

**NATION 5**

PM PRAISES EFFORTS OF CENTRE, DELHI GOVT IN CONTAINING COVID

**MONEY 6**

PETROL, DIESEL FUTURES TRADING TO START SOON ON EXCHANGES

**SPECIAL 7**

ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

VIJAYAWADA, SUNDAY JULY 12, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



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LYRICS IN HIS VEINS

12

## AMITABH TESTED POSITIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS, ADMITTED IN HOSPITAL

Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan has tested positive for coronavirus. He has been admitted to Mumbai's Nanavati hospital. Amitabh took to Twitter to share the news. He tweeted, "I have tested Covid positive... shifted to Hospital... hospital informing authorities... family and staff undergone tests... results awaited... All that have been in close proximity to me in the last 10 days are requested to please get themselves tested!" Amitabh Bachchan was last seen in Shoojit Sircar's comedy-drama Gulabo Sitabo alongside Ayushmann Khurrana. The film was initially going to be released in theaters, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, it premiered on Amazon Prime Video.



## 15-FOOT LONG KING COBRA RESCUED FROM TAMIL NADU VILLAGE

A 15-foot long King Cobra was rescued today by forest officials from a village near Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. The snake was spotted in Narasipuram village in Thondamuthur, a suburb of Coimbatore city. The village is located in the foothills of Velliangiri mountain in the Western Ghats mountain chain. Western Ghats, a biodiversity hub, is home to the world's longest venomous snake, King Cobra. The snake was later taken to the Siruvani forest area and was released in the wild by the officials. Recently, a Russell's viper, one of the most venomous snakes, was spotted in a house in a village near Coimbatore.



## BIOCON DRUG RECEIVES DCGI NOD FOR USE IN MODERATE TO SEVERE COVID-19 CASES

Biotechnology major Biocon on Saturday announced that its breakthrough drug, Itolizumab has received Drugs Controller General of India's (DCGI) approval for its use in moderate to severe COVID-19 patients. DCGI has approved to market Itolizumab (ALZUMAb) injection 25mg and 5mL solution for emergency use in India for the treatment of cytokine release syndrome (CRS) in moderate to severe ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome) patients due to COVID-19, Biocon said in a release. It said Itolizumab is the first novel biologic therapy to be approved anywhere in the world for treating patients with moderate to severe COVID-19 complications.



## SINGAPORE PM LEE RETURNS TO POWER WITH CLEAR MANDATE

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's People's Action Party has retained power with a 'clear mandate' in the general election held amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, but the opposition staged its best performance ever by securing a record 10 seats in Parliament. The People's Action Party (PAP), in power since 1965, won 83 of 93 parliamentary seats or 61.2 per cent of the vote - down from nearly 70 per cent it had in the 2015 general election. In 2015, the PAP secured 83 seats out of 89 seats in 29 constituencies. The surprise this time was that the opposition Workers' Party secured 10 seats - its best result. Friday's election was widely seen as a referendum on the Prime Minister Lee's handling of the coronavirus outbreak.



**'ALL AND SUNDRY'**  
New Secretariat must be modern, not an exercise in vanity

2

# State wants guarantee from Centre for \$1bn investment

Centre cold to Buggana's 'ill-conceived' foreign investor proposal

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Is the Andhra Pradesh government trying to get a foreign loan of US 1 billion dollars (approximately Rs 7,500 crore) and wants the NDA government at the Centre to provide sovereign guarantee for this? Yes, if well-placed sources in the Central Government are to be believed. The source says there is more to AP Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy's trip to Delhi on Friday, than meets the eye.



Officially, a delegation led by Buggana met various Union Ministers, including Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman, and top bureaucrats in the Central Government on Friday and urged them to release grants pending to the State besides providing additional funds in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

delegation led by Buggana had a much bigger agenda behind his meeting Sitaraman. On top of the agenda was to get the Centre to agree to clear the decks for the AP government to get Centre's permission, and a sovereign guarantee, for foreign private investment of USD 1 Billion to AP government.

Buggana's meeting with Sitaraman is believed to have focused on this one single aspect, and his meeting MoS Finance, Anurag Thakur and also Niti Ayog CEO Amitabh Kant and Niti Ayog Advisor Avinash Mishra is a pointer in this direction, the sources say.

FRBM limits. Though the Centre recently allowed raising of FRBM limits, albeit with riders, it has yet to decide on direct foreign private investments.

In theory, the Centre has raised the fiscal deficit limit for States, under the FRBM, from 3 per cent to 5 per cent. But only 0.5 per cent of this rise is unconditional. The remaining 1.5 per cent is dependent on fulfilling certain unrealistic and impractical measures — including privatisation of power distribution, and enhancing revenues of urban local bodies.

Moreover there are limits to the Central government with regard to overall foreign loan to be raised as the country.

However, the AP Finance Minister did not get any positive signal from Central Ministers as the Centre itself is yet to decide on giving sovereign guarantee to the States.

# AP misled Godavari River Management Board, says TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Government of Telangana on Saturday alleged that the AP Government has misled the Godavari River Management Board on diversion of 3 tmc ft of water through the proposed Godavari-Pennar interlinking project.



In a latest letter addressed to the Godavari River Management Board secretary, the Telangana irrigation engineer-in-chief said that there was no correlation whatsoever between what was said by the AP Government on Godavari-Pennar interlinking, Chintalapudi and Pattiseema projects during a discussion on new projects at the recent board meetings and what was taking place on the ground.

increasing capacity of Polavaram right canal to meet the needs of farmers of Krishna Delta, Nagarjunasagar Right Canal ayacut, Rayalaseema region and Nellore district, he alleged. He noted that the Government of AP made a statement on the floor of the State Legislative Assembly during a discussion held on June 16.

"The Government of AP has been misleading the board intentionally to deny Telangana its due share of river water diverted through Polavaram and Pattiseema project," the letter said, demanding the Board to seek details of all projects pertaining to diversion of Godavari water into Krishna river.

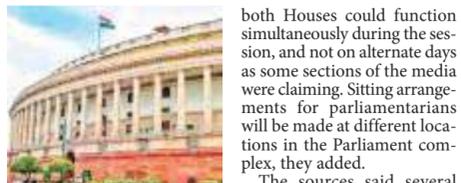
BJP uses electricity bills, Kejriwal's strength against him

5

# LS, RS Members to physically attend Monsoon Session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Secretary generals of both Houses of Parliament were asked on Saturday to make necessary arrangements for the upcoming Monsoon Session, which is likely to be physically attended by members while following social distancing norms, sources said.



It was conveyed to the top officials of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha that both the Houses are expected to function from their respective chambers, they said.

Presiding officers of both Houses Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday held deliberations on the logistics of organising the session in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The sources said options were being explored so that both Houses could function simultaneously during the session, and not on alternate days as some sections of the media were claiming. Sitting arrangements for parliamentarians will be made at different locations in the Parliament complex, they added.

# BJP offering MLAs 15 cr, trying to topple Govt: Gehlot

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot hit out at the BJP Saturday afternoon, accusing the party of playing politics and buying over MLAs to destabilise the Congress government in the state, even as the deadly coronavirus outbreak continues to affect the country. Gehlot alleged that the BJP, which is the main opposition in the state, was offering MLAs up to Rs 15 crore or "favours" to switch allegiances and help topple his government.

## ON THE MARK



DGP Gautam D Sawang tests newly-received ultra-modern weapons from Israel during his visit to the Sixth Battalion firing range at Mangalagiri and also tested ultra-modern weapons from Israel on Saturday. Senior IPS officers including State additional DGP Ravisanakar Ayyannar, P&L IG Nagendra Kumar, DIGs Rajasekhar Babu, Vijay Kumar and others also took a shot with the new weapons.

# 1,813 new cases, 17 deaths in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Each of the 13 districts in Andhra Pradesh has been reporting fresh cases of coronavirus resulting in a highest single-day spike of 1,813 cases on Saturday, taking the state aggregate to 27,235.

Anantapur district reported 311 Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, the highest in a district so far, followed by Chittoor with 300.

Kurnool and Anantapur districts crossed the 3,000-mark, registering 3,168 and 3,161 Covid-19 cases thus far with Chittoor, East Godavari, Guntur and Krishna having over 2,000 cases each.

Kadapa, SPS Nellore, Prakasam, Visakhapatnam and West Godavari districts have over 1,000 cases each, leaving Vizianagaram and Srikakulam with less than 1,000 cases each.

The latest bulletin said 17 deaths, the highest in a day so far, took the overall toll to 309 while 1,168 patients had recovered and been discharged from

hospitals in the last 24 hours. The overall number of recoveries stood at 14,393.

AP now has 12,333 active Covid-19 cases, it said. The Covid-19 tally of 27,035 included 24,222 locals, 2,385 from other states and 428 foreign returnees.

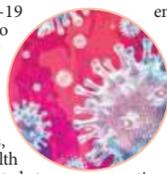
# India's Covid-19 recoveries cross 5-lakh mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The number of COVID-19 patients who have recovered in the country crossed the five-lakh mark on Saturday, the Union Health ministry said and attributed it to a number of measures taken by the Centre and the state governments, including implementation of containment zones and surveillance activities.

India's COVID-19 tally surged to 8,20,916 on Saturday while the death toll climbed to 22,123 with 519 people succumbing to the disease in 24 hours, according to the health ministry's data updated at 8 am.

A series of proactive, preventive and coordinated measures have been taken by the Centre and the state governments for containment and prevention of COVID-19, it said. Coupled with effective implementation of containment zones, surveillance activities, timely diagnosis and



# BJP, ally assert support to Amaravati as only capital

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The BJP and its ally in Andhra Pradesh, the Jana Sena, have in one voice said that they support Amaravati as the only capital of Andhra Pradesh.



"There shouldn't be any doubt among political parties that Amaravati is the only capital of AP" leaders of the two parties said. BJP Mahila Morcha in charge Daggubati Purandeswari in a statement said that during TDP rule, the Government was confined to graphics and photos pertaining to Amaravati capital city

Purandeswari said that the ruling party was concentrating on welfare schemes rather than development of the state and asserted that BJP will support the farmers of Amaravati

ment of the state and asserted that BJP will support the farmers of Amaravati who gave their land for the capital city. Elsewhere, BJP alliance Jana Sena Party president Pawan Kalyan made it clear that they would not allow the sacrifice of Amaravati farmers go waste. He said that the farming

community has sacrificed 34,000 acres of fertile agriculture land after Amaravati was decided the capital city for the State of Andhra Pradesh. He said that Jana Sena is reiterating its stand from the scratch that the government was taking a decision unilaterally insulting the farming community.

"Farmers, farm labourers and women are continuing restless agitation for the past 200 days to protect the capital city. There will be solidarity from the party to the ongoing movement in support of the capital city Amaravati. We stay support to them along with BJP, said Pawan Kalyan.

# 'Naalo..Natho YSR' English version soon

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

'Naalo..Natho YSR', a compilation of YSRCP honorary president YS Vijayalakshmi's memoirs about her late husband and former chief minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy, is receiving overwhelming response from the Telugu readers.



So much so, that a version of the book in English is planned soon. In proof of the late YSR's popularity among Telugu people, the book was sold out

within hours of its sale online, thereby creating a new record in online book sales.

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Ashadha & Krishna Paksha  
Panchangam  
Tithi : Shashthi: 01:32 pm  
Nakshatram: Uttara Bhadrpadac: Full Night  
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)  
Rahukalam: 09:07 am - 10:44 am  
Yamagandam: 01:58 pm - 03:36 pm  
Varjyam: 04:15 pm - 06:02 pm  
Gulika: 05:52 am - 07:29 am  
Good Time: (to start any important work)  
Amritakalam: 02:56 am - 04:44 am  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:55 am - 12:47 pm

**VIJAYAWADA WEATHER**  
Forecast: Mostly cloudy  
Temp: 34/27  
Humidity: 65%  
Sunrise: 05:49 am  
Sunset: 06:54 pm  
Current Weather Conditions  
Updated July 11, 2020 5:00 PM

**'ALL AND SUNDRY'**

The Telangana Secretariat has been razed and all that remains is dust, rubble, some buildings awaiting demolition and nostalgia for many.

In place of the ten blocks that straddled the 25-acre space will rise a structure six storeys high but enormous in length and depth.

The design has drawn unfair comparisons with the Palace of Versailles, France, and a mosque though to some it appears closer to St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican with all its domes and tall pillars.

But, it is way more sober than the garish, gold-plated complex originally planned at the Bison Polo Grounds in 2017. Had the Ministry of Defence handed over the land in Secunderabad, we would have to live with that monstrosity. The Ministry did

# New Secretariat must be modern, not an exercise in vanity

not relent and Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao decided to demolish the existing Secretariat.

The speed, the secrecy and the opacity that surrounded demolition of the 4.5 lakh sq.ft office space after the High Court's ruling in the government's favour is breathtaking. The media was not allowed within one km radius and even smartphones of staff and workers were prohibited inside to prevent photography.

The design of new Rs 500 crore Secretariat were instantly made public along with sketchy details stating that it would be an integrated complex. KCR zeroed on this design after vetting several blueprints submitted by Chennai-based architects Oscar and Ponni Concessao.

Ever since he took over, KCR has been very keen to leave his imprint on the fledgling State not merely in terms of new programmes and mega-projects

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like Kaleswaram lift irrigation project, Mission Bhagiratha and Mission Kakatiya.

Indeed, all Chief Ministers pursue efforts to make themselves immortal in history but KCR's ambition is a few notches higher. Never mind if his plans involve a bold step like redesigning the Pranahita-Chevella project, pulling down heritage structures like Osmania General Hospital and Errum Manzil or allowing others like the 132-year-old G block in the Secretariat to become decrepit. A rough calculation shows

that the buildings in the Secretariat have an average life of 30-35 years, keeping aside the G block and the stone structure used by the Electricity Department. Oldest among these is the K block built in 1954 while the newest was receiving finishing touches in 2015. To describe their demolition as a waste of money would be missing the point as Telangana is a rich State which earned Rs 672 crore from liquor alone out of a total Rs 5,962 crore revenue in June 2020.

It exposes a medieval mind-



**S NAGESH KUMAR**  
Former Resident Editor,  
The Hindu

set of present day rulers who justify their wanton extravagance either because a particular project was included in the party's election manifesto or out of a sense of entitlement arising out of their thundering electoral mandate.

History is replete with instances of how conquerors, after demolishing palaces built

by the vanquished, built their own structures depicting their culture and architectural style. The Qutb Minar in Delhi was built as a tower of victory by the first Sultan of Delhi Qutbuddin Aibak over Jain temples whose pillars can be seen even today.

The Rs 20,000 crore Central Vista Project of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lutyen's Delhi and AP Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy's 3-capital plan scrapping Amaravati fall into this slot.

Modi's plan is to put his stamp by demolishing buildings housing various Ministries alongside the Rajpath, constructing a new integrated Secretariat, a new Parliament House and residences for the Vice-President and PM by 2025 to coincide with the RSS centenary.

KCR must be extra cautious to see that his pet project is not likened to the Central Vista Project which is being panned

for destruction of national heritage. The project has dismayed urbanists for its lack of transparency and absence of consultations with urban planners.

It would be a tall order to expect openness in the design and construction of the new Secretariat judging by the blanket of secrecy surrounding the demolition.

KCR himself was caught unawares when a temple and a mosque were wrecked, forcing him to apologise.

Here, the broader point is selection of the right design, its compatibility with the surroundings, particularly Hussainagar, its harmony with Telangana's Kakatiya and Deccani culture and the wisdom of having 6-7 lakh sq.ft of office in one gigantic building just to give its facade an impressive appearance.

The reasons assigned for demolishing the Secretariat such as inadequate parking

space, old electrical wiring, non-compliance with fire safety norms were unconvincing. So did the excuses by the Centre for abandoning the Parliament house that tech upgradation and retrofitting could save.

The Writers' Building in Kolkata, and Fort St. George in Chennai are very old structures but continue to serve as the Secretariats of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu respectively. Buildings are not given up due to their age alone.

The nub of the matter is KCR's strong belief in Vaastu shastra. Oscar and Ponni have said the building was designed to meet his belief in Vaastu.

We must hope that his grand Secretariat complex will sync with his successor's beliefs so that he does not venture into building a new one. A public building should be safe, functional, technologically modern and not an exercise in vanity.

## Girl records selfie video before ending life

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A degree college student Ramya from Nellore committed suicide on Friday night. While committing suicide, she recorded the whole act through a selfie video. As Ramya did not come out of her room in the morning, parents of the victim knocked on the door and later broke open the door only to find Ramya hanging from the ceiling fan. Ramya was immediately rushed to a hospital where doctors declared her brought dead. Parents of the victim lodged a complaint with police and alleging that harassment of co-students had forced Ramya to take the extreme step.

Police swung into action, registered a case and started the investigation. They checked her call data and messages to probe into the case. According to sources, Ramya was on WhatsApp chat with her friends Siva and Bhargav and asked them to respond to her message before committing suicide.

# News parks to dot the city

C PRADEEP  
■ VIJAYAWADA

Parks are the recreational and open spaces providing the people a source of enjoyment to spend quality time. A study says that urban residents are visiting the parks regularly, while more than 50 per cent people spend at least one to two hours either in the morning or evening in parks. In the morning, people visit parks for jogging and in the evening for relaxation. The largest proportion of urban park visitor was teen age group consisting majorly males and they were mostly engaged in exercise and walk.

However, there is an acute shortage of parks despite the dense urban population in the city. Furthermore, Rajiv Gandhi Park that does not have proper access to people, moreover, it was cut to size due to the Durga flyover construction.

The good news is that among the upcoming parks the works of Ajith Singh Nagar Park has picked up the phase. The cost of the project was estimated at Rs 10 crore and the funds were released. The park is spread over 12 acres and the



design of the Nature Theme Park, which was released by the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation authorities, was doing rounds on social media. The first phase of the work will be completed within six months.

Speaking to The Pioneer, V Srinivas, executive engineer, Housing and Parks Division of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, said upcoming parks would be at Ajith Singh Nagar and Governerpet. As far as the construction of the Nature Theme Park at Ajith Singh Nagar is concerned, the boundary wall construction, site levelling, greenery, play

courts and children play equipment will be completed in six months, while VMC Commissioner V Prasanna Venkatesh is keen to complete the work on time.

The other attractions of the park will be Central Park, Vending Zone, Fitness Zone, Water Bodies, Nursery, Amusement Zone, Forest Zone, Sports Zone, Amphitheatre, Ecological Museum, Landscape Packets and many more.

The second park will be at Governerpet, near Lenin Centre in 0.35 acres at an estimated cost of Rs 50.96 lakh. The project will be completed in three months and would

have Seating Pavilions, Children Play Area, Landscape Packets and Pedestrian Pavers. About 40 people will get employment at both the parks in various divisions once the parks are inaugurated.

The other major park will be at the heart of the city in Swaraj Maidan, henceforth, it will be called the Dr BR Ambedkar Swaraj Maidan and the foundation stone was laid by Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on July 8. A library, memorial hall, a study centre and open theatre will be established by April 14, 2022.

# 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' kits to students on reopening day

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The government has decided to distribute a kit as a part of 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' to every student in the government school on the reopening day of the academic year 2020-21.

The government is introducing English medium in the government schools this academic year and also revamping facilities at all the government schools under 'Nadu-Nedu' (Then and Now) programme.

The YSRCP government led by Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has brought in revolutionary changes in the education sector by introducing a series of welfare schemes, which will help students from weaker sections realise their dreams.

In line with the 'Amma Vodi' scheme, 'Goru Mudda' (Mid-day meal scheme with new menu), 'Nadu-Nedu' and introduction of English as the medium of instruction, the government will give Vidya Kanuka kit to every student. On the reopening day of the



● On the reopening day of the schools, each student will be given a kit worth Rs 1,350 consisting of a school bag, text books and note books, fabric for three pairs of uniform, a pair of shoes and two pairs of socks besides a belt. The amount towards the stitching charges for the uniforms would also be paid to the students

● The YSRCP government led by Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has brought in revolutionary changes in the education sector by introducing a series of welfare schemes, which will help students from weaker sections realise their dreams

schools, each student will be given a kit worth Rs 1,350 consisting of a school bag, text books and note books, fabric for three pairs of uniform, a pair of shoes and two pairs of socks besides a belt. The amount towards the stitching

charges for the uniforms would also be paid to the students. Guntur DEO RS Ganga Bhavani said the kits will be given to 3,44,787 students studying in 3,663 government schools on the reopening day of the school.

## Cleaner electrocuted

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 21-year-old man was electrocuted at Medchal in early hours of Saturday. According to police, the deceased was identified as Gaikwad Sunil, 21, a native of Nanded, who was working as a cleaner with a tipper lorry.

He was ferrying concrete from a company at Kucharam in Medchal to different construction sites. "In the early hours of Saturday, Sunil, after unloading the concrete, was closing the door of the vehicle when he got electrocuted. He died on the spot. Apparently the body of the vehicle came in contact with an overhead power cable," the police said.



District Collector MD Intiaz undergoing tests at the Triage Centre in Vijayawada on Saturday

# Covid tests started at Triage Centre

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

District Collector MD Intiaz inaugurated Triage testing centre at Bishop Azariaiah Girls High School on Saturday. Speaking to the media persons here on Saturday, the Collector said that people, who wish for home quarantine, shall come to this Triage Centre and get tested. He said that the Triage Centre was established to decide, who will stay at home quarantine and who shall not.

He informed that people infected with Covid-19 virus and wish to stay home quarantine will be tested at the Triage Centre and based on their condition, permission will be granted. He informed that ECG, BP, Fever, Oxygen levels and chest X-Ray and blood tests will be conducted in the Centre. He explained that based on the report, they would assess if the infection is mild or severe and after the assessment, the patient will be given medicines for 10 days and the

medical officer and ANMs will visit once in 10 days to examine the patient.

He said home isolation is recommended to people below 50 years and as per the test report, if the infection is severe, they would be referred to the hospital. Two doctors, four nurses, four technicians and a data operator will be rendering services at the Triage Centre.

Intiaz said that 1.30 lakh samples were tested for Covid-19 and every day about 4,000 samples are being collected in Krishna district for testing. He stated that measures had been initiated to give sample test results in 24 hours, hence, the people need not wait for two and three days for the results, which is a big relief.

He said that 84 new Covid positive cases were reported in Krishna district on Saturday that includes 48 cases within VMC and 36 in the district. Triage Centre coordinator Dr Chaitanya explained about the functioning.

# Cops crossing line of duty, alleges Bonda

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former TDP MLA Bonda Umamaheswara Rao alleged that police crossed their line of duty by filing false cases to arrest TDP senior leaders and cadre as per the directive of the YSRCP leaders.

He alleged that a CI stooped to the level of co-conspiring with the Gurajala YSRCP leaders to kill TDP activist and Dalit youth Vikram. The TDP activist relocated to live in Hyderabad to avoid political harassment. But, as per a pre-meditated plan of the YSRCP, the CI called him to appear before him at Gurajala Police Station.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Bonda lamented that the DGP office in Mangalagiri was carrying the orders passed from the Chief Minister's Tadepalli residence. It was clear that the police have become subservient to the vengeful ruling of party leaders.



They were filing false cases and making arrests of Opposition leaders at the whims and fancies of the government.

He said that Vikram's mother lodged a complaint with police holding YSRCP leaders responsible for her son's murder but police had so far not taken any action. TDP former minister Kollu Ravindra was implicated in a murder that actually took place in a bitter

feud between the two families led by Moka Bhaskara Rao and Chinta Chinnna in Bandar.

The TDP leader slammed the Jaganmohan Reddy regime for persecuting the Opposition leaders and all those who were starting to question the wisdom and constitutionality of the CM's policies. Senior citizen Kishore was taken into custody and was forced to travel from Visakhapatnam to Kurnool in

● The TDP leader slammed the Jaganmohan Reddy regime for persecuting the Opposition leaders and all those who were starting to question the wisdom and constitutionality of the CM's policies.

the name of investigation. Guntur-based social activist Ranganyakamma was implicated in a false case for forwarding a social media post.

He further stated that no other Chief Minister in the country has ever behaved so atrociously like Jaganmohan Reddy in the history of country in the past 70 years. Unfortunately, IAS officers were also following diktat of a leader, who had spent 16 months in jail, he said. It was only because of Jaganmohan Reddy's illegal activities that IAS officer Sri Lakshmi had to spend 16 months in jail, he pointed out.

## Two held for stealing bikes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Kalapathar police arrested two persons involved in nine cases of bike lifting on Saturday. Police recovered all the stolen vehicles from them. The arrested persons have been identified as 37-year-old Mohd Irfan and 20-year-old Mohd Adil, both residents of Basharthnagar under Kalapathar Police Station limits.

According to police, the duo moved around in different areas of the city and identified vehicles kept outside the houses and in cellars of apartments. Using a duplicate key, they would open the lock of the vehicle and speed away. Following a case of vehicle theft on July 2 at Mochi Colony in Kalapathar Police Station limits, police started to track down the offenders. Using the help of CCTV cameras and technical inputs, the duo was caught by the police on Friday night.

# GoDaddy joins Ketto to support Indian SMEs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domain registration and web hosting giant GoDaddy on Saturday announced a partnership with crowdfunding platform Ketto to help Indian businesses hit by Covid-19 disruptions to host a fundraiser campaign for free.

As a part of this initiative, a small business based in India, with a website holding an active .in, .co.in, org.in, net.in or IND.in domain name, can apply to start a crowdfunding campaign on Ketto to support their business. GoDaddy will work with Ketto to evaluate the applications based on a set of eligibility criteria.

On an average, Ketto charges



**On an average, Ketto charges a commission of five per cent as platform success fee and subsequent three per cent payment gateway fee on the total funds raised by each fundraiser. As a result of GoDaddy's partnership with Ketto, the small businesses will get the opportunity to host a fundraiser on Ketto for free, without paying any intermediate fee.**

GoDaddy said it will incur these fee expenses on behalf of eligible small businesses, for combined funds raised up to Rs 2 crore. "GoDaddy will work with Ketto and shortlist the applications based on a set of eligibility criteria, and help these entrepreneurs and small business owners get financial aid to not just support their business goals

but also their employee base," Nikhil Arora, Managing Director and Vice-President, GoDaddy India, said.

"By joining forces with Ketto, we have made our first step in trying to bring some financial relief their way," Arora said. Enabling easier access for GoDaddy customers, Ketto's landing page will be highlight-

ed on GoDaddy's #OpenWeStand India website. #OpenWeStand is GoDaddy's global initiative, which supports small business owners across the world navigate the challenging times presented by Covid-19, with special offers on services and tools, expert advice, and community for entrepreneurs to share insights and experiences with one another.

Over 70 companies have joined in support of #OpenWeStand and pledged action to make a difference together by contributing their expert advice, services, and special offers to help ease the financial stress caused by the ongoing health crisis.

# Minister interacts with Covid patients in WG dist

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Health and Family Welfare Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas (Nani) spoke to the patients undergoing treatment at various hospitals in West Godavari district on Saturday. Addressing a review meeting through virtual conference at the Eluru Collector's camp office, the minister asked the patients about the facilities being provided to them in the hospitals.



The minister spoke to the patients undergoing treatment for Covid in Ashram hospital in Eluru, Bhimavaram Covid hospital and Covid hospital in Tadepalligudem and asked about the facilities and their problems. A few patients complained that quality food is not being provided besides bed sheets are not provided, hygiene is not maintained and toilets are not being maintained properly.

He said that Rs 500 was spent to provide quality food to patients undergoing treatment at the Covid designated hospitals as per the instructions of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy.

Since Monday, July 6, 71 hot spots were identified and restrictions are being imposed in those areas, said the minister. People with Covid symptoms shall go to the nearest hospital for testing and get tested for the virus, stay under the supervision of the doctors in the separate hospitals till the reports are received, said the minister.

District Collector Mutyala Raju, District Medical and Health department officials SP

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Narayan Naik and other officials were present on the occasion.

# TDP objects to Ambedkar memorial shifting to Vja

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former minister N Ananda Babu objected to the shifting of Ambedkar memorial to Vijayawada from Amaravati. He reminded that the TDP government had started Ambedkar memorial work in Amaravati but the YSRCP government without eliciting the opinion of people has decided to shift the memorial to Vijayawada, which is objectionable.

The political parties and Civil Rights organisations held a round-table in Guntur on Saturday in this regard. During the meeting, the former minister reminded that Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy had boycotted the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of BR Ambedkar when he was in opposition and that shows his respect towards Ambedkar.

He said that former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had proposed a plan to construct a museum, library and theatre, along with 125-foot tall statue of Ambedkar, with international standards to attract the tourists but Jagan



**Former minister N Ananda Babu said that former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had proposed a plan to construct a museum, library and theatre, along with 125-foot tall statue of Ambedkar, with international standards to attract the tourists but Jagan shifted the project to Vijayawada.**

shifted the project to Vijayawada.

CPI state joint secretary M Nageswara Rao demanded the construction of a memorial for Ambedkar in Amaravati. He said that there is no objection on the installation of Ambedkar statues in other places but demanded that the YSRCP government develop Ambedkar memorial in Amaravati.

Former minister and TDP leader A Rajendra Prasad, Congress party district president L Eswara Rao, CPI district secretary J Ajay Kumar, Jana

Sena Party leader Venkateswara Rao and others spoke and a resolution was passed at the meeting demanding the construction of the memorial in Amaravati.

# Gandhi Hospital nurses boycott duties for 2nd day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Outsourcing nurses working at Gandhi Hospital staged a protest for the second consecutive day on Saturday demanding regularisation of their services as well as a salary hike. In all, 220 nurses boycotted their duties at the hospital. Dhanalakshmi, a nurse, said, "I am working on an outsourcing basis at Gandhi Hospital for the past 14 years. We are striking since Friday. All we ask is to make our jobs permanent. We are paid Rs 15,000 and it is getting difficult to meet the ends."

Nurses added that they had rendered during Swine Flu, Ebola and now in Covid-19 duties and it is bare minimum that the government can do for them. Nurses in Telangana said that the Andhra Pradesh government is paying its nurses more than what Telangana is paying to the outsourced staff. Nurses in Andhra are getting around Rs 20,000 and some even Rs 35,000.

# Oxygen cylinder racket busted

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The West Zone Task Force police on Saturday busted a racket of illegal sale of oxygen cylinders in the city and seized 34 cylinders from two gangs involved in this. With their arrest, some startling revelations also surfaced as they were found to be selling each oxygen cylinder for a whopping Rs 1 lakh, exploiting the shortage caused due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They seized cylinders have been handed over to the Health and Medical Department.



According to reports, based on a tip-off, the Task Force police raided the bases of two gangs selling oxygen cylinders illegally and seized 34 oxygen cylinders from their possession. Police found that they were selling oxygen cylinders to several clinics, hospitals and individuals.

"The person was conducting the business without a valid licence issued by the Drug Control Authorities and the Controller of Explosives," said P Radha Kishan Rao, DCP of

Commissioner's Task Force, adding that a case was booked against the person at the Golconda Police Station.

Three days ago, police caught one person at Gowliguda and seized three oxygen cylinders from him. The case was handed over to the Drug Control authorities for further action. "Our teams are gathering information about persons who are illegally dealing in the sale of oxygen cylinders. It is mandatory to obtain licences from different

agencies for trading and storing medical oxygen. Otherwise we will initiate action," the DCP said.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar reviewed the supply of oxygen to hospitals in the State on Friday. The government constituted joint teams of officers from Drug Control Administration, Task Force of Hyderabad City Police, Director of Public Health and Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives to conduct inspections.

# Jagan blackmailing BC leaders: TDP MLA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The YSRCP government is targeting BC leaders in order to put them in a fix so that they won't speak against the government's policies, alleged TDP MLA Nimmala Ramanaidu.

He lamented that BC leaders are now unsafe and insecure because of the unchecked suppression of their leadership at every level. If BC leaders not surrender to the YSRCP, they were being put to severe harassment and punishment, he pointed out.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Ramanaidu said BC leaders, who have not a single case against them prior to 2019, were now being harassed with false cases and arrests. BC leader and former minister Atchannaaidu was arrested, while Kollu Ravindra was implicated in a murder case with false charges.

Former minister Yanamala Ramakrishnu was impli-

cated in an SC, ST atrocities case, he pointed out. Ayyanna Pathrudu was booked in Nimbhaya case.

He said that former minister Pithani Satyanarayana, a Setti Balija, was being targeted now as he was reportedly not succumbing to the YSRCP political pressure. Now, the Jagan regime was harassing Pithani in order to make to keep aloof from the TDP so as to reduce the Opposition party's influence among the Setti Balija community.

# 'Naalo..Natho YSR' English version soon

Continued from Page 1

Published by Emesco Books, the memoir was lapped up within hours of the opening of its sale online.

Even a decade after his demise, YSR continues to be the most popular leader in Andhra Pradesh politics. The fact that the book was a compilation of Vijayamma's memories of the political stalwart has only generated added curiosity among the readers to know more about their favourite leader.

The contents of the book turned out to be a big hit with the readers who gave a 5-star rating for the incredible work. Readers were fascinated by the brilliant compilation of the memoirs penned by Vijayamma as it gives them a completely different insight into the life of the legendary leader from the closest quarters.

Buoyed by the unprecedented response and sellout of the first edition within 24 hours,

Emesco Books is bringing out the second edition of the book which will be available for sale online by Monday. The book getting sold out on the very day it was made available is a unique record in itself.

Adding more sheen to this heartening success, renowned book publisher Penguin Books India has come forward to publish the English version of 'Naalo..Natho YSR'. Seeing its success in Telugu, the publisher intends to bring it out for the benefit of the English readers.

The book was released by YSR's son and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy at Idupulapaya on July 8 on the occasion of the legendary leader's 71st birth anniversary.

**Fake versions of book on social media**

While the book has become a resounding hit, it is turning out to be a gold mine for some fraudulent elements who are circulating a fake version under its name

on the social media. Warning the Telugu readers and all the ardent admirers of YSR about this, senior YSRCP leader and TTD Board Chairman YV Subba Reddy clarified that all the versions available on the Internet and social media are fake.

He appealed to everyone to guard against the fake versions and look for only those published by Emesco Books to get hold of a genuine copy of the book.

"A fake PDF version is being circulated on social media using the name of YS Vijayamma's book. We will proceed legally and seek stringent action against the copyright violators. We have already represented the matter to the Andhra Pradesh Director General of Police for immediate action against these fraudulent elements. All YSR admirers and followers are hereby advised to exercise caution while choosing the copy of the book online," YV Subba Reddy said.

# AGRI VARSITY FINDINGS

## Huge demand for coarse rice in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prof Jayashankar Telangana State Agriculture University research centre recommended increase in the area under coarse variety of paddy cultivation in next Yasangi season due to its high demand in the market. The coarse variety of rice is useful in production of value-added products like idli rava, rice flour and rice flakes whose trade runs into several thousands of crores. Traders at the national-level have been demanding coarse rice, while the fine variety of rice enjoys demand in Telugu states alone.



research centre suggests increasing the area under coarse variety of paddy in rabi since the area of cultivation under this variety has come down during current Yasangi.

Annually, the Centre declares the MSP for paddy for A grade and ordinary variety. The MSP for grade-A variety of paddy (Coarse variety) declared during 2020-21 was Rs 1,888 a quintal, while the support of the fine variety was declared as Rs 1,868. The MSP for coarse variety is higher by Rs 20 a quintal.

# Last batch of Indians stranded in South Africa to return home

■ JOHANNESBURG

The last batch of Indians, who were stranded in South Africa due to the global travel restrictions, will return home on Sunday. More than 50 of the 183 passengers are IT employees from Bengaluru who were stuck in the country after their contracts were ended prematurely due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Fourteen South Africans, who could not return to their workplace in India, will also travel. This is the second private repatriation flight arranged by India Club, an ethnic, socio-cultural group by India Club, an ethnic, socio-cultural group. The first one was to Hyderabad on June 21. The flight has not been filled to capacity, suggesting that there are no more stranded Indians seeking urgent repatriation.

This repatriation assignment has given us a different

opportunity and satisfaction. Despite having normal day jobs, we did not mind the late night work one bit and it is a different feeling when we are of help to

■ This is the second private repatriation flight arranged by India Club, an ethnic, socio-cultural group



someone, especially in such unprecedented times, said John Francis, Vice President of India Club.

As the passengers prepared ahead of the boarding on Sunday, a visibly overcome

woman, who asked not to be identified, shared her story of a double misfortune during her first visit to South Africa. This is the most horrific period of my life. As I was preparing for a surgery, I got a call that my father has passed away.

It was devastating. The fact that I could not meet him one last time will pain me for the rest of my life, she said. Francis said that the test is mandatory for all the passengers as a filter mechanism to assist in identifying the Covid-19 cases. The passengers, who will continue to destinations across India,

will be subject to the quarantine rules prescribed by the Government of India and state governments after they reach Bengaluru on Monday. The Indian government has so far operated three Vande Bharat mission flights from South Africa, repatriating over a thousand people.

# India's Covid recoveries cross 5-lakh...

Continued from Page 1

"The recovered cases outnumber the COVID-19 active cases by 2,31,978. With this progressively widening gap, the recovery rate has further improved to 62.78 per cent," the ministry said.

There are 2,83,407 active cases and all are under medical supervision, with severe cases being admitted in hospitals and pre-symptomatic patients and those showing moderate symptoms in home isolation, the ministry said.

Recent policy changes like allowing all registered medical practitioners to recommend testing for COVID and introduction of rapid antigen point of care testing along with RT-PCR has substantially bolstered the COVID-19 tests in the country, the ministry said.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 1,13,07,002 swab samples have been tested for COVID-19 up to July 10, of which 2,82,511 were tested on Friday.

# AP misled Godavari River Management Board: TS

Continued from Page 1

Till such time, the Board was urged to rein in AP from going ahead with interlinking of Godavari with Pennar river. In another letter sent earlier to the Krishna River Management Board chairman, irrigation principal secretary Rajat Kumar asked the Board to give a transparent and detailed project report on the projects proposed to be carried out by AP.

Rajat Kumar's letter made it clear that the irrigation projects in Telangana are not new but conceived before bifurcation of the state.

These include Kalwakurti, Nettekpadu and the project conceived to increase capacity of the Srisaillam Left Bank canal. "If the KRMB needs DPRs on these projects, the matter would be taken to the notice of the Government of Telangana for suitable action," Rajat Kumar said in his letter to the KRMB chairman.

The letter asked the KRMB to make suitable changes in its 12th Board Meeting held on June 4.

The Government of Telangana urged the Krishna River Management Board to amend its minutes to the extent that the Srisaillam Left Bank Canal project capacity has been increased from 30 tmc ft to 40 tmc ft within the purview of the allocations made to Telangana.

"Moreover, this is not a new project just because its tunnel work is underway. Therefore, DPR is not needed for studying by the KRMB. The government of Telangana wants the minutes to be amended thus, Rajat Kumar's letter said.

The Nettekpadu project is almost ready, but distributary canal work is pending. The extent of the ayacut to be irrigated under the project has been increased in undivided AP, he wrote.

The increase in ayacut of Kalwakurti II Scheme was also conceived before bifurcation. Water used for execution of Mission Bhagiratha is from the Telangana quota, he said, urging the Board to amend the minutes accordingly.

# AP wants guarantee from Centre for \$1bn investment

Continued from Page 1

Secondly, the Centre is apprehensive of many such demands from other states for direct loans and also for extending sovereign guarantee to such loans. This will put the Centre in a piquant situation as most of the foreign investment banks have reduced the ratings for India.

Thirdly, a sovereign investor would only pump in money

and expect his pound of flesh — meaning that there are chances of the State being held to ransom.

Sources in Delhi are wondering how the AP government expected the Centre to allow it to directly raises the loan from foreign investors when the normal procedure is that the Central government takes the loan and keeps some portion of it, generally around 7.5 per cent, as security.

# MPs to physically attend Monsoon Session...

Continued from Page 1

The dates of the session are yet to be finalised. The Monsoon Session will certainly start before September 22 as there cannot be a gap of more than six months between two sessions of Parliament, a senior government functionary said.

The Budget Session of Parliament was adjourned sine die prematurely on March 23 before its scheduled conclusion on April 3 due to the pandemic.

# BJP, ally assert support to Amaravati as only capital of AP

Continued from Page 1

He recalled that the YSRCP had consented to Amaravati as the capital of AP in the Legislative Assembly, but later changed its stand after winning the elections and coming to power. "It's a reflection of the YSRCP's degraded politics," he said.

Baji said that for more

than 200 days, farmers of Amaravati have been protesting demanding that the State government announce Amaravati as the only capital of the state. "However, the Government is trying to shift the capital from Amaravati shamelessly solely due to its politics of vengeance against the TDP," he said.

# 'BJP offering MLAs 15 cr, trying to topple Government': Ashok Gehlot

Continued from Page 1

"While the state government kept working for the people during the COVID-19 crisis, the BJP has continued to cause problems," Gehlot began.

"I want the nation to know that while the Congress in Rajasthan takes everyone alone, even those who oppose us, the BJP is now crossing all limits. They are making increasing efforts to topple my government," he added.

Gehlot referred to changes in the government in both Karnataka last year and Madhya Pradesh in June - both instances where a Congress (or Congress-led) government was replaced by the BJP amid allegations of MLA poaching.

"We keep hearing talk of money being offered to MLAs to switch sides. Some have been promised up to Rs 15 crores and some have been assured of other favours. This is happening on a constant basis," he said. "The

BJP's (true) face has been exposed ever since their victory in 2014. What they first did covertly, they now do overtly. You saw this in Goa, Madhya Pradesh and the north-eastern states". Gehlot also hit out at a "shameless" BJP and said they "bought seven MLAs in Gujarat" to win last month's Rajya Sabha election. "They tried to do the same thing in Rajasthan but we stopped them and gave them a lesson they will remember for a long time," he added.

# Monsoon Session may be very short; eye on passing ordinances

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the resumption of Parliamentary standing committees, efforts are on to convene the monsoon session of Parliament, with a focus on clear ordinances brought by the Centre. Given the huge challenge both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats are facing right now to make seating arrangements in the Parliament, maintaining social distancing, the monsoon session is likely to be "very short", suggest informed sources.

On June 5, the government brought ordinances that it claimed would be game changers. It amended the six-a-and-a-half decade old Essential Commodities Act, for ease of doing business with an objective to deregulate food items, including cereals, pulses and onions, in bid to raise farmers' incomes.

The Centre also brought the Banking Regulation



(Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 for "better management & sound regulation of Cooperative banks", as well as the APMC tweaking with a goal of 'One India, One Agriculture Market'. But the ordinances, that are crucial for Centre's effort to boost the economy intake of the lockdown slump, need to be passed by Parliament. Monsoon session's primary goal will be to get these ordinances okayed by the

**The Centre also brought the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 for "better management & sound regulation of Cooperative banks", as well as the APMC tweaking with a goal of 'One India, One Agriculture Market'**

Parliament, at the earliest. The treasury bench will also be ready to make a statement on the India-China border stand-off, that killed 20 Indian brave hearts, presuming that the opposition will press for it. The Centre may use the Parliament to send a "strong message of unity", as far as LAC aggression was concerned.

However, given the monumental challenge the Parliament is facing to reconvene, it is

unlikely that a detailed session with a full business transaction can take place.

Both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats have explored all possibilities including using a substitute venue like Vigyan Bhawan, to ensure seating with "do gaaz ki doori", but none were big enough to accommodate the entire Indian Parliament, all together.

# IMA demands setting up of all-India medical services

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has demanded the setting up of an Indian Medical Service (IMS), on the lines of IAS, IPS and IFS, to bring about a drastic change in the healthcare sector, the doctors' body said.

The IMA feels that there is a dire need for a drastic change in health administration which can be realised by raising a new cadre of administrators, it said in a statement.

The IMS will be responsible for holding the administrative responsibilities pertaining to the district medical officer, project officers of various disease control programmes, and the various ranks of secretaries in the Union health ministry and the state health departments and the heads all other areas in the health sector, Dr Rajan Sharma, IMA national president, said.

The basic qualification to sit for the IMS examination should be MBBS, he said.

"Even though IMA has been



enthusiastically working, we request the government of India to emphasize upon the certain major provisions. Meticulously continuing the public health activities of contact-tracing and testing will ensure a minimal morbidity rate," he said. "There is an urgent need for a new post-COVID healthcare policy providing equal priority to non-COVID care as well," Sharma added.

Working closely with the central and the state governments during the pandemic, the IMA

said it has been involved in various activities like availing of insurance for healthcare workers, anti-violence ordinance, inclusion of clinics, nursing homes and hospitals in MSME, modifications in testing policy, PPEs in work places, policy for quarantine of caregivers and plasma therapy among others.

Management of this pandemic would have been better had the public infrastructure and the strategies in place been better, it said.

## SHORT READS



### Major fire in shopping mall in Mumbai's Borivali, no casualty

**MUMBAI:** A major fire broke out at a shopping mall in suburban Borivali here early on Saturday, but there was no report of any casualty, a fire brigade official said. The fire brigade received the call about the blaze in the basement of Indraprastha Mall on S V Road in Borivali West around 3 am, he said. "The mall is a three-storey structure. The fire started at its basement and spread to the ground and the first floors," he said. "Thick black smoke enveloped the complex and its surrounding area, which was visible from far away. The fire brigade personnel faced difficulties in firefighting, following which a robot was deployed in the operation," the official said. At least 14 fire engines, 13 jumbo tankers and other vehicles were used in the operation. According to the official, the blaze was initially categorised as level-2 fire, but was marked as level-3 around 4 am and then level-4 after that. The fire was brought under control by around 12.30 pm, he said, adding that the cooling operation was still on.

# Odisha CM speaks to two MLAs undergoing treatment for Covid-19

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday spoke to two legislators who are undergoing treatment after being diagnosed with COVID-19 and enquired about their health.



The chief minister spoke to BJP MLA from Nilagiri, Sukanta Kumar Nayak and ruling BJD lawmaker from Salipur, Prasant Behera over the phone and wished them a speedy recovery, officials said. Patnaik also spoke to several Covid warriors undergoing treatment in various Covid care centres and enquired about their health condition.

The chief minister highly appreciated the noble contributions being made by frontline Covid warriors and assured

them all support in their good work, the officials said. Patnaik also spoke to a number of other Covid-19 patients who are undergoing treatment in various Covid hospitals in the state and enquired about their condition and the facilities available in the medical facilities.

# TN not in position to conduct college final exams in Sep: CM

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government on Saturday said it was not in a position to conduct college examinations for the final year/semester students in September 2020, as several educational institutions have been converted into COVID-19 care centres.

Such a move in the backdrop of the spread of coronavirus will jeopardise the future of students facing their final year/semester exams, Chief Minister K Palaniswami said and requested the central government to grant "freedom to states to work out their own assessment methods, without compromising on the quality and academic credibility."



In a letter to Union HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal, he said the July 6 2020 guidelines (of the UGC) mandated that all educational institutions across the country conduct exams by September 2020 for the final semester students.

The guidelines have many constraints and difficulties, which include that of students reaching the examination centres as many of them reside outside the district or state and some even outside the country. It was also not feasible to

conduct online examinations, considering the various issues relating to digital access to the students, he said.

"Moreover, most of the government and private Arts & Science and Engineering colleges, polytechnics and other institutions of higher learning (including the hostels, classrooms etc.) in the state have been converted as COVID-19 Care Centres for housing asymptomatic positive persons under quarantine and these centres may continue as COVID centres for some more time," Palaniswami said.

"Therefore, if we are not in a position to conduct examinations even after waiting till September 2020, it would jeopardise the future of the students who are in their final year/ semester," the CM said.

# No lockdown on Saturdays in Kar: Dy CM

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Amid the rising Covid-19 cases across Karnataka, especially in Bengaluru, Deputy Chief Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan on Saturday said no lockdown will be imposed on Saturdays.



"There is no move to impose lockdown in the state or Bengaluru on Saturdays although total lockdown only on Sundays will continue till August 2," Narayan told reporters amid speculation that the state government was mulling a lockdown on weekends to prevent crowding in public places.

A complete lockdown is being observed only on Sundays since July 5 to ensure that people remain at home and avoid going out and contracting the coronavirus by crowding in public places.

Essential services and supplies and shops selling milk, vegetables, fruits, groceries and medicines are exempt from the lockdown but close at 8 p.m. for the night curfew, which is in force till 5 a.m. daily till July 31.

The state government also declared a holiday for its employees on the first and third Saturdays of the month. Its offices are already closed on the second and fourth Saturdays.

# Differences brew in NDA, opposition camps in poll-bound Bihar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Increasingly bitter relations between the JD(U) and the LJP in the ruling National Democratic Alliance and differences in the opposition camp have thrown up possibilities of a political realignment in Bihar ahead of the assembly polls in the state.

It remains uncertain if the state's fractured politics will see new alliances, but all is far from well in the two rival camps, prompting some parties to explore their options, sources have said.

The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) is peeved with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led Janata Dal (United) as it believes that its due strength in the state is not being acknowledged by the ally in seat-sharing talks among the NDA partners.

While the equation between the BJP and the LJP remains fine, Kumar's party is angry over Chirag Paswan's repeated snipes



at the chief minister and hints that the saffron party should look beyond him in the state.

"The LJP is overestimating its strength in Bihar, and Chirag Paswan has become more and more ambitious. It was never an ally of the JD(U). It has aligned with the BJP on and off, and the saffron party will deal with its demands, not us," a senior JD(U) leader said.

Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan's party, now being led by

his son Chirag, had fought on 42 of the state assembly's 243 seats in 2015 and wants a share on similar lines in the upcoming polls, a position rejected by the JD(U). The JD(U) was in the rival camp of the RJD and the Congress in 2015.

JD(U) sources have pointed out that the LJP won only two seats in 2015, and its best show was in 2005 when the party won 29 seats while fighting on its own in the Bihar polls.

# TABLIGHI JAMAAT: Delhi court grants bail to 75 Thai, Nepalese nationals

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court Saturday granted bail to 75 foreign nationals from Thailand and Nepal, who were charge-sheeted for attending a Tablighi Jamaat congregation here allegedly in violation of visa norms, indulging in missionary activities illegally and violating government guidelines issued in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gurmohina Kaur granted the relief to the foreigners on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 10,000 each. Till date, 445 foreign nationals from 33 different countries, who were charge-sheeted in the case have been granted bail by the court. The police had in June filed 59 charge sheets, including supplementaries, against 956 foreigners belonging to 36 different countries in the case.

# There is hardly any understanding of sport among people in India: Rijiju

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Saturday rued that people in India, including some of his colleagues in Parliament, have limited understanding of sports and emphasised on the need to create a sports culture in the country.

Rijiju was amazed that his colleagues felt that people like Jyoti Kumari, Kambala jockey Srinivas Gowda and Rameshwar Gurjar — who became social media sensation — were Olympic prospects.

Jyoti Kumari had cycled down from Gurugram to Bihar, carrying her ailing father amid the COVID-19 pandemic and Karnataka's Gowda was claimed to have run 100m in about 11 seconds.

"Knowledge in Indian society about sports is very minimum. I don't want to degrade my own colleagues but even in Parliament there is no knowledge," Rijiju said during the online launch of



High Performance leadership programme organised by ELMS Sports Foundation and Abhinav Bindra Foundation.

"Everybody knows about cricket, the English people have put that in our mind. They play the game and we had to beat them. But other than that, there is no knowledge, all just want gold medal." In May, the 15-year-old Kumari hit national headlines after she cycled down 1200 km from Gurugram to her

native place in Bihar in eight days with her father. She was offered a trial by the Cycling Federation of India, which she turned down.

Talking about Kumari, Rijiju said: "There was this young girl who under very difficult circumstances during this COVID-19 pandemic carried her father on a cycle from Gurugram to Bihar. It was a tragic thing but imagine some of my colleagues said she will bring gold medal for India in cycling."

# On run for 38 years, dacoit nabbed for Guj bank robbery

PNS ■ PALANPUR

A dacoit wanted in a 38-year-old bank robbery and murder case in Banaskantha district of Gujarat was arrested from neighbouring Rajasthan on Saturday, police said. A team of the local crime branch from Palanpur nabbed Deepsingh Rajput (68) from a village in Barmer district of Rajasthan near the Indo-Pak border, Banaskantha superintendent of police Tarun Kumar Duggal said. Rajput was the mastermind in a gang of seven dacoits who had allegedly robbed a branch of State Bank of India at Amirgadh town in Banaskantha on December 30, 1982, the senior official said. The dacoits had attacked the bank manager and killed head constable Shivdutt Sharma of Amirgadh police station, before decamping with Rs 1.32 lakh, he said.

# China behaving in a 'belligerent' fashion all around its periphery

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former US national security advisor John Bolton feels China has been behaving in a "belligerent" fashion, all around its periphery, in an effort to assert itself through not just political and military means but also through the belt and road initiative and others to gain increased sway over countries that become economically dependent on it.

Bolton also believed that US President Donald Trump's "gut instinct" for the next four months is to take anything off the table that complicates what is already a difficult election campaign for him. The former NSA said he does not think Trump knows anything about the history of border clashes over the decades between India and China.

Trump may have been briefed on it, but history doesn't really stick with him, said Bolton, who was the US NSA from April 2018



to September 2019 under the Trump administration. "I think his (Trump) gut instinct for the next four months is to take anything off the table that complicates what is already a difficult election campaign for him."

"So what he (Trump) would want is quiet along the border whether it benefits China or India. From his point of view -- No news is good news," he said.

Replying to a question, Bolton said the fact is China has been behaving in a belligerent fashion, all around its periphery, certainly in the East and South China sea.

"Its relations with Japan has declined, with India, you are well aware of the facts there. I think this is China's effort to assert itself through not just political and military means but also through

**"I think his (Trump) gut instinct for the next four months is to take anything off the table that complicates what is already a difficult election campaign for him."**

the Belt and Road initiative and others to gain increased sway over countries that have become economically dependent on it."

"Sri Lanka has been subject to this death diplomacy and Pakistan and many countries in Central Asia. I think China has a grand strategy and it's pursuing it, the United States has been asleep at the switch and so have many other countries."

# Tripura's Covid-19 tally rises to 1,932

PNS ■ AGARTALA

The COVID-19 tally in Tripura rose to 1,932 after 141 more people tested positive for the virus in the state, officials said on Saturday.

Of the 141 new cases, 63 are from Khowai district, 35 from West district, 15 from Dhalai district, 10 from Gomati district, 11 from Sepahijala district, six from South Tripura district, they said. There are 545 active cases in the state while 1,372 patients have recovered from the infection, one person has died and 14 persons have migrated to other states, the officials said.

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, in a tweet, on Friday night had requested people of the state to be cautious. He said, "141 People found Covid-19 Positive today out of 2125 samples tested."

# 570 new cases take Odisha's tally to 12,526

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha's tally of coronavirus cases rose by 570 to reach 12,526 on Saturday, while five more people succumbed to the disease taking the death toll to 61, a health department official said.

Of the new fatalities, two were reported from Ganjam which is worst-hit by the infection, and one each from Puri, Cuttack and Khurda, the official said. "Regret to inform the demise of five COVID-19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals," the official said. Two men, aged 55 and 72, succumbed to the disease in Ganjam, while a 70-year-old man suffering from diabetes and hypertension died in Puri, he said.

"A 56-year-old woman from Khurda, who was a diabetic, and a 46-year-old man from Cuttack also died. The man had diabetes, hypertension and hypothyroidism," the official said. A 62-



year-old woman from Kendrapara district, who had tested positive for COVID-19, also died, but the "cause of her death was brain tumour", he said, adding that she was also suffering from diabetes, hypertension and asthma.

Of the total 61 deaths reported so far, Ganjam accounted for 36, followed by Khurda nine, Cuttack six, Puri two and Angul, Bargarh, Bhadrak, Gajapati, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Rayagada and Sundergarh one each. The official said 384 of the fresh COVID-19 cases were reported from different quarantine centres, while 186 were detected through contact-tracing exercises.

SHORT READS



**Sonia chairs LS MPs' meet ahead of monsoon session**

**NEW DELHI:** Congress interim chief Sonia Gandhi, here on Saturday, chaired a virtual meeting of party's Lok Sabha members to discuss the strategy for the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament, including India-China face-off, lockdown's fallout and economic situation. The meeting was attended by all 52 Congress MPs, including former party chief Rahul Gandhi. The meeting also comes in the wake of government tightening noose around foundations related to the party. The government has set up an inter-ministerial panel to probe into various alleged violations by the Gandhi family's Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust and Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.

**Tibetan group holds protests against China in Delhi**

**NEW DELHI:** A small group of Tibetans held a protest against China here on Saturday, police said. The protest was held around 11 am, they said. "Three protestors came here to protest. They were detained from near the Chinese embassy at central Delhi when they were trying to move ahead," a senior police officer said. They were taken to Chanakyapuri police station and will be released soon, he said.



**55-hour-long lockdown-like restrictions in UP**

**LUCKNOW:** Shops and business establishments, other than those dealing with essential services, remained closed in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday after the government reimposed lockdown-like restrictions across the state to slow the spread of coronavirus. The government on Thursday had announced that restrictions will be reimposed in the state from 10 pm on Friday to 5 am on Monday in the state following the surge in coronavirus cases. However, it permitted the functioning of essential services and the opening of religious places during this period. "The curbs have been imposed in the state to check the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases," Chief Secretary R K Tiwari had said in an order communicated to all district authorities in the state. Roads wore a deserted look on Saturday, as tempos, taxis and government buses did not operate. Only vehicles carrying essential goods were seen plying on the roads. Police personnel were posted at all prominent crossings of the state capital, and they were seen maintaining a close watch on people moving on two-wheelers.

**PM praises efforts of Centre, Delhi govt in containing Covid**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday appreciated the efforts of the Centre, state and local authorities in containing the COVID-19 situation in Delhi and directed that similar approach be adopted with other state governments in checking the pandemic in the entire NCR area.

He made these remarks at a meeting to review the coronavirus situation in the country, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office said.

The prime minister reiterated the need to observe personal hygiene and social discipline in public places. Modi said the awareness about the pandemic should be disseminated widely and a continuous emphasis on preventing the spread of the infection should be laid.

He said there is no room for any complacency in this



**He said there is no room for any complacency in this regard, according to the statement. Modi also directed that real-time national level monitoring and guidance should be provided to all affected states and places with high test positivity rate**

regard, according to the statement. Modi also directed that real-time national level monitoring and guidance should be provided to all affected states and places with high test positivity rate.

"The prime minister appreciated the concerted efforts of the Centre, state and local authorities in containing the

pandemic situation in Delhi," the statement said. "He further directed that a similar approach should be adopted with other state governments in containing the COVID-19 pandemic in the entire NCR area," it said.

The review meeting was attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Health

Minister Harsh Vardhan and the cabinet secretary among others.

During the meet, the "successful example" of surveillance and home-based care through 'Dhanvantri Rath' in Ahmedabad was highlighted and it was directed that it may be emulated in other places, the statement said.

**Rahul, Priyanka have the guts to take on Modi-Shah: Digvijaya**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Saturday asserted that the party leadership must take up the challenge of building the party organisation under the "dynamic" leadership of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi. He said both have the guts and courage to take on the invincible duo of PM Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. "The Congress leadership must take up the challenge of building the party organisation brick by brick. This is where we need the dynamism of Rahul ji and Priyanka ji. I am sure both of them have the guts and courage to take on Modi-Shah twins," Singh said in a series of tweets. Hailing the aggressive stand taken by Rahul and Priyanka over a range of issues to corner the BJP-led government, Singh said that the former Congress chief had virtually emerged as the main challenger to Modi in 2019. "I personally support the aggressive stand which Rahul ji and Priyanka ji are



taking on issues of national interest in India and UP. If this is not appreciated by some leaders in Congress then why are they in Congress?" he questioned.

Commenting on the recent setting up of an inter-ministerial committee to probe various alleged violations of legal provisions by the Gandhi family's Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust and Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, the Congress leader said, "Modi-Shah are under a misconception that they can browbeat Nehru Gandhi family by threats of

ED/IT/CBI. Their whole family have fought the British fearlessly, spent years in jail and are a brave lot. So don't be under any illusion Modi-Shah ji."

Once again echoing the demand that Rahul Gandhi again become the party president, he said, "No one and no one in Congress party is opposed to him. This perception is more in you people in the media than reality. The people in Congress who want to go soft on PM must have the courage to speak their mind either within the party or if they have guts say publicly."

**Delhi govt to cancel next semester, final exams of univs**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi government has decided to cancel all forthcoming semester and final exams of universities under it due to the COVID-19 situation, Deputy CM Manish Sisodia said on Saturday.

Sisodia said these state universities have been asked to promote their students and award them degrees adopting a "progressive method of evaluation".

He said CM Arvind Kejriwal has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to replicate Delhi government's decision for all central universities across the country to end uncertainty among students regarding the exams. Sisodia said Delhi government's decision did not concern Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and other central universities in the national capital. The state universities under Delhi government include National Law University, Delhi Technological University, Ambedkar University, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha



University, Netaji Subhas University of Technology and Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women.

The deputy chief minister who is also Delhi's Education minister said studies in the universities were disrupted due to the pandemic, and it was not possible to conduct examinations. Unprecedented times require unprecedented decisions, Sisodia said. "The issue was complex since no studies or any other academic activities took place in the semester. So we have asked universities to cancel exams and promote students to next semester on the basis of past results or some other progressive method of evaluation," he said.

**BJP uses electricity bills, Kejriwal's strength against him**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Arvind Kejriwal may have come to power riding on his popular free electricity scheme in Delhi up to 200 units, but it is the electricity bills now that the BJP is using it against him.

BJP's Delhi unit Chief Adesh Gupta has written to Kejriwal seeking time to discuss "grievances of entrepreneurs, traders, school-hospitals, religious places and fellow citizens, who are troubled by the huge electricity bills due to fixed and other charges".

The BJP leader has written that he has received complaints from many quarters about fixed charges, average billing on electricity bills that are inflated.

"Delhi's businesses and markets are shut since March. But due to fixed charge and steep commercial rates and taxes, they are getting charged steeply. For those who were forced to stay at home due to the lockdown have also received high electricity bills. Due to higher bills, they are



not being able to avail their subsidies," Gupta has complained in his letter.

Reminding that it is the "duty" of the government to pay heed to the problems of the people, which the BJP Delhi president claimed Kejriwal has ignored. He also cited example of Madhya Pradesh and Haryana -- both BJP ruled states, which have extended benefits to people for their electricity bills during the lockdown.

**'High performance programs key to producing champions'**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's only individual Olympic gold medalist Abhinav Bindra on Saturday stressed on the importance of high performance programs for producing champions in a "structured and accountable format".

"Champions have to be built through systems and processes," said Bindra during the online launch of High Performance leadership program organised by ELMS Sports Foundation and Abhinav Bindra Foundation.

"It requires a detailed and relentless pursuit of greatness. At the end of the day, when every athlete has been trained to the hilt, it is the small things that separate the good from the excellent." Talking about the High Performance leadership program, Bindra said it is an "initiative linked at creating advocates and architects of High-Performance Sport in the country, laying the groundwork for a robust Indian sport ecosystem that continuously generates champions by design and not by



chance. "High-Performance sport is simply attention to detail in recruiting, training, and creating champions in a structured and accountable format," the ace shooter said.

Over 50 participants from across the country have been nominated for this course, which will be attended by leaders from the SAI, state governments, national sport federations and private sector enterprises.

"High performance has been a possibility not just because of great athletes and coaches but also due to sports leaders. These leaders not only created an athlete centric approach but also executed plans with perfection," Bindra said.

**Don't take voters for granted; even Indira, Atal had lost: Pawar**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Taking aim at the BJP, NCP president Sharad Pawar has said that politicians should not take voters for granted as even powerful leaders like Indira Gandhi and Atal Bihari Vajpayee had been defeated in elections.

Criticising former Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis over his 'Mi punha yein' (I will come back) refrain during the last year's assembly polls, Pawar said voters thought this stance smacked of arrogance and felt that they should be taught a lesson. He also said that there was not an "iota of truth" in reports about differences in the three ruling allies- Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress- that are part of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

The veteran leader said he was



neither the headmaster nor the remote control of the MVA and made it clear that Thackeray and his ministers were running the government.

The former Union minister said this in an interview by Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut, who is also the Executive Editor of party mouthpiece 'Saamana'.

The first of the three-part interview series was published in the Marathi daily on Saturday.

This is for the first time that a non-Shiv Sena leader has featured in a marathon interview series in this newspaper. In the past it had published such interviews of late Bal Thackeray and Uddhav Thackeray.

**Meghalaya reports highest single-day spike**

PNS ■ SHILLONG

Meghalaya on Saturday reported its highest single-day spike of 76 COVID-19 cases, taking the total to 312 in the state. There are 215 active cases in the state at present and of these, 132 are BSF personnel posted at its frontier headquarters here, officials said.

"Seventy-six more individuals have tested positive for COVID-19 in Meghalaya," Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said. So far, 45 people have recovered from the disease, while two have died.

The state has recorded 170 new COVID-19 cases in the last two-three days, an official said. The number is likely to go up further during the day as more reports are expected in the second half, he added.

**ED raids Delhi-NCR travel firms, seizes over Rs 3.50-cr cash**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has seized Rs 3.57-crore cash after raiding tours and travel firms and their CAs in Delhi-NCR to probe alleged irregularities in processing of e-visa applications for foreigners wishing to travel to India.

The central probe agency said on Saturday it raided eight locations in Delhi and Ghaziabad on July 9 under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

The raids were carried out at the residences and offices of directors of several tour and travel companies and their chartered accountants and Rs 3.57-crore cash along with incriminating documents and digital records were seized, the agency said in a statement.

The ED had received "specific inputs" that these entities were involved in unauthorised receipt of foreign remittance through payment gateways in the name of providing e-visa services to foreigners, it said.



The agency said the preliminary probe found "two such entities received foreign remit-

ance of more than Rs 200 crore for processing Indian e-visa applications of foreigners without any authorisation from the government."

"These entities were also involved in high value suspicious transactions," it said.

It was also found that "certain chartered accountants played a key role in managing the affairs of these entities and were behind the suspicious transactions carried out by them."

"The seizure of unaccounted cash during the raids has raised further suspicion about the operations of such entities and blatant violation of statutory requirements," the ED said.

A probe is underway and the directors and executives of these firms will be questioned, a senior agency official said.

**Security personnel testing Covid-19 positive won't be allowed to enter Sikkim**

PNS ■ GANGTOK

With security personnel comprising a substantial chunk of the COVID-19 cases in Sikkim, the state government has decided to allow only those jawans to enter the Himalayan state who test negative for coronavirus, a senior health official said on Saturday.

Rapid antigen tests will be conducted exclusively on security personnel, including those from the Army and the paramilitary forces, at the Rangpo border check-post from Saturday onwards, he said.

The Rangpo check-post along the Sikkim-West Bengal border is one of the major entry points to the Himalayan state.



General-cum-Secretary of the Health Department, Dr Pemba T Bhutia. The measure comes after more than three dozen security personnel posted in the Himalayan state, bordering China, tested positive for COVID-19.

Earlier, thermal screening was conducted on everyone including security personnel entering the state through the border check-posts. The rapid antigen

tests, that give results faster, will be conducted for free for the first 15 days, he said.

Meanwhile, eight more people have recovered from COVID-19 in the state, the official said. Of the 121 COVID-19 cases in the state, 41 are active and 13 patients (Army personnel) have migrated to neighbouring West Bengal, while the remaining people have been cured of the disease, he added.

**Proactive screening helped curb Dharavi's Covid-19 spread: BMC**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With the WHO lauding the efforts taken to contain the spread of the COVID-19 in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of the world's largest slums, the local civic body said proactive screening with the assistance of private doctors and community support helped it in the fight against the disease.

World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, had said during a virtual press conference in Geneva on Friday that there were many examples from around the world that have shown that even if the outbreak is very intense, it can still be brought back under control.

"And some of these examples are Italy, Spain and South



Korea, and even in Dharavi - a densely packed area in the megacity of Mumbai," he had said. The Asia's largest slum, which was once declared a COVID-19 hotspot, has managed to flatten the curve of the viral spread.

Talking to PTI on Saturday, Kiran Dighavkar, Assistant

Commissioner of the G North ward of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said the civic body had to change its traditional approach of waiting for patients, contact tracing, isolation and home quarantine to begin proactive screening instead.

"Proactive screening helped

**"And some of these examples are Italy, Spain and South Korea, and even in Dharavi - a densely packed area in the megacity of Mumbai," he had said**

in early detection, timely treatment and recovery," he said.

At least six to seven lakh people have been screened in Dharavi, while 14,000 persons were tested and 13,000 were placed in institutional quarantine with medical facilities and community kitchen for free," the senior official said.

**We have to adjust to new normal: Arjun**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

As Arjun Kapoor returned to the sets on Saturday after staying home for four months due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, the actor urged people to try and adjust to the "new normal". Production on films, television and digital projects were put on hold in mid-March to vhelp curb the spread of the novel virus. On May 31, the Maharashtra government issued guidelines for producers and filmmakers to resume the shooting of films, TV shows and web series in non-containment zones, emphasizing safety and security norms. "Everyone of us will have to adjust to the new normal and slowly resetting our lives. My work life restarted and I shot for the first time in four months. Everything is changed. Accepted," Arjun said.

CAPSULE



**Gland Pharma files papers for IPO**

**NEW DELHI:** Hyderabad-based Gland Pharma has filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi for an initial public offer that includes fresh issue of shares worth up to Rs 1,250 crore. Apart from the fresh issue, there is an OFS of a little over 3.4 crore shares as part of the IPO. The company, backed by China's Fosun Pharma, has filed a DRHP with Sebi. It develops, manufactures and markets complex injectables. The issue comprises fresh shares worth up to Rs 1,250 crore and OFS of up to 3,48,63,635 shares. The latter includes sale of up to 1,93,68,686 shares by Fosun Pharma Industrial Pte Ltd, 1,00,47,435 shares by Gland Celsus Bio Chemicals Pvt Ltd, 35,73,014 shares by Empower Discretionary Trust and 18,74,500 shares by Nilay Discretionary Trust, as per the DRHP.



**Don't allow Chinese firms in Train 18 project: CAIT**

**NEW DELHI:** The Confederation of All India Traders on Saturday urged the Centre not to allow Chinese firm's participation in the global tender for semi-high speed indigenous train project of Indian Railway. The development comes as a part of its 'boycott Chinese' products and services campaign in the light of growing border tensions between the two Asian giants. Consequently, CAIT in a communication sent to Union Railways Minister Piyush Goyal urged him not to allow Chinese state owned firm CRRC Corporation to participate in global tender for semi-high speed indigenous — Train 18 — project. "The total worth of the project is more than Rs 1,500 crore for 44 Vande Bharat Express Trains," CAIT said in a statement.



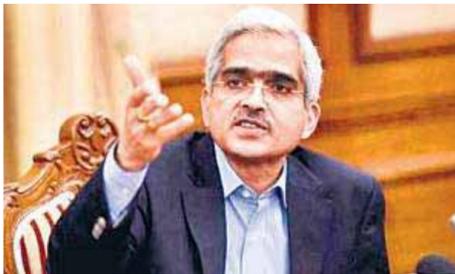
**Odisha banks to attract investments in textile sector**

**BHUBANESWAR:** In a bid to attract investments in the textile and apparel manufacturing sector, the Odisha government said it has "world-class infrastructure facilities, strong logistics base and skilled manpower required for such units to flourish. Industries Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra, while addressing the 'Invest India Exclusive Investment Forum for Textiles and Apparel Sector' event, highlighted Odisha's unique competitive advantages in the textiles and apparel sector. "Textile and apparel manufacturing is one of the focus sectors of the Odisha government and several firms have already set up their units in the state," he said.

**Indian economy showing signs of returning to normalcy: RBI**

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Indian economy has started showing signs of returning to normalcy in response to the staggered easing of lockdown restrictions, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Saturday.



He further said the need of the hour is to restore confidence, preserve financial stability, revive growth and recover stronger.

"The Indian economy has started showing signs of getting back to normalcy in response to the staggered easing of restrictions," Das said at the 7th SBI Banking and Economics Conclave. Indian companies and industries respond better in a crisis, he noted.

Das, however, said it is still uncertain when supply chains will be restored fully, how long it will take for demand conditions to normalise, and what kind of durable effects the pandemic will leave behind on potential growth. According to him, targeted and comprehensive reform measures already announced by the government should help in supporting growth. Possibly in a vastly different post-COVID global environment, reallocation of factors of production within the economy and innovative ways of expanding economic activity could lead to some rebalancing and emergence of new growth drivers, Das added.

The central bank, he said, strives to maintain the balance between preserving financial stability, maintaining banking system soundness and sustaining economic activity.

"Post containment of COVID-19, a very careful trajectory has to be followed in

**Legally-backed 'resolution corporation' need of the hour**

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday advocated the creation of a 'resolution corporation' with legislative backing for resolution and revival of stressed financial firms. The government in August 2017 had introduced the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance (FRDI) Bill in Parliament which, among other things, proposed setting up of a resolution corporation. However, after a year, the government decided to withdraw the bill as there were concerns raised about the protection of depositors' money if it was passed with the controversial 'bail-in' clause, under which a bank's liabilities could be cancelled/modified to shore up its finances. "Going forward, we need the legislative backing to have some kind of a resolution corporation, which has to deal with resolution and revival of stressed financial firms," Governor Das said at the 7th SBI Banking and Economics Conclave. He said the regulator can issue early warning signals and flag the emerging risks. "The regulator will continue to take necessary measures, continue to engage with the management of the bank or NBFCs to identify the vulnerabilities, but there has to be a legally-backed arrangement," he noted. The governor said setting up a resolution corporation was earlier part of the FRDI Bill which the government withdrew because there were certain issues which needed closer examination. He further said the notification issued under Section 227 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has given additional powers to the RBI to deal with non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs). By using those powers, the RBI had appointed an administrator for Devan Housing Finance (DHFL) and that has been referred to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), he said. DHFL, the third-largest pure-play mortgage player, is the first NBFC/HFC to face the corporate insolvency resolution process.

orderly unwinding of counter-cyclical regulatory measures," he said. The financial sector should return to normal functioning without relying on the regulatory relaxations as the new norm, he added. He said the MPC has reduced policy rates by 250 basis points since February 2019 to support growth.

The conventional and unconventional monetary policy and liquidity measures by RBI have been aimed at restoring market confidence, alleviating liquidity stress, easing financial conditions, unfreezing credit markets and augmenting the flow of financial resources to those in need for productive purposes, he said.

The Indian economy has started showing signs of getting back to normalcy in response to the staggered easing of restrictions. Post containment of COVID-19, a very careful trajectory has to be followed in orderly unwinding of counter-cyclical regulatory measures

— SHAKTIKANTA DAS  
RBI Governor

**Petrol, diesel futures trading to start soon on exchanges**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) may soon allow futures trading in auto fuels petrol and diesel giving an opportunity to bulk consumers of these petroleum products to hedge their risks from a volatile market where there is a sudden spurt in prices.



Sources said that petroleum ministry has approved the plan to allow trading of petroleum products in the derivative market and the commodity exchanges would be able to launch petrol and diesel futures soon after SEBI releases its final regulations in this regard.

Futures are financial contracts which help the buyer to purchase a commodity, or the seller to sell the commodity, at a predetermined future date and at a predetermined price. In the case of petrol and diesel, the derivative product would involve buying a specified quantity of the at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future. In a rising market where prices of fuel is going up, the futures product would protect the participant from losing out as the financial product would hedge the risk and ensure uniform pricing of the commodity.

"It is a good development as

it will allow industrial and bulk consumers of the two petroleum products to hedge their risks. But in current market conditions, in the absence of a big pick up in demand oil prices are either stable or falling, hedging would work against the interest of participant as it would add up to the cost of hedging," said an oil sector analyst asking not to be named.

Currently futures trading is allowed in crude oil giving opportunity to refiners to hedge their risks against frequent price fluctuations. The addition of petrol and diesel will give them another instrument to hedge their refining margins.

Sources said that as current market conditions may not be conducive for a futures market in petroleum products, it

may wait before intruding the new product in the market.

Petrol and diesel futures in any case will not benefit retail customers as the quantum of fuel used by them would be low. SEBI may allow derivative products with a floor of say 100 litre of petrol and diesel. This will be too high a level for retail customers to participate in the futures market.

Futures contract in petrol and diesel are expected to be ideal for refiners, transport companies, petrol pump owners, etc. In India a part from volatility in international markets, petrol and fiscal prices are also impacted by frequent changes in government duties, both at central and state levels, on the two products. The futures contract can help against these unforeseen price increased too.

**SpiceJet to operate UAE flights from July 12th**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Airline major SpiceJet on Saturday said it will operate flights from across four stations in India to Ras Al-Khaimah (Dubai) between July 12th and 26th for eligible 'Identity and Citizenship (ICA) approved UAE residents'.

Accordingly, the airline will operate flights from Delhi, Mumbai, Kozhikode and Kochi to the UAE.

"These flights will carry only those passengers who are destined for UAE," the airline said in a statement.

"From the Ras Al-Khaimah airport, SpiceJet will also be providing coaches, free of cost, for passengers travelling to Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi."

According to the airline, all passengers will be required to undertake a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test conducted not more than 96 hours

prior to the departure while also carrying the Covid-19 negative test result to be eligible to board the flight.

"Passengers must also have the Al-Hosn UAE App downloaded on their respective mobile phones. It is also mandatory for passengers to submit the health declaration form and quarantine undertaking form before boarding the flight," the statement said.

The airline has helped repatriate over 45,000 people in the last 45 days from UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar by operating 'Special Charter Flights' and by participating actively in the Vande Bharat mission.

"We will operate more repatriation flights in the coming days and we are fortunate to acquire another opportunity to serve and fly back people to the UAE to their families or for work," Shilpa Bhatia, Chief Commercial Officer, SpiceJet, was quoted as saying in the statement.



**CREDAI seeks TN's help for speedy approval of projects**

PNS ■ COIMBATORE

The Coimbatore chapter of the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Associations of India (CREDAI) on Saturday requested Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami to look into the association's demands.

In a representation listing the 14-point charter of demands, CREDAI president Surender Vittel sought specified time of clearance of building projects since the current approval process takes a minimum of six months to one year. Presently, the approval process goes through Local Planning Authority (LPA) and Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP), Corporation, and that takes time, he said.

Such long approval time makes the designs obsolete, so CREDAI has been seeking a specified time of clearance, he said. The spread of COVID-19 has limited the travel of peo-



ple in Coimbatore to Chennai and at present every file of 15,000 sq ft of building and above has to go to DCTP-Chennai for approval, he said.

In the current circumstance due to the pandemic, CREDAI, Coimbatore, has requested approvals of upto 2 lakh sq ft in the city's LPA itself which would reduce unnecessary commute and contact/physical interaction, Vittel said.

At present, various no objection certificates (NOCs) have to be obtained along with recommendation from local

Panchayats and the procedure is unclear leading to unethical practices in various departments, he said. An online single-track window application and tracking system should allow the status of the application at LPA, DTCP, Corporation or any central or state government department linking all approvals thereby making the system seamless and efficient. "Currently, we face delays at each department making the real estate industry opaque with incremental cost of compliance," Vittel said.

**Signature Global to invest Rs 225 cr in housing project**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Signature Global will invest Rs 225 crore over the next four years to develop a new affordable housing project in Gurugram, Haryana.

The project, comprising 852 units, will be developed under the Haryana government's affordable housing policy. Signature Global said in a statement that the project cost is estimated at Rs 225 crore. The selling prices of the units range from Rs 14.46 lakh to Rs 25.80 lakh.

"The demand for affordable housing has increased manifold. The realisation of the importance of one's home has dawned on people while staying and working from home, as many of them have faced challenges," Signature Global Group Founder & Chairman Pradeep Aggarwal said.

**Marico Foundation selects 3 innovations for affordable ventilator**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Marico Innovation Foundation (MIF) on Saturday said it has selected three innovations to provide affordable ventilator solutions amid COVID-19 crisis for funding.

MIF will help the selected innovators by providing access to business opportunities, men-

torship and guidance on business operations, so that they can reach the right pockets of India.

Concluding its

#Innovate2BeatCOVID challenge, MIF has selected three



innovations in 'Ventilators and Other Respiratory Solutions' and offered Rs 85 lakh grants, it said in a statement.

MIF has already announced the three winners for providing innovative solutions in 'Personal Protective Equipment

(PPE)' category, where it had distributed Rs 1.60 crore in grants.

In March, MIF, A T E Chandra Foundation and Marico Chairman Harsh Mariwala in his personal capacity launched a nationwide hunt for innovative solutions to healthcare challenges during COVID-19 crisis.

They had offered a grant of Rs. 2.5 crore for cost-effective and innovative solutions to combat a short supply of ventilators and personal protective equipment.

The challenge had received over 1,500 interests from across the country during the 20 days - from March 29 to April 18 2020, it said.

**LOCUST SWARMS Centre takes measures to prevent crop losses**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has taken various steps to control locust swarms, and carried out operations in over 1.5 lakh hectares area since April 11 to prevent crop losses.

"As per the instructions of Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, continuous action is being taken to control locust swarms," an official statement said on Saturday.

Starting from April 11 till July 9, control operations have been done in 1,51,269 hectares area in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana by Locust Circle Offices (LCOs), it added. The control operations have also been done in 1,32,660 hectares area in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Bihar by state governments.

Elaborating on the actions, the Agriculture Ministry said that in the intervening night of July 9-10, control operations were carried out at 16 places



in 8 districts - Barmer, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, and Karauli of Rajasthan, 2 places in Bhuj district of Gujarat and at 1 place each in Auraiya and Etawah districts of Uttar Pradesh by LCOs. Besides this, respective state agriculture department/s also carried out control operations at 1 place in Alwar district in Rajasthan; and at 1 place each in Auraiya and Etawah districts of Uttar Pradesh against small groups and scattered population of locusts. Further, five companies with 15 drones are deployed at Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Nagaur and Phalodi in Rajasthan for effective control of locusts on tall trees and in inaccessible areas through spraying of pesticides.

**American Airlines threatens to cancel Boeing Max orders**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

American Airlines is warning Boeing that it could cancel some overdue orders for the grounded 737 Max unless the plane maker helps line up new financing for the jets, according to people familiar with the discussions.

American's stand comes as airlines are finding financing increasingly difficult and expensive as the coronavirus pandemic has crippled their operations.

American had 24 Max jets before they were grounded in March 2019. It has orders for 76 more but wants Boeing to help arrange financing for 17 planes for which previous financing has or will soon



**American's stand comes as airlines are finding financing increasingly difficult and expensive as the coronavirus pandemic has crippled their operations**

steep drop in traffic," but did not comment on the talks with American. The Fort Worth, Texas-based airline declined to comment. News of American's threat to cancel some orders was first reported by The Wall Street Journal. The situation underscores the strain facing airlines during the coronavirus pandemic. It has grown more difficult and expensive for

them to finance planes. American's negotiating stance doesn't reflect a loss of confidence in the plane's safety, the sources said. The Max was Boeing's best-selling plane before crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia killed 346 people and led regulators around the world to ground all Max jets.

The coronavirus pandemic has compounded Boeing's

problems by causing a sharp drop in air travel and a loss of interest in new planes. Nearly 40% of the world's passenger jets are idled, according to aviation data supplier Cirium, as most airlines have more planes than they need until travel recovers.

The 17 planes in dispute were supposed to have been delivered to American at least a year ago. That has given the airline the option of canceling the order without penalty and recovering its down payments now, according to one of the people familiar with the matter. The deliveries have been delayed while Boeing works to fix a flight-control system suspected of playing a role in the crashes.

# ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with VISHAKHA FULSUNGE, the country's first woman motovlogger about what got her interested in riding and experiences from her travels

She loved to compete with the boys in her area and do one better. She was in primary school when the neighbourhood boys bought themselves BMX cycles and she had no intentions to be left behind and insisted that her father buy her a cycle as well. She got a girl bike which she rejected on sight. She wanted the one that the boys were riding. When she was in Class VIII they graduated to motorbike and she also wanted one. Since then there has been no stopping this 26-year-old — the country's first motovlogger. Meet Vishakha Fulsunge who has three Indian Book of Records to her name for her feat. The first, India's first woman motovlogger. Second, first woman to ride solo to Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The third is on the way.

For those who don't know who or what a motovlogger is, he is a person who shoots a video log while riding a motorcycle. While her parents may have indulged her and told her to follow her passion, it was not very easy for Fulsunge to reach where she is today. She tells you that it is tough to be a rider in this country especially if you are a woman.

There have been a couple of instances where Fulsunge has had to resort to threats to get a room in a hotel. "I ride alone. When I am all geared up people can't tell whether I am a man or a woman. But the minute I take off the helmet, there is no hiding. Sometimes I ride long hours but other times I take short breaks. As a woman rider I can't pitch a tent anywhere. When I went to this hotel and asked for a room, he refused. I understood that he thought that since I was a woman and alone, he could take me for a ride and I would beg. Instead, I threatened him and told him that I was recording whatever he had said. He had not expected that and finally relented and gave the room," Fulsunge recounts.

Another time, she ended up getting the fright on her life while taking a parikrama of the Narmada River. It had got late and she took a wrong turn and it took her on a narrow kuccha narrow lane. Soon she reached a dead end and realised there were three men squatting and staring at her, walked up to her and asked: *Aur chori kahan ja rahe hai*. "That really scared me but I knew if I showed fear they would pounce so I calmly without looking at them turned the bike, it took a bit of back and forth since there was no space and rode out of there like there was a fire on my trail. It was dark and on a bike the headlights give light only in front. In a jungle one doesn't know from where the danger can come," Fulsunge tells you.

Then there is the whole issue of toilets. "It is not easy to leave all the gear on the bike and go to the washroom. It takes ages to take off all the protective gear and wear it again. Also, when I take a break to eat, I have to park the bike where I can see it all the time or pick a snack I can eat on the go," Fulsunge says.

Then there have been some serious accidents that she has met with. An acci-

“WHEN I FIRST STARTED TO GO ON RIDES ALL ALONE, BUYING THE GEAR WAS A CHALLENGE. TO BEGIN WITH, YOU JUST CAN'T GET ONTO ANY BIKE AND BECOME A RIDER. YOUR MACHINE AND YOU HAVE TO GET USED TO LONG HOURS OF BEING ON THE ROAD. FOR THIS, THE BIKE HAS TO BE IN PRISTINE CONDITION AS WELL AS YOU TO BE ABLE TO TAKE LONG HOURS OF RIDING”



dent last year put her in the ICU. Her mother was a pillar of strength. While people told her that maybe her riding days were over, it was her mother who told her that her bike whom she has named *Kashish* is waiting for her at home. It was only once Fulsunge was home, after three months, that her

mother broke down and cried. Since then, she has a few people who are immediately contacted if her bike falls. There is an app that she has synced to her phone and any jolt sends a message to people listed as emergency contacts.

There are safety measures that she devised. One of them is a ponytail that

she has attached to her helmet which has pink ponies to let people know she is a woman rider and not to touch her. At night, the ponytail is out for the same reason — she doesn't want people to know she is a woman rider.

It is not just about people giving her strange looks because she is a woman

rider. "When I first started to go on rides all alone, buying the gear was a challenge. To begin with, you just can't get onto any bike and become a rider. Your machine and you have to get used to long hours of being on the road. For this the bike has to be in pristine condition and so should you be, to be able to take long hours of riding," Fulsunge says.

She also had to get used to wearing all the protective gear. It took her two years before she could buy proper riding gear. This includes a jacket and we all know the price of a good quality jacket in the country. In a country like India, where it is hot nine out of the 12 months, the jacket that she has to wear has to be special, that which has can withstand extreme heat and extreme cold since she has traveled the length and breadth of the country excluding North-east which is on her wish list and she all set to go there when the lockdown was announced. Her plans have had to be put on hold but not for long, she tells you.

"Back then, it was extremely difficult to get quality products in the market. I would ask my friend or acquaintance who would travel abroad to get me the gear that I needed," she tells you.

More so, because Fulsunge had decided she would pursue her passion under her steam and not borrow money from her parents. For this, even she was still a teenager, she took up jobs that came her way.

"When I was in college, I used to earn money by asking people to fill coupons. I would save up for months on end to buy what I needed. I was also very confident and could chat with people easily. I am also unlike most bike riders. I am petite. People take to me easily. There was an event at a mall in Mumbai where I was working when I saw that the organisers were a bit agitated. I came to know that their host had not turned up. I told them I could do it. It was the best event that the company had had in a long time and I walked away with Rs 4000. Slowly, my earnings increased and bought my gear and then started vlogging. Today, there are many companies that cater to women riders and it has become easy to source the protective gear. It is still expensive though," Fulsunge says.

Then there are knee-high boots with special soles to protect the feet from all the grit that hits when you ride. The length of the boot is to protect the legs from road burns if she falls. Riding pants and gloves are just as important. She tells you that a riding jacket costs ₹25,000 depending on the level of protection, pants ₹18,000, a helmet ₹22,000, gloves ₹5000 and boots another ₹25,000.

Interestingly, before she started her channel, she completed her integrated MBA. "In our country, people give importance to a degree and not skills. I wanted to pursue a degree. But I also knew that I was the kind to be tied to a 9 am to 5 pm job. I love what I do. Yes, there are perils that come with it but the freedom that it gives me, makes me happy," Fulsunge says.

## Young and beautiful at heart

She dons several hats and that is what sets her apart from others. ARUSHI NISHANK tells MUSBA HASHMI how she got interested in social work and how she is using her dancing skills to give out a social message

At an age, when most people focus on their career and a yearn for fame and this leading lady thought of giving it back to Nature. When children are busy playing around with mud and building sand castles, this young heart realised the importance of preserving and respecting Mother Nature.

Meet a 33-year-old social activist, environmentalist, young-preneur, film producer and dancer, Arushi Nishank. It is not easy for Nishank to don several hats, it took years of effort, hard work and not to mention eternal dedication. Having been born in Kotdwar, Uttarakhand, Nishank always feel

that she has a moral responsibility towards River Ganga, and that is how she came on board as National Ambassador of Sparsh Ganga, a campaign that aimed at restoring and conserving the holy river.

"The Sparsh Ganga Campaign was started by my father, Ramesh Pokhriyal, in 2009. People hailing from Uttarakhand realise that it is their duty to protect and conserve Ganga. The whole world looks up to the river as *moksh* giver, they see it with a lot of *aastha* and a whole lot of feelings are attached with the holy river. This is what got us thinking and in 2009 under the guidance of Dalai Lama, several

*dharam gurus* and Hema Malini ji we started the campaign in Rishikesh. At that time, my father was the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand at that time and the campaign was a Government project. However, there was no surety that the next Chief Minister will have the same feelings for the campaign, so we privatised it. And now, more than 5.5 lakh people from around the world are associated with this campaign," Nishank tells you.

What is even more interesting is that people associated with the campaign do it out of free will and without any pay or funding. "All these people organise a weekly Sunday cleaning drive. This has now become a ritual. This doesn't mean they only clean River Ganga, instead they get together and clean any river that is there in the proximity or for that matter even colonies and drains," Nishank explains.

This is not it. In 2016, she also boosted the Clean Ganga Initiative through her Kathak shows *Ganga Tujhe Salam* in Dubai and UAE. The purpose of these shows was educating the NRI's about the importance of River Ganga and its cleanliness. Even, her compositions and choreography like *Ganga Avataran*, a story of Goddess Ganga coming to earth, and *Sajda*, a classical Kathak dance performance are based on the Sufiyana theme.

"Being from the young generation, I know that the best way to give out a social message is to do it in an entertaining way. I have studied in Toronto, and have had a lot of friends from India and abroad. Whenever we conversed, I realised that it is not like our generation isn't concerned about anything, they do care about our culture and environment. But the fact is they don't want to see it in the

old traditional way. This got me thinking and I started walking on this road. I tried utilising my dancing skills and came up with several compositions that talked about our culture. Also, I am a trained Kathak dancer and if I started doing typical Kathak, no one would have understood it. Therefore, I experimented with it a lot and came up with the compositions," she says.

Her passion for Kathak came from her mother. "My mother was a Kathak dancer. She left all of us at an early age. Seeing her photos where she is all dressed up in classical attire and performing Kathak, I got interested in the dance form and started pursuing it when I was in Class VIII. The thought that some day I would also look that beautiful in the classical attire, excited me a lot. Also by God's grace, my family has that values and virtues that we are automatically inclined towards Indian culture," she tells you.

Nishank is also associated with various social reform programmes aimed at uplifting women all over the world. Off late, she chaired the International Women Empowerment Program (IWEP) in Dubai, and for her contribution to social work and women empowerment, she was featured in Forbes Middle East. She is also globally active to promote *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*, a Government initiative to save Girl Child. She also founded the Himalayan Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital in Dehradun, Uttarakhand in 2006. She took the step to educate the youth

“I ALWAYS HAD THIS THING IN THE BACK OF MY MIND THAT ONE DAY I WILL CREATE A SOCIETY WHERE WOMEN WILL BE CREATING SYNERGY WITH EACH OTHER AND WHERE ONE PLUS ONE WILL BE 11”



about the benefits of Ayurveda and to create employment.

The sense of empathy strike Nishank at an early age, all thanks to her being the eldest daughter of the family. "I have two younger sisters, and everyone knows that the eldest in the family is automatically more responsible towards the family. That was the case with me. As I grew up, I became responsible towards my career and when I achieved that, I realised that I am responsible to bring in good things to our society as well. That is how I started doing all the social work," she tells you.

What made her play an active role in women empowerment, she says, is the reason that a woman's greatest enemy is a woman. "We all have heard the saying once in a while, but somehow we never understood its depth and essence. Gradually, when you grow up and face a lot of politics in your respective fields, you realise how true it is. I faced a lot of difficulties in my life. Sometimes when you are pretty, you are bullied, you are pushed around by other girls and people are judgemental about you because of who your parents are. Having faced all this, since a very young age, I always had this thing in the back of my mind that one day I will create a society where women will be creating synergy with each other and where one plus one will not be two but 11," she says.

She adds that in Uttarakhand women are the bread earners of the family. "These women are the best example of

women empowerment. They are so mentally and physically strong that no one can even dare to touch them. To help these women even more, we with the help of other women from different countries came up with policies at IWEP in Dubai," she tells you.

With the help of NGOs in Uttarakhand, Nishank also helped in generating more employment opportunities for these ladies. "We used Vimal tree's bark to make a fabric out of it. The bark was also used by these women to make baskets. This not only created employment opportunities for 800 women of Uttarakhand, but also acted as a substitute for plastic. Then we used the flowers and petals that were drained into Ganga to make scent sticks, this further gave employment to around 200 women. The numbers are small but we plan to grow even more," Nishank tells you.

She recalls a story that she says was the introduction of women power to her: "It was my school days and I was in Rajasthan. One day, I saw a member of the hostel staff who lived nearby, she made her toddler sit on a *charpayi/khat* and placed a tub underneath it. She then bathed her son and utilised the water to wash her clothes and gave the remaining to the animals. She didn't waste a single drop of water. We have been using the ornamental words like reuse and recycle for decades now, but the real essence of these words is known by our women who are doing it since eternity. That was a wake up call for me to understand a woman's brain."

Being a film producer, there were certain Bollywood films on Nishank's cards which are now on hold. "Keeping in mind the current situation, all those projects are now on hold. But we are eyeing the digital space at the moment. We shall come up with something soon," she tells you.



REALISE DEEPLY THAT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS ALL YOU HAVE. MAKE THE NOW THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF YOUR LIFE —ECKHART TOLLE



**YOUR WEEK AHEAD**



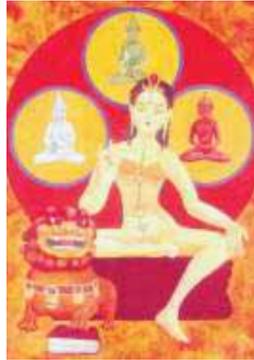
MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week you are likely to neglect your physical and emotional health. It is high time you change your lifestyle and choose a more healthy way of living. You need some time to rebuild your physical, mental and spiritual energies. Ensure a positive outlook in life to deal with health issues. On the career front, you will experience some negative energies that may cause mental pressure upon you. Be sincere towards your work and no harm will come to you. Financially, this is not a good time for a lot of you. Stay away from gambling as major loss is indicated. In love, a committed relationship may bring a new height of intimacy and joy. Singles, may soon find deep and true love in someone.

**Lucky number 3**  
**Lucky colour** Peach  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

Something big awaits you this week. You are full of enthusiasm and are adventurous to face the challenges life chooses to throw at you. Your health is at its best and you will experience high energy and vitality. Positive attitude and jolly nature will enhance your personality. In career, stay focused and keep a positive outlook. Be careful about the rivals at your workplace and do not disclose your strategies and plans to anyone. The week is favourable for spiritual healers and medical practitioners. Utilise this time to enhance your knowledge. Listen to your inner voice to follow the right track. In terms of the relationship, committed couples will enjoy strong bonding this week. Your reputation and goodwill will fetch you rich dividends and this will help you lead a charmed life.

**Lucky number 8**  
**Lucky colour** Camel Brown  
**Lucky day** Friday



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

Your health is likely to get affected due to stress and anxiety. A disappointing situation will leave you emotionally exhausted. Make sure you take some time out for meditation and proper rest. Be optimistic. On the work front, you are likely to face difficult circumstances due to your thoughts and perspective. Try to look at things with a different viewpoint and you may find many options available to sort out the difficulty. Those looking for employment may get a call for an interview. This week you may feel that your relationship is becoming boring. Therefore, you need to sit and openly discuss your feelings with your partner. Things will change for the better. Singles, analyse what you want from the relationship and then consider to enter into it.

**Lucky number 13**  
**Lucky colour** Rose Gold  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

Your health will be good this week and you will be confident about your future. Explore new ideas to maintain good health. Stay away from circumstances that will make you lazy. Those suffering from some illness may expect a speedy recovery. It is important to be grateful to those who stood by you in the journey of your progress. Professional life looks good. Those who are employed are like to get the next position in line. Negotiating your value is worth your effort. A partnership proposal from an old friend or colleague is on the cards. Go for it as this will prove lucky for you. On the relationship front, express your feelings with passion. Singles may find love this week. A positive start will give you confidence.

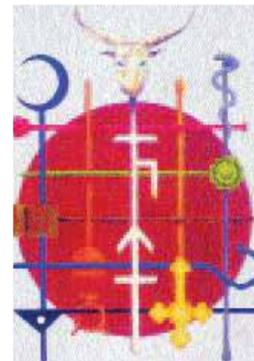
**Lucky number 10**  
**Lucky colour** Off-White  
**Lucky day** Monday



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you will possess the inner strength to take up any physical and mental challenge. You should make some efforts to uplift your fitness level by following a workout regime. Follow a diet chart to ensure balanced intake. A legal issue is likely to cause worry and keep you a little tensed. You should work towards avoiding negative vibes, this will help you be a confident person. On the career front, you will not have any pending work. Those who have started a new venture may have a reason to worry, but this will be temporary. It is advised to stay calm this week. Relationship wise, love will bloom and so will you. Happiness and contentment in all relations are indicated. Your dream for a perfect relation may come true.

**Lucky number 12**  
**Lucky colour** Yellow  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week your health will be good. Look out for new ways to maintain this — this could be by following a new fitness routine or a diet plan. Follow whatever suits you, as it will increase your vitality. Emotionally, you are content and will spend some good time with your family. On the work front, you will be successful in achieving your goals. Your efforts and hard work will be acknowledged. This week you will shine, but make sure that success doesn't get into your head as this will bring disappointment. Those seeking jobs may find one. In the love life, if things are not going well, then talk to your partner openly. Singles, before starting a relationship you need to be aware of your emotional issues and try to correct it.

**Lucky number 16**  
**Lucky colour** White  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

Be very careful about your health and at the same time, be observant as there are fine solutions for many health issues. Do not avoid situations where you have to decide on your health, as this can help you recover from your health issues. Maintain balanced behaviour and a positive outlook. On the career front, you will be overburdened and likely to be weighed down by responsibilities and commitments. You need to impose time management techniques to ensure that the work burden doesn't exhaust you. Ensure you take rest. Relationship wise, this week foresees happy family time, both for committed and single people. You and your partner will enjoy a peaceful time as you both are on the same page.

**Lucky number 7**  
**Lucky colour** Brown  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you will be full of energy and vitality and this will further help maintain a perfect harmony with respect to your body, mind and soul. You know what you want from life and will maintain a balance between personal and professional life. You need to take some time out to relax. On the professional front, the week is satisfactory. Those in the field of finance will perform better. Trust your communication skills and listen to your inner voice. This will bring you desired results. You are likely to connect with important people who will play a role in your professional growth. On the relationship front, a fresh start is foreseen. This is a good time for love birds. Couples will experience a truly deep love in the coming days. Love is in the air.

**Lucky number 9**  
**Lucky colour** Red  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will witness a sound mind and body connection. Consider your thoughts and behaviour while dealing with a health issue. Genetics and environment play an important role in creating such conditions, but negative thinking makes the situation worse. Seek help from a counsellor to deal with this negativity. At work, you need to think before acting on any situation, else it will lead to an unfavourable consequence. If required, re-evaluate your goals and change your priorities. There may be some turbulence in your love life. A relationship might end or have already ended. It will be an unpleasant situation as you will dwell in the memories of the past. You may heal by forgiving and learning from the mistakes.

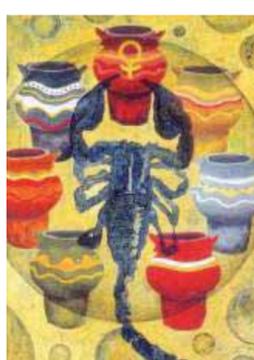
**Lucky number 11**  
**Lucky colour** Pastel Blue  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

You will work towards correcting the issues for the betterment of your health. If the issues become problematic, then it is advised to make some changes for a healthy lifestyle. Pay attention to your diet, exercise, and relaxation. If required, consult a health professional. On the career front, those looking for a new position will attain it. This week is a crucial time for you. You are likely to gain a new project. Work towards maximising your potential for a longer period. With hard work and persistence, you will leave a positive impact on senior management. Love life is not so rosy. A relationship has either ended or is on the verge of getting over. Don't let this situation dishearten you. You will overcome this situation.

**Lucky number 1**  
**Lucky colour** Indigo  
**Lucky day** Friday



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

You will enjoy good health this week. Therefore, invest your energy into something productive. This is the right time to start a new health regime like a fitness plan, a diet plan or an exercise routine. Those who are facing health challenges, are likely to recover soon with the help of their loved ones and people around them. Being optimistic will help you big time. On the professional front, things look favourable. You will be happy to help others and will make the working experience a pleasant one. The money will be in abundance. In the love life, you are likely to face conflicts. Therefore, try to have open communication with your partner to avoid any misunderstandings. Singles, this is not a good time to get into a relationship.

**Lucky number 17**  
**Lucky colour** Silver  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

For a healthy life, you need to have patience and mental strength. Stay optimistic and spread good vibes around you. Share your motivation and inspiration with others. That might just as well help them. Those who are dealing with bad habits, this is the right time to correct it. On the career front, uncertainties and confusions will dominate your mind and decisions and make your goals unclear. Colleagues and peers might try to limit your capabilities. Be confident and you will be able to overcome all opposition. In the matters of heart, you and your partner are likely to feel inspired and motivated. Spend time with each other and try to express your feelings. A new beginning is on the cards for singles. Use your creative energy productively.

**Lucky number 20**  
**Lucky colour** Golden  
**Lucky day** Sunday

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**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

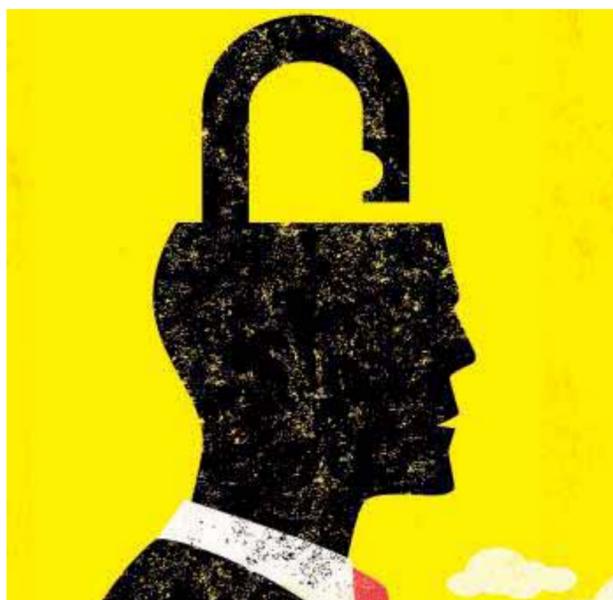
# Unlock the mind to heal

Lockdown is being gradually eased out. People are trying to resume normal activities, but the problems confronting us are not yet over. It will take some time before things settle down. As nature goes through unforeseen twists and turns, we are faced with unprecedented situations. We can't change nature's course. But how we respond is definitely in our hands. If we negotiate with the challenges coming our way with fortitude and intelligence, we may be able to contain the damage. We faced similar pandemic during 1918-1920 in which more than 50 million people lost their lives, which included 2.25 million Indians. This time, however, the recovery rate is higher and death toll so far has been much lesser. It is not that world's destiny has taken a different turn. It needs to be appreciated that it is the result of human endeavour that medical science has grown substantially and we are better equipped today.

In life too, we are often confronted with challenging situations, many of them beyond our control. Many of us become a victim of our own making also because of our flawed perceptions. But here again, what matters the most is how

we respond to the situation. Some amongst us are able to face the situation bravely, intelligently negotiate the challenges and keep marching ahead in strength. But many, particularly the weak, come under great pressure, that is difficult to withstand, often at times calling for medical intervention. The question now is: Why given a similar situation, different people respond varied ways?

The answer lies in the unique character of each being, coming as it may as one's karmic carryover from the past. In one's life time, we would have learnt and unlearned many a things, acquired skill sets, developed habits and attitudes, acquired virtues and attributes, and also have unfulfilled desires left. Their imprints get carried over in the form of thought seeds to our successive incarnate body-mind organism. As and when the thought-seeds get a congenial ground, they come into play involuntarily. That may be to our advantage or detriment, depending on the character and content of the thought-seeds. To sum up, we are all invariably born with a preconditioned mind, which sets the premise of one's thought process — the basic fabric of individual mind-frame — on which our



future life takes off. Accordingly, each mind involuntarily develops its individual specific defining principles that guide all actions on our part — the desires nursed and pursued, the initiatives we take, or how we respond or react to a particular situation. That, of course, is subject to further modification as we go through learning lessons during ongoing life. With such a preconditioned mind, our scope of vision comes under restriction. That doesn't let us look at the issues in hand with an open mind, and so often fail to perceive things in the right perspective due, and evidently to our detriment.

The beauty of human mind, however, is that it can self-reflect upon its own trends and could respond to fresh educative inputs also. That empowers us to watch our thought-trends and make necessary amends through conscious efforts. The paradox, however, is that seldom do we remain conscious about using the above exclusive privilege. Often, our ego also plays spoil sport, as it doesn't let us identify and acknowledge our fault lines. Here comes the role of Astrology, which can dispassionately read your personality trends. For, it reads your individual energy signature with a fair amount of precision. And energy knows no bias.

Here is the case of a person who came seeking guidance on how to come out of acute stress he is undergoing. Look at his astrological pointers. The Sun conjunct Saturn in the *lagna*, a fixed sign, both opposed to Jupiter conjunct mischievous Neptune. That speaks of a hardened negative mindset. Second, he is stuck to his self-defined delusory beliefs and perceptions. Third, has a swaggering ego, who wishes to live exclusively on his own terms. All the more because mind signifying Moon occupies a dual sign Gemini and afflicted by both the sign lord Mercury and *lagna* lord Venus. That clouds his vision and interpersonal relationship skill. If all that would not be enough, fiery Mars conjunct erratic Rahu, lock horns with both Mercury and Venus. He, thus, has a restive and a cynic mind, who habitually finds fault with others for all the wrong happening. I wish, he unlocks his preconditioned mind, and things will definitely turn better.

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# the pioneer agenda

To not have any hope is where things start to get really bleak. Things are possible. The impossible can be possible  
— Sarah Paulson



FROM THE INSIDE

**Hope in the times of pandemic**  
Leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive



**Dealing with muscle pain**

Automation will become the key driver of “Vocal for Local” narrative for the manufacturing industry in India, writes PRADEEP DAVID, as he explains how Collaborative Robots will be significant in proliferating businesses in the post Covid-19 era

# A CASE FOR COBOTS

The world has come to a standstill and the global economy has taken the worst hit in history. Right from the negative pricing of crude oils to the worldwide lockdown, it has brought the global economy to its knees, looking for the road to recovery. With the global cases mounting up to 8 million, the impact of the grave pandemic can be witnessed across geographies. This has resulted in a major shift of leading lives and the whole world is coming to terms with the new normal. As the famous saying goes, ‘Every crisis brings an opportunity’ and this pandemic has provided an opportunity for businesses to be creative and adapt an innovative approach to sustaining the tide. Most of the countries — whether developed or developing — are actively pursuing opportunities to become completely self-reliant to battle the situation and also prepare for any future disruptions.

## THE INDIAN SCENARIO

The labour-intensive manufacturing sector has been one of the hardest-hit due to the coronavirus. According to a business publication, the seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), a reflection of the health of the manufacturing economy, fell to 27.4 in April, from 51.8 in March this year.

Like the rest of the world, India, too, is experiencing a major outbreak of the Covid-19 virus and has slowly reached the second phase of the pandemic. According to the World Bank, India was the world’s sixth-largest manufacturer at the end of 2018. However, having a labour-intensive manufacturing sector has resulted in the sharpest deterioration in business conditions in the last 15 years, with the seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) — a reflection of the health of the manufacturing economy — falling from 51.8 in March 2020 to just 27.4 in April.

As the current unlocking phase across the nation takes place, social distancing, stringent hygiene measures, and remote working have all become a part of the new normal. The manufacturing sector, however, is one of the few places where online meetings can only do so much. After all, the majority of the nature of the work is on-site, physical, and time-sensitive, so work-from-home is not always an option.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIA

The ground reality is that Covid-19 is not expected to abate anytime soon, so our daily lives must instead incorporate the right measures to prevent the risk of contagion. According to Forrester analytics, we are stepping in the second stage of the pandemic, which steers us to ‘Adapt and Overcome’ the situation. To stay afloat, the industry needs to adjust to the new normal and strategise how to



accelerate recovery from the losses incurred so far, optimising efficiency and encouraging self-dependency.

## THE NEW APPROACH: COLLABORATIVE ROBOTS, OR “COBOTS”

While the government’s Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan initiative is a significant step towards restart the operations and encouraging various sectors to stabilise themselves, it is vital that manufacturers recognise the need to join hands with technology and embrace automation. In fact, a study by EY found that 41% of employers across the world are fast-tracking automation plans in an endeavour to make up for lost productivity and also prepare for the post-crisis world. Normalising the allegiance of employees and technology will pave a path that will lead the sector to growth, stabilising Indian business and enabling self-sufficiency.

Rewiring an industry and making it tech-friendly comes with its own challenges. Some of the obstacles faced by the manufacturing industry include an abundance of unskilled labour, a lack of space on the shop floor, and the lack of technical expertise to operate complex new technology. Collaborative robots, or “cobots,” are a niche robot technology that present the perfect solution by addressing all these challenges, offering an easy automation solution for Indian manufacturers.

## EMPOWERING MANUFACTURING THROUGH HUMAN ROBOT COLLABORATION

While industrial robots have been around for years, collaborative robots are a much newer technology. Cobots are an advanced robotic arm that — unlike their industrial robot predecessors — were created to share the same workspace as humans, without the need for any cumbersome caging or fencing

(subject to application risk assessment). This is thanks to their advanced safety features, backed up by 65 patents, including a protective stop that is enabled when an obstacle blocks a cobot’s path of motion, ensuring that a person that may come in contact with a cobot is not harmed. By simply changing the end-of-arm-tooling on a cobot, it can be used for a variety of tasks, ranging from the tending of CNC and other machines, dispensing, quality inspection, pick and place, screwdriving, and much more. This makes them versatile to use in a multitude of applications across virtually every industry.

Cobots can handle tasks that require high repeatability, precision, and quality, as well as jobs that pose ergonomic risks. Humans are then free to cater to tasks that require mental efforts and human ingenuity, often leading to the upskilling of labor. In a crucial time like this, it has become a priority for industry leaders to not just utilise their workforce wisely to handle tasks that need human intervention, while cobot can handle work that could cause physical and mental stress to people.

Human Robot Collaboration is one of the key drivers of Industry 4.0 and, in fact, a study on a BMW assembly plant, conducted and published in MIT Technology Review found that there is a whopping 85% reduction in the idle time of workers when they collaborate with robots. Cobots, thus, can empower domestic production and facilitating the Make in India mission. In the Covid-19 era, when manufacturers are facing issues of labor uncertainty and recognising the need to automate but unsure how to start, cobots are one of the quickest solutions on the market, addressing many common barriers to automation faced by Indian manufacturers.

## HOW COBOTS BOOST MANUFACTURING

**Social Distancing:** By allowing humans and cobots to work side-by-side, cobots reduce the need for contact between human workers, ensuring that they maintain safe social distancing standards. This is especially vital in crowded assembly lines and worker-dense factory floors, which will have to take measures to ensure that distance is maintained between individuals but no efficiency is lost. In essence, this enables businesses to optimise productivity while also helping flatten the curve of Covid-19 contagion.

**Partial Automation:** Complex automation with heavy machinery is expensive, space-consuming, and difficult for most manufacturers to carry out. Cobots, however, enable the automation of specific applications instead of an entire plant, thereby reducing capital expenditure significantly. This partial automation means that manufacturers can start small and identify applications that involve high precision, monotony, or potential ergonomic risk

for humans, and use cobots to handle these instead. For example, at Baxter Lab, one can see that the cobots are placing bottles in boxes, while the man is manually holding the boxes open for the cobot to do so. Both are thus, working together and the process is only partially automated to optimise efficiency.

**Quick Deployment and Flexible Redeployment:** Their ease of use and setup means that cobots are one of the fastest automation solutions currently in the market. While traditional automation solutions can take months to deploy, a cobot can be set up for a simple application within a single day, even by first-time robot users. Plus, a cobot can be programmed time and again for different tasks, functioning like a lightweight “tool” with many uses. In this uncertain environment, many manufacturers need to repurpose their assembly lines to focus on different products based on the urgency of requirements and changing consumer demands. Cobots are flexible and easy to re-station as needed, enabling high mix/low volume production.

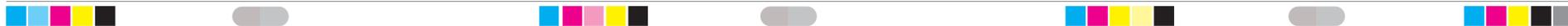
## DEMOCRATISED AUTOMATION

As you can see from the USPs highlighted above, collaborative robots are easy and quick to set up, have a low footprint, and enable flexible redeployment. This, combined with the Human Robot Collaboration facilitated by cobot, make it possible for manufacturers of all sizes to deploy this Industry 4.0 technology with ease. Cobots lower the barriers for automation faced by Indian manufacturers, allowing them to use robotic technology without having to make drastic changes to their existing shop floors. As SMEs are the building blocks of the Indian economy, it is vital that they are able to automate to meet global standards of quality to achieve their Make in India dreams.

To sum it up, the Covid-19 virus has caught the world unprepared, taking businesses by storm and showing no sign of abating anytime soon. If anything, the pandemic has shown us all the unpredictability of life and the need to invest in smart decisions to prepare for the possibility of any future disruptions.

With the spotlight on India as the new destination for global manufacturing, industries need to prepare for a prolonged recovery period where it has become of paramount importance to learn how to manage human capital and production capabilities. Cobots allow manufacturers of all sizes to automate areas previously considered too small or too expensive to automate, lowering the barriers to automation through USPs that traditional robots and automation solutions simply cannot provide. They enable manufacturers to increase agility to cater to rapidly changing demands.

The writer General Manager, South Asia, Universal Robots





I OFTEN THINK THAT THE NIGHT IS MORE ALIVE AND MORE RICHLY COLORED THAN THE DAY  
— VINCENT VAN GOGH

# HOPE IN THE TIMES OF PANDEMIC

We have role models who have led the fight against the pandemic in India. These leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive.

**STILETTOS**



**MINIYA  
CHATTERJI**

**Y**ou step out in Mumbai and humanity is at your feet, almost all revealed. There is much squalour with some glitz. There is chaos and also the calm of the sea. You either move or get pushed down by the crowds. People and constructed spaces in this city flow like opium, filling up your senses. I have found maximum city Mumbai to be as overwhelming as life can get. It is these crowds and deeply socialised nature of the city that eventually played a strong role in augmenting the reproductive ratio of Covid-19 here leading to winning the race in India that no one wants to win — of having the most number of active Covid-19 cases until recently.

Mumbai could have been more prepared. In a note authored by Professor Dhaval Monani and myself, that we submitted to the Prime Minister's Office on April 2, 2020, we had proposed the setting up of temporary hospitals within vacant community halls, marriage halls, office spaces. But it was not until end of April that BMC decided to take over vacant spaces to create temporary hospitals for Covid-19 patients and for quarantining those at risk. BMC's search also included the wrong spaces — *maid-aans*, warehouses — which are not only expensive to convert in to Covid-19 recovery facilities, but also dusty and therefore detrimental to the condition of the patients. For setting up facilities at scale, we needed to keep the per-bed cost as low as possible. Instead, most of the facilities used expensive steel beds and equipment that was not needed.

Never waste a good crisis — I was dismayed to see this as the motto of several government officials to make a quick buck in procurement, of politicians who would be more interested in press coverage rather than getting any work done, and people in the private sector who overnight became dealers of testing kits at huge margins. I also watched (furiously) how CSR was at times used as a garb for profiteering off the crisis. My team's efforts come free of cost. However, for-profit ventures for social good are also excellent as this builds in incentives to do good so that it is sustainable — but when doing so the model needs to be transparent. Mumbai, a city where dreams are realised as fast as they are crushed, was even during a pandemic using its elbows to get ahead in the crowd.

Large private sector companies have not stepped up. While elsewhere in cities like Pune, companies like Wipro set up temporary hospitals within their



**MUMBAI COULD HAVE ADOPTED DIFFERENT POLICIES IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS DEPENDING ON THE LOCAL CONDITIONS. THE EPIDEMIC COULD HAVE BEEN CONTAINED IN SOME AREAS WHERE IT WAS RAMPANT, AND CERTAIN UNAFFECTED DISTRICTS COULD HAVE BEEN OPENED UP**

office buildings or the Serum Institute of India who is collaborating with universities to create a vaccine, where are the corporate giants of Mumbai? CSR is not enough, but even that has been inadequately spent to help Mumbai cope with the virus.

The city has woken up to randomised testing far too late. This week the BMC has removed the earlier order for the need of prescription to get a Covid-19 test and has introduced a new rule that does not require a prescription. People can now get a test done at any hospital. Right from the start of the spread of the pandemic, there should have been no need to make it so darned difficult to get tested! After the initial hic-

cup, Covid-19 tests were available in abundance. Numerous experts cried hoarse advising the government to make testing easier, but it was to no avail. Panic early, Mumbai.

Communications from the government has been confusing and damaging. At first, there was fear induced amongst people against Covid-19 which led to severe stigmatisation against patients. And then economic interests took over the concern for health, which suddenly made it alright for certain sectors to open up. Ironically, now as numbers of active cases of the Coronavirus soar, it has never been easier during this pandemic to be out and about in the city. There has been extreme short-sightedness on the part of

the government, in at first believing that social distancing would work in a country where 1 of 6 urban dwellers live in slum zones. In most cases — and more so in a health disaster — we can not copy-paste solutions that have worked for other countries on to the unique context in India. Economy and health needs to be balanced, but it should have been balanced very differently than done. Mumbai could have adopted different policies in different districts depending on the local conditions. The epidemic could have been contained in some areas where it was rampant, and certain unaffected districts could have been opened up.

There is hope. We have role models who have led the fight against the pan-

dem in India. These leaders have emerged because of their genuine interest in helping people out, their intellect, and by being proactive.

For example, I was introduced to Amin Patel when we were making our first Covid-19 quarantine centre in Mumbai in early May 2020. Those were the days when my team at my company Sustain Labs and at the Anant Centre for Sustainability a think-teach-do tank that I established two years ago, was manufacturing equipment and moving trucks across India amidst a complete nationwide lockdown. Amin is a three term MLA from the Mumbadevi constituency in Mumbai, but his concern was for all of Mumbai. He set up a 200 oxygen cylinder bank for everyone to use in Mumbai — this is refreshing as often the challenge for democracy is populism, and that too combined with a narrow vision of pleasing the constituency for votes.

When Covid struck, Amin's first reaction was to send ration to the Kamthipura area where overnight sex workers saw their incomes disappear due to social distancing rules in place. He once told me, "Even if one family anywhere in Mumbai needs ration I send a tempo with food." His sleep routine is highly unrecommended — he sleeps at 1 am; is awake from 3.30 am to 6 am answering distress calls that he would have received while asleep and taking action on them; then he goes back to sleep from 6 am until 8 am.

While setting up the Covid-19 recovery facility with the help of Amin, one of the partners in the project had a demand for 10% of project cost as management fee to which Amin's reaction is one that I will never forget. He was appalled at the demand and said, "10% of project cost can make 20 beds and save 20 lives every fortnight! We will refuse to pay that!" It is only too common for government officials and politicians to be in a hurry to get things done just to look good to the higher ups and the voters.

Why is it so difficult to help the government in India? This could well be the title of my next book as there is so much to reflect upon and write about this. In the meantime, all power to those government representatives on the frontline who are genuinely and effectively fighting for the rest of us.

*The writer is CEO of Sustain Labs and Adjunct Professor at SciencesPo Paris. She is also a columnist and author of the 2019 bestseller Indian Instincts — essays on freedom and equality in India*

# Covid tales: The joy of homecoming

From keeping the various documents ready prior to the journey, to all the procedures and possible mishaps that could occur at the airport, travelling feels like a daunting mission nowadays. VANDANA SRIVASTAVA shares her first person account

**A**tense mood had surrounded our household, as our family braced up for a monumental change in their lives. My husband had just got his transfer order, which would entail us to move back to Delhi from Dubai in one of the repatriation flights, since we were diplomats. Undertaking such a massive transfer process along with the four hour journey in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic got me anxious for quite a few days. However I maintained my calm, and felt stronger by reassuring myself that this time would soon pass.

Finally, when all the boxes were packed and the rooms rendered empty, it was time for us to leave. As I started packing my final bags, I realised that it was time to say goodbye to Dubai, the place where I had spent 5 and a half golden years of my life. We were finally done with our final shopping in the region, and were getting braced up to travel during these trying times. Obviously, our main travel essentials were going to be Sanitisers, PPE, Masks, Face Shields, Disinfectant Sprays, and the like: as opposed to the usual earphones and a good book to read.

As advised by various acquaintances, we wrapped our entire check-in luggage in cellophane wraps. This would allow us to just open and discard them as soon as we reached our destination, allowing the main baggage to not be contaminated, and eliminating the need to disinfect the same. We reached the DXB airport at 10.00 hours (UAE time), and saw quite a meticulous arrangement of people waiting for their health checkup before moving on to the usual airport protocol. A vivid depiction of responsibility and unity was portrayed before our eyes as we saw every single person wear masks, gloves, maintain social distance, and follow all the new rules and regulations during the pandemic throughout the airport.

We passed our Covid health screening at the airport, and moved on to the usual airport procedure. We got our boarding passes, gave our check-in baggage, took care of some over-sized baggage since we were moving on a transfer basis, and moved on through the X-Ray area to the gates, where we would wait until boarding started. Air India also gave us Face Shields, Sanitisers, and extra Face Masks for use during the journey. They were also giving out PPE kits to everyone sitting in the middle seat. However, upon seeing two kids



travelling with me, they decided to give PPE kits to all of us. Even the security at the airport allowed all kinds of sanitisers and sprays to be taken on flights during this pandemic, which was strictly forbidden in the past.

Finally, our flight's announcement was called out and it was time for us to suit up in our PPE kits, Face Shields, Masks, and Gloves. We all resembled astronauts on a field mission in our face masks and shield combo. We boarded a bus and entered our airplane as usual, but were informed soon that there would be no food or drinks served in this flight. Contrasted with the old times, air hostesses were giving out hand sanitisers instead of refreshments. On top of all the security measures taken by the airport and the airline, we also made it a rule of thumb to spray disinfectant everywhere we went and everything we came in contact with.

A small box of food and a water bottle were already kept on everyone's seats, but we chose to keep it on the ground and ignore it. Owing to our fear and alertness, we did not eat or drink anything throughout the journey, and realised later on that it was everybody on the flight who did the same. It was pretty uncomfortable for all of us to wear masks and shields, and to add on to the inconveniences, the flight was already running an hour late. Living such a surreal moment, I was reminded of John Milton's poem, "On His Blindness", where he thought that god was testing him during every single moment of his life.

The 3 hour journey seemed much longer than it actually was, but we soon made it to the Indira Gandhi Airport in New Delhi. However, as opposed to what everyone believed, this was nowhere close to the end. We were told to remain

seated inside the plane until further notice, and to also download the Aarogya Setu app on our smartphones, which was a contact tracing app created by the Government of India in order for citizens to protect themselves from the Coronavirus. The plane was being sanitised from the outside, and soon the air hostess started calling out seat numbers on the PA system, upon which the respective passengers stood up and left the plane.

Upon entering the New Delhi airport, we were informed that a flight from Melbourne had just landed and the airport authorities were conducting their due procedures with passengers of the Melbourne flight first. Once all the passengers from that flight were cleared out, we proceeded to our checkups, and kept all our documents ready. Firstly, our temperatures were taken and our self-declaration health forms were checked, and

stamped. This allowed us to carry on to the next process, which was the standard immigration process, upon which our health forms were checked once again. Notably, they also kept a copy of the same for their own records. We followed the standard airport process since and moved to the conveyer belts, where the luggage was kept by the side of the belts instead of on the belt, owing to the very few amount of flights operating. We looked for our luggage and gathered it, all while maintaining social distancing and using disinfectant spray throughout.

After all standard procedures were over; we met yet another medical official at the airport who checked our Blood Pressure, temperature, and oxygen levels. Then, we went outside of the main airport building to a small makeshift office made by the airport authorities. The purpose of this office was to rule out if we had the Coronavirus or not, and would suggest the necessary means of precaution tailored to each person's health situation. We cleared all formalities, and were declared Covid negative. There was an SDM to check our quarantine documents, and we availed due permission to use our personal vehicle to get to our hotel, which was our designated quarantine center. It was now 21.30 hours (IST): almost 12 hours since we had started our journey from Dubai.

As soon as we reached, the hotel staff disinfected our luggage. We were taken to our room quickly, where we removed our masks, took a bath, and felt like we were in paradise. It was almost after 13 hours now, when we had the second meal of our day. It truly was pure bliss to finally see this journey come to an end successfully, and we were grateful that we made it safe.

To conclude, I would like to preface by saying that travelling anywhere during this pandemic is obviously not an easy thing to do. Ranging from the various documents needed to be kept in order prior to the journey, to all the procedures and possible mishaps that could occur at the airport, travelling feels like a daunting mission nowadays. However, throughout this experience, I would like to mention that the airports were well equipped and very cooperative, and all essential measures were taken to ensure that all passengers travel safely with the least amount of hassle possible.

*The writer is a lawyer by profession and philanthropist by heart*

# All you need to know about perimenopause

**M**ost women know the signs of menopause which happens around the age of 50. But there is another phenomenon called peri-

menopause which many are unaware of and tend to ignore.

Perimenopause - The term means "around menopause", is a time when your hormones undergo changes in preparation of menopause, points out Dr Asha Baxi, Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist,

Motherhood Hospital. Here, the level of estrogen (the

female hormone) falls and women may also begin to have cycles where they do not ovulate (release an egg). Most women begin their perimenopause period at some point after their mid-40s. Many could also skip this stage entirely and directly experience menopause. But there are also cases when perimenopause could hit you as early as in your mid-30s, she adds.

The symptoms of perimenopause can be subtle, they come on gradually and many women fail either to notice it or just tolerate the changes. This phenomenon

is generally ignored by most people. But it is very important that whenever you experience changes in your menstrual cycle that interfere with your day to day life and well-being that you go see a doctor as these symptoms may indicate perimenopause, Dr Baxi says. If experienced at an early age like in your 30s, perimenopause will cause problems in conceiving and can cause infertility.

### The expert shares some features of perimenopause:

**Periods are irregular:** The length of time between periods will start to vary as a woman starts experiencing perimenopause. Ovulation becomes irregular and you may have a space of 60 days or more

between periods.

**Hot flashes & night sweating:** You may suddenly feel feverish during perimenopause. Hot flashes may also be accompanied by redness of skin and excessive sweating. Your sleep patterns are also likely to be affected.

**Fertility decreased:** Due to irregular ovulation, you may experience problems in conceiving. The levels of estrogen, progesterone and other essential hormones decrease during perimenopause. The quality of the egg decreases leading to infertility.

**Mood swings:** Due to change in sleeping patterns and hot flashes, women tend to get irritable and depressed during perimenopause.

**Problems related to the Vagina and the bladder:** Low levels of estrogen will lead to loss of lubrication and elasticity in the vagina. Due to this intercourse may be painful. Libido also decreases. Diminishing estrogen levels will

make women more susceptible to urinary and vaginal infections.

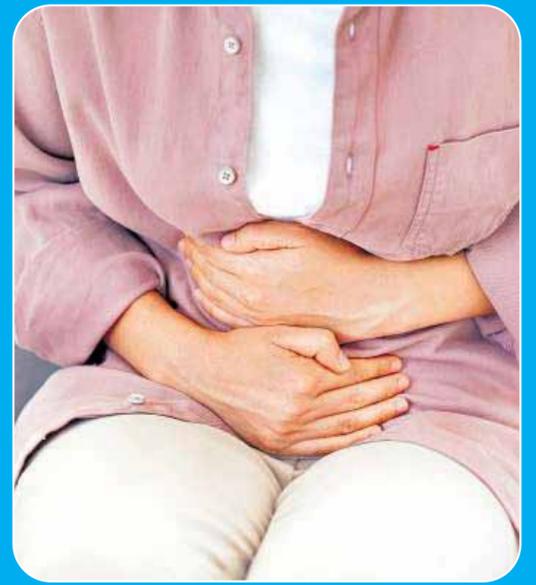
### Decrease in Bone Mass:

Estrogen is the hormone that protects the bones in women. During perimenopause, as estrogen levels fall leading to bone loss. This also makes women more vulnerable to osteoporosis. This is a disease where your bones become so brittle that a simple fall or even mild bending/stretching may lead to fractures.

When should you see a doctor?

**She replies:** Irregular periods are quite common due to multiple reasons and most often than not women tend to generally ignore them. However, it is important to pay attention if this becomes a regular occurrence and schedule an appointment when one experiences the below symptoms:

- Extremely heavy bleeding or if the bleeding has clots
- Spotting between periods
- Bleeding last for more than 7 days
- Spotting after intercourse
- Painful bleeding or painful intercourse



## DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

- Doctors take many things into consideration before determining whether a woman has entered perimenopause or not. There are a number of factors like age, menstrual history, the symptoms shown etc. There is no one test or process to determine this, Dr Baxi says.
- She adds perimenopausal complications can be treated with drug therapies like:
- Hormone Therapy:** This is the most effective form of treatment used to relieve the complications. Estrogen doses are given in the form of pills, skin patch, gels or creams to reduce your perimenopausal symptoms.
- Estrogen administered into vagina:** This form of treatment will help reduce the vaginal dryness caused due to decrease in the estrogen levels due to perimenopause. It will provide relief from vaginal and urinary infections.

### Art procedures like IVF/ ICSI may be needed for women wanting to become pregnant.

It is very important to consult a gynaecologist to plan the course of medication. It is very easy to ignore mild symptoms like irregular periods or mood swings but remember these may all indicate underlying perimenopause. Detecting perimenopause and offering treatment in time provide a window of opportunity for long term benefits in conditions like protection against cardiovascular disease or osteoporosis. Talk to your doctor about the options available, check for risks and benefits and then make an informed decision.

# DEALING WITH MUSCLE PAIN

**I**n times of COVID-19 and the lockdown, most people have been staying indoors and levels of activity have decreased significantly. Work from home has become the new norm and we may see more of it even if the COVID-19 pandemic resolves.

For online classes, students have to sit for long hours in front of laptops or mobiles, often maintaining an incorrect posture on the bed rather than using a table and chair. Sitting at the desk or on the sofa watching TV for a long time weakens and tightens muscles, stiffening the back, shoulders and neck.

Dr Kaushal Malhan, Director Orthopaedics and Joint Replacement surgeon at Fortis Hospital Mulund points out: "A survey conducted at UK's Institute for Employment Studies (IES) found that more than half of those who responded, said they were experiencing new neck, shoulder or back pain. Maintaining a healthy diet and exercise plummeted over a fortnight since, with 60 percent saying they are exercising less, a third eating less healthily and 20 percent saying they were consuming more alcohol. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of the 500 respondents said they were sleeping less, while 48 percent said their new working life involved increased and irregular hours."

Dr Malhan notes the common causes of muscle pain we see nowadays include:

**Muscle cramps:** Muscle cramp is a sudden contraction of one or more muscles. This can be intense and sometimes even lead to muscle injury. Sitting for long hours in a particular posture can lead to muscle cramps along the upper back, shoulder blade and calf muscles. These can be treated by gentle stretching exercises, massage, hot fomentation and

good hydration.

**Muscle strains:** Muscle strains are injuries due to sudden strenuous contraction of the muscles or a vigorous sudden stretching of the muscle leading to damaged muscle fibres. These are often seen due to unaccustomed or incorrectly done exercises. People are adopting new exercises by watching videos without proper supervision and preparation, resulting in muscle injury. These are treated by rest, ice fomentation, splintage and anti-inflammatory medications.

**Overuse injuries:** Overuse injuries or repetitive stress injuries are due to a small strain being applied very frequently. This happens due to bad posture with excessive repetitive pressure on a particular muscle or indulging in a particular motion frequently thus causing excessive localised muscle strain. An example is that of a tennis elbow when an individual may develop persistent pain along the outer side of the elbow because of some simple repetitive activity such as doing household chores like lifting, repetitive wrist extension, etc. To treat, one needs to rest the part, and couple it with Ultrasonic Therapy with a Physiotherapist and anti-inflammatory medicine.

It is most important to correct what you are doing wrong

and perform the repetitive activities in a manner which will not be strenuous for the muscle. This can be done by correct position of joints e.g. keeping a soft support under the wrist joint so as to reduce the extension at the wrist while typing. Correct posture at the work station with elbows rested and back supported will reduce the risk of neck and shoulder pain.

**Muscle pain due to arthritis in adjacent joints:** A number of patients with knee arthritis whose mobility levels have decreased are suffering from pain, not just in the knee joint but also the muscles of the thigh and the calf.



## MEASURES TO PREVENT MUSCLE PROBLEMS:

- Regular change of posture and breaks from prolonged sitting with walks and movement exercises
- Avoid posture which specifically strains one muscle group
- Body postures should be such that the head and neck lie along the centre of gravity axis
- Postures should be such that none of the muscle groups are under constant tension
- Workstation should be designed so that the computer screen is at a height, backrest supporting the back and elbows supported on the table. Soft silicon support under the palms so as to avoid wrist hyperextension. Scapular retractions can be done while sitting to reduce neck pain
- While doing household chores avoid excessive loads at one go and divide a heavy job into small lighter sections
- Take a break in between activities. Movement breaks are better than standing breaks
- In case of any pain please consult your doctor for treatment.
- Regular gentle stretching exercises focusing on all relevant muscle groups; listen to your body and dial up or down as needed or as much as can be tolerated. Use your doorway for a full body stretch
- Aerobic exercise like walking should be done regularly within the house
- Deep breathing exercises and a positive optimistic outlook to reduce stress
- Endurance exercises involving lightweights and multiple repetitions for muscle groups which are more prone to problems
- Hot fomentation and gentle massage for tight muscles
- Regular hot water bath
- Drinking lots of water and having a healthy well balanced diet
- Avoid sitting in one position continuously for too long

**FOR ONLINE CLASSES, STUDENTS HAVE TO SIT FOR LONG HOURS IN FRONT OF LAPTOPS OR MOBILES, OFTEN MAINTAINING AN INCORRECT POSTURE ON THE BED RATHER THAN USING A TABLE AND CHAIR. SITTING AT THE DESK OR ON THE SOFA WATCHING TV FOR A LONG TIME WEAKENS AND TIGHTENS MUSCLES, STIFFENING THE BACK, SHOULDERS AND NECK.**

# LYRICS IN HIS VEINS

Barely two words when one hears the lyrics of songs like 'Ee Sethitone', 'Nuvvu Chudu Chudakapo', 'Mounamgaaney Edagamani', 'Pedave palikina matallone'... the listener is taken back to the day he or she first heard it and starts humming along. These are some songs that ease your nerves, help you relax, and bring a smile onto your face. The man behind such songs, Kanukuntla Subhash aka Chandrabose, known for the 'Teluguthanam' in his songs, became a hit with his first song itself. His penmanship instantly connects with people across all age groups.

A man behind 3,400 successful songs, a multiple Nandi awardee, Chandrabose is one of the top and most-sought-after lyricists in Telugu cinema. In an exclusive conversation with **THE PIONEER'S** correspondent **K RAMYA SREE**, Chandrabose takes us through his childhood, family, while revealing some interesting facts about him.

### My village, my roots...

**M**y entire childhood was spent in Challagariga village in Warangal district. I studied till Class X in that village. There used to be a temple near my home where bhajan programmes were held every Monday. I used to sing there during my childhood. I also used to read a lot of novels in the library near my house. That's how I developed an interest towards music, poetry and writing, although no one from my family was into the seven arts. My village laid the foundation stone for my career, I can say.

### Naughty as a child...

I used to be a notorious as a child. I used to seek newness in everything. I was different from other children of my age. I always wanted to do something different from others and think unique. I didn't want to follow the path everyone else treads. Sometimes, my experiments would turn a disaster and I used to get a good thrashing from my parents. Not just music, I used to take part in everything, including sports. My creativity and unique thoughts I have had since childhood, have helped me in my career in the cinema industry. I put all my thoughts in the form of lyrics.

### Running a newspaper...

I used to run a handwritten newspaper named 'Vartha Vahini' during my school days. I used to write random news articles about what's happening in the village. My mother, K Madanamma, would go to farm work and my father, K Narsaiah, would go to school. When they returned home, I used to hear their conversations about what is happening around me and I would pen them down as either a news article or a poem, and drop the paper in the library of the village. All the elders in my village would first read my paper before other established ones.

### When false news got me into trouble...

One day I was out of fresh news. I didn't know what to do. There used to be a stamp in my house that had a cow and calf on it. When I tried to stamp it on my newspaper to write a poem on them, because of the wrong way I did it, the cow and the calf looked malnourished. Immediately, I got a different news angle and wrote a story headlined "Pasuvula Vaidyashala Vunna Kuda, Bakka Chikkina Avu Dheena gaadha" (The story of a malnourished cow, despite having veterinary hospital in the village). The elders in the village read the article and were enjoying what I had written. The doctor of the veterinary hospital too was present while they were reading the article. The elders tried to tease the doctor with the headline I gave. The doctor felt bad and complained to my father after he returned from school.

My father beat me up and scolded me for writing such an article. I was in Class 6 or 7 then. The next day, I wrote another story, "Due to some unforeseen reasons, I'm shutting down this newspaper. Apologies." My tryst with newspapers ended there.

### Writing for films was not considered lucrative...

I come from a lower middle class family. When I

used to do all kinds of naughty stuff, my mom would protect me from my father and she would support me, saying I was too young to know what is correct and what's not. They didn't know much about films. Writing for films was not considered well-paying, according to them. For them, becoming an engineer or a doctor was considered as a proper and cushy job. I initially couldn't tell them that I wanted to write for films. They used to think the heroes used to write the lyrics for their films. They had no idea about the department that writes songs, dialogues etc for any film.

### Not meeting parents for a year...

Back then there were no cell phones, and there was no telephone too in my village. The only communication was through let-

### Was turned down for various reasons...

During my engineering days when I used to go from pillar to post, looking for opportunities in the film industry. I got turned down for various reasons before I bagged my first job. Some turned me down because I was just an engineering student. Some suggested that I do MA Telugu literature, while a few others turned me down because I don't have a musical background and that I was too young. Finally, my friend Srinath Anna, took me to some directors and with his help I met director Muppalaneni Shiva garu who launched me in the industry. I came to the industry in 1995 and I have completed 25 years here. I have done 840 films and written 3,400 songs so far.

### When I cried for two days...

Writing every song is like a yagna. I worked for two years and wrote all songs for *Komaram Puli*. When the first set of cassettes were out, my name was not printed on it. I cried for two to three days and was very upset. But when the second set of cassettes were released, the crew rectified the mistake and my name was printed. This is something I can never forget, because we all look for recognition.

### Met my wife on a flight...

My wife, Suchitra Chandrabose, is a choreographer. I met her on a flight. We were working on a film and were returning from Chennai. She happened to sit beside me in the flight and recognised me. She introduced herself and appreciated my work and she said a few lines from my song she worked on. I was very impressed with it. Generally choreographers speak about the beats in the song and not the meaning, especially in depth. I felt she had an artistic heart and really liked her. Our friendship turned into love and we have been married for 21 years now. We are parents to two beautiful kids, a son, Nanda Vanamali, and a daughter, Amrutha Varshini.

### Unforgettable memory with a fan in the US...

When I was in the US, one day I was walking towards the conference hall from my hotel room. While I was on my way, many people greeted me, but there was one guy who touched my feet and left. I was shocked and I stopped him and asked why he touched my feet. He said, "You are like a Swami Vivekananda in my life. I was very upset after my visa was rejected twice. I wanted to give up, but I heard your song 'Chamata neeru chindaga...' and took some inspiration from it and applied for the visa again. Fortunately, my visa was approved on the third attempt. If it wasn't for your song, I wouldn't be here enjoying all the luxuries."

### Some of his popular songs:

- ◆ Ee Sethitone (Rangasthalam)
- ◆ Nuvvu Chudu Chudakapo (Okato Number Kurradu)
- ◆ Mounamgaaney Edagamani (Na autograph sweet memories)
- ◆ Manchu Kondalona Chandramaa (his first song, from Taj Mahal)
- ◆ Chai chatukuna Tagara Bhai (Mrugaraju)
- ◆ Cheekatito Veluge Cheppenu Nenunnanu (Nenunnanu)
- ◆ Panchadhara Bomma Bomma (Magadheera)
- ◆ Namaste Namaste Neeku Namaste (Samba)
- ◆ Telugu bhaasha theeyadanam (Naaku Nuvvu Neeku Nenu)
- ◆ Ekkado putti ekkado perigi (Student no 1)
- ◆ Jai jai ganesha jai kodatha ganesha in (Jai chiranjeeva)
- ◆ Inthe inthithe inthe inthithe in (Balu)
- ◆ Deshamnte matham kaadoy (Jhummandi naadam)
- ◆ Aakaasham ammayaithe (Gabbar Singh)
- ◆ Sai ante thalli (Shiridi Sai)
- ◆ Sayonara sayonara (1 Nenokkadine)
- ◆ Em antaaru (Gudumba Shankar)



"I gave my final year exams and wrote for the film at the same time. The cinema was a success and I got an engineering degree too. I was in a dilemma over the choice at hand. My friends suggested that I choose films as I got an opportunity there. I have wanted to write for films since childhood. So I set a year's deadline for myself to test my fate in the industry."

"I used to be a notorious as a child. I used to seek newness in everything. I was different from other children of my age. I always wanted to do something different from others and think unique. I didn't want to follow the path everyone else treads. Sometimes, my experiments would turn a disaster and I used to get a good thrashing from my parents."

### Engineering vs cinema...

When I was doing my engineering, I used to look for opportunities in films. I was good in studies too. In my fourth year of engineering I got my first opportunity to write for a film *Taj Mahal*. I gave my final year exams and wrote for the film at the same time. The cinema was a success and I got an engineering degree too. I was in a dilemma over the choice at hand. My friends suggested that I choose films as I got an opportunity there. I have wanted to write for films since childhood. So I set a year's deadline for myself to test my fate in the industry. I told myself that if I did not succeed, I would return and appear for AE posts. I soon got an opportunity to write for *Pelli Sandadi*, which too was a huge hit and I started receiving offers on a regular basis. I didn't even realise when the years passed by.



### RAPID FIRE:

- Describe yourself in three words:**  
Freshness, loyal and humane
- What do you dislike in others:**  
Someone who cheats
- Favourite holiday destination:**  
Kerala
- Your inspiration:**  
Athreya garu
- Favourite song:**  
Em antaaru from Gudumba Shankar
- Favourite celebrity:**  
Virat Kohli
- How do you deal with stress:**  
Meditation and walking

