sanda event of the 15th World Wushu Championships. Praveen had earlier defeated Uzbekistan's Khasan Ikromov 2-0 in the semifinal on Tuesday to set up the summit clash with Diaz.

In 2017, Pooja Kadian became the first Indian to be crowned world champion in wushu after she defeated Evgeniya Stepanova of Russia in the women's 75 kg sanda event. — PTI

● Praveen Kumar beat Russel Diaz 2-1 in the men's 48kg final, making him the first Indian to win a gold at the wushu World Championships.

Goa open ISL account in style

Goa, Oct. 23: FC Goa struck the right chords on the field to ease past Chennaiyin FC 3-0 in their first game of the Hero Indian Super League 2019-20 season at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Wednesday.

The ISL runners-up were a step ahead of their opponents in all areas of the field and were the better team overall.

New signing Seiminlen Doungel scored on his debut to break the deadlock in the 30th minute. All-time ISL top-scorer Ferran Corominas struck in the 62nd minute and substitute Carlos Pena added a third in the 81st minute to consign an unimpressive Chennaiyin to a defeat.

In the 19th minute, Ferran Corominas picked up the ball from midfield and released Seiminlen



Chennaiyin FC goalkeeper Vishal Kaith (in green) and defender Lucian Goian foil an FC Goa attempt during their ISL match on Wednesday. Goa won 3-0.

Doungel into the box. Chennaiyin goalkeeper Vishal Kaith was on to the ball in a flash before

Goa's new signing could pounce and take a shot. A minute later, Manvir Singh attempted a strike

after making room for himself at the edge of the box and once again, Kaith was up to the task.

Heartbreak for Srikanth, Kashyap, Sikki, Ashwini

Paris, Oct. 23: India's Kidambi Srikanth and Parupalli Kashyap were both ousted in the opening round of the French Open here on Wednesday.

While Srikanth fought hard for 55 minutes against second seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei before losing 15-21, 21-7, 21-14, Kashyap was no match for Hong Kong's Ng Ka Long Angus, losing 11-21, 9-21.

Another Indian male shuttler Sameer Verma suffered the same fate as he lost 22-20, 18-21, 18-21 to Japan's Kenta Nishimoto in the first round.

Shubhanker Dey now remains the lone Indian in the men's singles contest, having progressed to the second round where he will

be up against Shesha Hiren Rhustavito of Indonesia. India's challenge, however, came to an end in the opening round of the mixed doubles event with the ouster of the pairs of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa and Pranaav Jerry Chopra and N. Sikki Reddy.

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While Rankireddy and Ponappa lost 17-21, 18-21 against fourth seed Seo Seung Jae and Chae Yujung of Korea, Chopra and Reddy combination was shown the door by England's Chris Adcock and Gabrielle Adcock 13-21, 18-21.

The only Indians left at the event are Shubhanker Dey and P.V. Sindhu.

Earlier, Shubhanker had notched up an upset win over Tommy Sugiarto of Indonesia 15-21, 21-14, 21-17 to make the second round.

While Sindhu beat Li 21-15 21-13 in a match that lasted 44 minutes in her opening round of the BWF Super 750 tournament. — Agencies



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