

**OPINION 6**  
IGNORING THE  
WARNING SIGNS**WORLD 8**  
ETHNIC GUERRILLAS IN MYANMAR  
SAY THEY SHOT DOWN COPTER**SPORT 12**  
BALE SCORES HAT-TRICK  
AGAINST SHEFFIELD UTD

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# Bengal Opp badly battered

8 workers of BJP and Left killed; TMC rejects allegation of party's role

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Ruthless attacks on the vanquished Opposition workers continued in West Bengal with at least 8 people losing their lives to alleged Trinamool Congress violence in various parts of the State in the past 24 hours or so, reports said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made a public appeal asking the people to remain indoors and refrain from engaging in violence, but political animosity degenerated into bloodshed.

Indian Secular Front worker Hasanur Zaman was repeatedly bombed to death at De Ganga in North 24 Parganas while BJP worker Haran Adhikari was shot in Sonarpur. Another BJP supporter succumbed to bullet injury at Moynaguri in Jalpaiguri district of North Bengal. A third BJP worker was shot dead at Burapancha village near

Sitalkuchi in Coochbehar where CAPF firing had claimed four lives during the elections.

A woman was bumped off at Ranaghat in Nadia district while a Left supporter was killed in Murshidabad, sources said. Another BJP man was allegedly beaten to death at Belegata in North Kolkata, party men alleged.

Properties, including motorcycles, of BJP and CPI(M) supporters were destroyed at Chakdaha, Haringhata and other areas of Nadia district, sources said.

Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh alleged that the houses of BJP men were vandalised and torched at Bhagwanpur and Patashpur in East Midnapore while saffron party offices were torched at Balurghat and North Dinajpur in North Bengal. He appealed to the Chief Minister to "stop this carnage and let the people live in peace."

Ghosh led a team of BJP leaders to meet the Governor at Raj Bhavan. He said, "Elections are over and whatever ill-feeling should now be forgotten... Instead of that our workers and those of some other political parties are being systematically targeted, beaten up, murdered and their properties destroyed. We have been forced to transfer the victims of this violence to other safer places. I request the Chief Minister to order her men to stop this or else we shall be forced to resume campaign from tomorrow."

Refuting the charges, TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said, "Our leader Mamata Banerjee has asked people not to indulge in violence. In none of the cases, the TMC is involved. In fact, it is the fight between the old and the new BJP men. The old BJP men are beating up the new entrants who went from the TMC."

## Nandigram recount was stopped at gunpoint, will move court: Mamata



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses the media in Kolkata on Monday PTI

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The people of West Bengal had put the rulers of Delhi in their place by handing them out a stunning loss in the Assembly elections and this "proves that the BJP is not a shahenshah," Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said.

Mamata will take oath for the third time in a row as Bengal Chief Minister on May 5, senior party leader and Minister of the outgoing State Cabinet Partho Chatterjee said after the TMC Legislator party on Monday unanimously elected her as the Leader of the TMC Legislature Party. She alleged the BJP had

misused the poll body to defeat her but failed, "thanks to the people of Bengal". Refusing to let her anger on the Election Commission die down, Mamata complained how the counting of votes at Nandigram was manipulated at gunpoint to ensure that she lost by a wafer-thin margin.

"I have an SMS with me... it was sent by someone... it said the Returning Officer of Nandigram was forced not to order a recount at gunpoint... he said he had risk his life and family if he ordered a recount... But I will not take it lying down. I will move the court and definitely tell all the officials to preserve VVPAT and other papers," she said.

## IAF plane flies 12 hrs at stretch from Frankfurt to bring oxygen

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sustaining the tempo of airlifting the much-needed oxygen from abroad, an aircraft of the IAF flew non-stop for 12 hours to bring home oxygen from Frankfurt, Germany. The C-17 transport plane ferried four empty cryogenic containers from there and landed at the Hindon airbase, Ghaziabad.

Similarly, another C-17 aircraft airlifted 450 oxygen cylinders from Brize Norton in the UK to the Chennai airbase in Tamil Nadu. In the past few days, the IAF planes carried out numerous sorties to ferry the containers from Singapore, Thailand and United Arab Emirates.

## O2 piles on K'taka agony, 24 die

PTI ■ BENGALURU

In yet another hospital tragedy in the country in recent days, 24 patients, 23 of them Covid-infected, died in Karnataka's Chamarajanagar in the district hospital in the last 24 hours, with the Government warning of stringent action against those found guilty.

The Government ordered a probe into the matter and appointed senior IAS officer Shrivayogi Kalasad as the inquiry officer.

Following the incident, Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa convened a meeting with oxygen producers, where a number of decisions were taken to ensure supply of allocated quantity of oxygen to the State by the Centre. Among these



Relatives grieve after death of Covid patients due to shortage of oxygen cylinders in Chamarajanagara District of Karnataka on Monday PTI

were to reduce the time taken to refill oxygen tankers, provide a green corridor for faster commuting of oxygen tankers and avoid unnecessary delay at toll gates. Utilising the service

of the LPG tanker tankers drivers in case of emergency was also another important decision.

Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar maintained that only

three people had died due of oxygen shortage and not 24 as reported, though he stressed that the probe would reveal the truth.

The incident evoked a sharp response from the Congress, with party leader Rahul Gandhi wondering "how much more suffering before the 'system' wakes up."

In heart-breaking episodes preceding today's incident in the country, a fire at a mall in Mumbai housing a Covid-designated hospital in March left nine, including those on ventilators, dead, while 22

Covid-19 patients who were either on ventilator or oxygen support, suffocated to death when their oxygen supply stopped suddenly due to a malfunction in the main storage at a civic hospital in Nashik.

## They won UP panchayat elections but didn't stay alive to celebrate victory

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

In a sad end of the panchayat elections, more than half a dozen candidates in the panchayat polls have died across the State before they were declared elected by the returning officer.

Re-poll will now be held on these seats later.

According to reports, most of the candidates died following Covid like symptoms but none of them had got themselves tested or treated because they did not wish

to be barred from the counting process. The State Election Commission (SEC) had said the candidates and their agents will be allowed to enter the counting centres only if they have tested negative for Covid-19 in the 48 hours prior to the commencement of the counting process or taken both doses of the vaccine.

Pinky, who contested the village pradhan post in Kurawli in Mainpuri district, won the election on Sunday. However, she died before the counting could take place.

## Take criticism by Madras HC in right spirit, SC tells EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected the pleas of Election Commission of India to ban media reporting on the Madras High Court's observations that the poll panel was singularly responsible for Covid-19 deaths and it should be booked for murder.

Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah advised the EC to take the criticism by the Madras High Court in the right spirit. "The ECI is a sea-



soned constitutional body which has been entrusted with functions of conducting the elections. We cannot in today's times say media will not report the discussions that take place in court," the Bench said.

The Bench went on to point out that the discussions that take place in the courts are of importance and are in public

interest. "It's not a monologue that one person will speak and then judges will speak. We have an Indian pattern of arguments in court... There is an aspect of the application of mind. First prayer of don't report what is said in court was farfetched," said Justice Chandrachud rejecting the EC plea.

"When something is observed, it's in the larger public interest. They (Judges) are also humans and they are also stressed... Take this in the correct spirit," said Justice

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	2,02,19,578 (+2,99,715)
DEATHS:	2,21,356 (+2,409)
RECOVERED:	1,65,46,717 (+2,64,775)
ACTIVE:	34,42,730
MAHA:	47,71,022 (+48,621)
KERALA:	16,64,790 (+26,011)
K'TAKA:	16,46,303 (+44,438)
UP:	13,42,413 (+29,052)
DELHI:	11,94,946 (+20,394)

## Mild Covid patients need not rush for CT-scan, it can lead to cancer: AIIMS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With people rushing for computerised tomography scan (CT-scan) at the slightest sign of Covid-19 symptom, the Government has asked them not to do so as it can have health side-effects as serious as cancer besides causing holes in their pocket.

"In mild Covid-19 illness CT-scan is not needed, rather it can result in cancer in young people in their later stage of life. One CT-Scan is equivalent to 300 chest x-rays, it's very harmful," said AIIMS director and pulmonologist Dr Randeep Guleria.

CT scan and markers are being misused. A lot of people are getting CT scans done. There is no use of the scan in



the early stages, as it will not detect Covid properly in mild cases, Dr Guleria said.

Guleria, who is also a member of the national pandemic task force, added blood tests can't always prove Covid infections as other underlying diseases can also trigger a spike in biomarkers.

The CT-scan machine takes cross-sectional images of

the body using computers and rotating X-ray machines. They are being used to detect Covid infections by detecting signs of pneumonia or white patches in the lungs. More people are relying on the expensive scan than last year as reports suggest the mutant variants of the virus can go undetected in the gold standard RT-PCR test.

## CAPSULE

### COVID HITS IPL: KKR-RCB MATCH POSTPONED

New Delhi: A Covid-19 outbreak left the star-sprinkled IPL on tenterhooks as Kolkata Knight Riders' Varun Chakravarty and Sandeep Warrier tested positive for the dreaded virus, forcing postponement of their game against Royal Challengers Bangalore, while cases also came to light in the Chennai Super Kings camp.

### DELHI RECORDS MAX TEMP OF 39.7 DEGREES C

New Delhi: The national Capital on Monday recorded a maximum temperature of 39.7 degrees Celsius, one notch above the season's normal, according to the India Meteorological Department. The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative figures for the city, recorded a minimum temperature at 24.3 degrees Celsius. Partly cloudy sky with possibility of thunder and lightning is expected in the city on Tuesday, the IMD said.

## State reports 8,914 new Covid cases

MAX 1,258 IN KHANDHA

5 MORE DEATHS; TOTAL NOW 2,073

6,488 RECOVER

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State on Monday reported 8,914 Covid-19 positive cases in 30 districts and the State pool, with which the total tally surged to 4,71,563. Of the new cases, 5,081 were detected from quarantine and 3,833 were local contacts.

Khandha district reported the maximum 1,258 cases followed by Sundargarh with 592, Cuttack 587, Puri 530, Sambalpur 520, Bargarh 452, Nabarangpur 433, Bhadrak 351, Angul 331, Jharsuguda 304, Balangir 291, Nuapada 278, Ganjam 262, Kalahandi 236, Jajpur 232, Nayagarh 194,

Baleswar 179, Boudh 175, Gajapati 165, Rayagada 157, Dhenkanal 149, Koraput 145, Mayurbhanj 134, Kendrapada 132, Subarnapur 121, Jagatsinghpur 109, Keonjhar 104 and Deogarh 103, Malkangiri 73 and Kandhamal 62. Besides, 255 cases were reported from the State pool.

Currently, the active cases in the State stood at 71,835 and the cumulative samples tested were 1,02,27,321, including 46,643 on Sunday.

The positivity rate stood at 4.54 per cent. Meanwhile, five more patients died in the State on the day.

## 809 more Covid cases in BBSR

1 death; 598 recover

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Covid-19 cases declined slightly in capital city Bhubaneswar on Monday when 809 positive cases were reported on Monday. With this, the city's total tally rose to 46,317.

Out of the new cases, 119 were from quarantine while 690 were local contacts. Out of the local contacts, maximum 55 cases were reported from the Old Town area followed by Patia with 49, Nayapalli 46, Khandagiri 42, Chandrasekharpur 32. Jayadev Vihar 16 and Laxmisagar 15. Currently, the active cases in city stood at 8,378. Meanwhile, death toll increased to 266 with one more causality in city on day. However, as many as 598 patients recovered on day, taking total recoveries to 37,652 in city.

## Pipili by-poll deferred

Fresh date after assessing Covid situation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the raging second wave of Covid-19, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Monday postponed the bye-election to the Pipili Assembly constituency in Odisha and two Assembly constituencies in West Bengal.

The bye-elections were scheduled to be held on May 16. In a notification, the ECI stated, "Commission after taking all material facts and inputs of CEO West Bengal and CEO Odisha in consideration and taking note of lockdown/restrictions under Disaster Management Act, 2005, as issued by NDMA/SDMA has decided to defer scheduled polls and extend period of elections in Pipili Assembly constituency of Odisha and Jangipur and 56-Samsanganj Assembly constituencies of West Bengal."

## Lockdown from tomorrow

## Mad rush in BBSR markets flouting Covid norms

SRC urges people not to resort to panic buying; All essential commodities' shops to remain open

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

There was huge rush in the markets in Bhubaneswar in blatant flouting of the Covid-19 guidelines after the shops and vending places reopened on Monday after the two-day weekend shutdown.

Though the Government had announced that all the grocery shops, single shops on roadsides, vegetable and fruit shops would remain open from 6 am to 12 pm during the 14-day lockdown period beginning from May 5, huge queues were seen in the malls and grocery and other shops. There was literally a mad rush before the for-



eign liquor shops as tipplers queued up to purchase large stocks before the lockdown period. Concerned over the violation of norms, Special Relief Commissioner Pradeep Jena on Monday appealed to people not to unnecessarily crowd the markets as all essential commodities'

shops like vegetable, grocery, poultry products, meat, milk and medicines would remain open during the lockdown. He also assured that there are enough stocks of essential commodities and there would be no shortages and hoarding; so, there is no need for panic buying.



# IX, X exams: HMs asked to submit tabulation data

Process to award marks to students starts

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Following cancellation of Class-IX and Matric examinations for the session 2021, the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) has begun a process to award marks to students based on school tests and pre-board examination results respectively.

As notified by the BSE, the headmasters of schools have been asked to submit the 'Tabulation Registers of Classes-IX and X examinations in a prescribed format. The format as given by the BSE may be prepared in three copies within next one or two days at the Mentor school. As per decision,

each copy will be prepared for DEO, Mentor school and individual school. Notably, the State Government has cancelled the annual Matric examination for the year 2021 and Class-IX examination in view of the spread of Covid in its second wave.

The results of Class-X Board would be prepared on the basis of an objective criterion to be developed by the BSE, School & Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash had told while announcing the cancellation of Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) or Matric examination on April 21. "Any candidate, who will not be satisfied with marks awarded to him/her on this basis, will be given an opportunity to sit in an examination as and when the conditions are conducive to hold the examination," Minister had said.

# In BBSR Covid vaccination for 18-44-age group begins

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The third phase vaccination drive began on Monday in Bhubaneswar for the age group of 18 and 44. Those, who have registered themselves on Cowin portal and got the slot, took the jab at the allotted vaccination centres.

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has set a target to vaccinate as many as 5 lakh people.



All the beneficiaries from this group would be given the second doses by the end of June or the first week of July.

The inoculation programme on Monday, which started from 8 am, continued till 1 pm for 18-44 age group while the beneficiaries above 45 got the jab between 3 pm and 6 pm at the same centres.

Youths were seen queuing up at different vaccination sites in the city in sizzling heat while waiting patiently for their turn. The civic body began the vaccination drive after receiving 1.5 lakh doses of Covaxin from the Bharat Biotech.

However, the BMC advised citizens of 18-44 age group not to visit vaccination centres without registration, which can be done at self-registration.cowin.gov.in.

# Panic buying triggers huge rush in twin city

Prices of grocery, vegetables soar

SRIKANTA K TRIPATHY ■ BHUBANESWAR

As the State Government has declared a 14-day lockdown from May 5, panic buying was found in the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar on Monday. There was mad rush before shops selling grocery, vegetable, other daily consumables, medicines and OMFED outlets.

People flooded at these shops looking to stock up on the items for the next two weeks. Though police deployments were made at several marketplaces, the customers were in a hurry.

At many shops where slot-shad been made for them to stand up for their turn for

maintainingsocial distancing, the buyers were creating a melee. At the RelianceFresh outlets also, there were long queues of buyers. In Cuttack, Malgondan and Chhatra Bazar were choke-a-block with the buyers throwing the Covid rules to wind.

There was no social distancing at these two places with the scary customers turning out in large numbers since early morning ensuring that they have their quotas for the entire lockdown period.

This was despite the fact that the Commissionerate police and the BMC and the CMC had declared that the shops selling essential items would remain open during the lockdown.

Some dishonest traders seized upon the situation and sold the items at higher prices. The prices of some grocery items and vegetables soared up on the day by Rs 5 to Rs 10.

# In Jagatsinghpur De-addiction centre ransacked after inmate dies Kin allege deceased is murdered

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

A de-addiction centre in Chandagada village was ransacked by irate villagers after a 22-year-old inmate was found dead on Sunday. The deceased's family alleged that the centre's trainer killed him.

The deceased was Sk Jabar, a resident of Banta village on the outskirts of Jagatsinghpur town. Irate villagers also staged a road blockade at Court Chhak on Cuttack-Jagatsinghpur NH 55.

Later, police rushed to the spot, seized the body and maintained law and order. Reports said the de-addiction centre 'Chesta' provides treatment to youth falling prey to drugs and intoxicant consumption.



Deceased Jabar's family had sent Jabar for treatment to the centre a month back and paid necessary monthly charges Rs 12,000.

Jabar's father Sera Ali had visited the centre on Sunday morning but the centre's authority had restricted him to meeting his son citing Covid 19 reason.

Strangely, on Sunday evening news about Jabar's death was conveyed to his family members. A case has been registered against de-addiction centre owner Rajkishor Das who has absconded soon after the incident. Meanwhile, a man-hunt has been launched against the accused, informed Jagatsinghpur SDPO Priya Ranjan Satapathy.

# Abhay Pathak given compulsory retirement

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Accepting the Odisha Government's recommendation, the President of India on Monday issued an order for compulsory retirement of tainted Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer Abhay Kant Pathak from his service.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has been continuously emphasising on high-degree of morality and integrity in



public service. As part of the policy of zero tolerance towards corruption, the State Government had recommend-

ed to the President for compulsory retirement of the 1987-batch Odisha-Cadre IFS officer. In November last year, the State Vigilance had arrested Abhay Pathak and his son Akash on the charges of amassing assets worth crores disproportionate to their known sources of income.

Abhay had been serving as the Additional PCCF (Plan Programme and Afforestation) since June 2, 2018.

# 'All migrant workers be registered'

U Sammilani holds webinar on migration

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

On May Day, a webinar on rights of labour was organised by Utkal Sammilani Central Committee under chairmanship of Basant Kumar Tripathy.

Over thirty participants from across the State and other States took part in the programme. While advocate

Bishnu Prasad Sharma and activist Rajiv Sagaria placed background of migration trail from western Odisha, Sammilani Titilagarh branch president Gajanan Mishra and central president Basanta Tripathy discussed various aspects of migration issue.

Despite the various provisions of social security provided to migrants under Inter State Migrant Workmen Act 1979, the establishments engaging migrant labourers are not implementing law. In this context, Sammilani decided to submit a memorandum to Government demanding that

all establishments engaging migrant labourers be registered and the Government and enforcement authorities be asked to enforce law in full spirit in Odisha so that establish-

ments would engage local labourers rather than outsiders. The summing up of webinar was done by Sammilani general secretary Radhanath Parharaj.



# Another scribe dies of Covid

**BHUBANESWAR:** With the massive spread of infection due to Covid-19 in its second wave, yet another journalist succumbed to the virus on Monday.

Subhansu Mishra, a resident of Salebhata village in Balangir district, passed away while undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at the Sabarmati General Hospital in Cuttack.

Mishra was in his early 50s. He was the 'Sambha' representative from Salebhata in Balangir district. **PNS**

# Activist Manasi hospitalised for Covid

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Former Member of National Commission for Women and rights activist Manasi Pradhan was on Friday admitted to the Care Hospitals here as she tested Covid positive a day back. Pradhan was on a two-month tour since January before returning to Odisha on March 15.

"Get Well Soon" messages have been coming in from high dignitaries from across the globe after news of Pradhan admitted to hospital got spread.

Several senior officials from the United Nations, Heads of States, foreign embassies in India, former US Ambassador

Sharon Wilkinson, Executive Director of WFI Washington DC, Lord Elizabeth Butler, several Indian Ministers and MPs, Indian celebrities have inquired about Pradhan's health and wished her speedy recovery.

Covid surge

# Delhi Odias seek help from Naveen

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

With the Covid-19 situation worsening in New Delhi, Odias living in the national capital have urged Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to provide necessary assistance to them, especially those who are infected. They have requested Patnaik to provide oxygen cylin-

ders, which are scarce in Delhi, and other relevant kits required for the Covid-19 treatment.

In a letter to Patnaik, Delhi Prabasi Odia Mahamanch director Gobardhan Dhal has urged for immediate assistance for the Odias in Delhi. The letter mentioned that Delhi is battling with the worst pandemic situation amid a complete collapse of

health infrastructure and Odia people who need immediate medical emergency are struggling to get a bed or admission at hospitals. If the Odisha Government sends minimum 200 oxygen cylinders, regulators and kits through the Odisha Bhawan, they can be made available to the needy so that many lives can be saved, Dhal said.

# 4410.462 MT oxygen sent from Odisha

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A total of 241 tankers and 4410.462 MT of medical oxygen have been escorted so far from Rourkela, Jajpur, Dhenkanal and Angul districts of Odisha by the Odisha Police.

More were leaving on Monday. As many as 28 tankers were dispatched from Angul with 458.02 MT, 50 from Dhenkanal with 793.5 MT, 65 from Jajpur with 1314.53 MT and 98 from Rourkela with 1844.412 MT.

Further, 68 tankers with 1404.83 MT of oxygen were sent to Andhra Pradesh, 67 tankers with 1124.179 MT of oxygen were sent to Telangana. Tamilnadu received six tankers filled with 116.22 MT of medical oxygen. Similarly, Haryana received 27 tankers filled with 528.782 MT of oxygen. 13 tankers with 211.16 MT of oxygen were sent to Maharashtra, while 182.931 MT of oxygen filled in 12 tankers have left for Chhattisgarh. As many as 20 tankers have carried around 362.42 MT of oxygen to Uttar Pradesh and 25 tankers with

417.55 MT of oxygen were sent to Madhya Pradesh. Two tankers with 33 MT of oxygen were sent to Delhi and one tanker with 29.32 MT sent to Punjab in last 11 days. The Odisha Police is committed to ensure that there is no delay in loading and transporting so as to promptly serve thousands of patient other needy States, an official release said.

# SIC office shut for 15 days

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Information Commission (SIC) office here would remain closed for 15 days from May 5 in view of the upsurge of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This was decided on Monday by SIC Chief Commissioner Sunil Mishra. The decision was taken in view of reports of SIC employees being affected by Covid-19. However, the employees and officers are advised not to leave the headquarters, Mishra said.

# Time for least use, regulation of hazardous chemicals'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As management of hazardous chemicals emanating from industrial and manufacturing units, automobiles,

agro-chemicals, wastes and other sources are not very often carried out appropriately, they make their entry into environment and pollute air, water and soil severely with significant adverse effects.



This was stated by guest speakers while participating in a webinar held on Sunday here on the theme 'Hazardous chemicals in environment and human health' organised by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) under the chairmanship of OES president Dr Sundara Narayana Patro.

"These toxic substances subsequently enter into plants and animals, eventually to reach human beings through the food chains and the air, water and food they consume.

These chemicals remain deposited in their systems for

long and frequently lead to acute and chronic health disorders," said a speaker. According to the experts, even though appropriate legal provisions and strategies are in place at national and global levels for dealing with this menace, their stringent implementation still remains a distant dream.

The speakers further emphasised that in consideration of the detrimental impacts of the hazardous chemicals, emphasis has to be laid on their minimal use, proper handling and regulation giving priority to the health and safety issues

of both present and future generations. Chief speaker BPUT Dean of Science and Prof of Chemistry at the Trident Academy of Technology Dr Manas Ranjan Senapati narrated that various types and sources of hazardous chemicals ranging from food additives, pesticides, paints, batteries and e-wastes to biomedical wastes, fly ash and micro plastics which possess the potential for inciting a wide range of diseases including cancer, respiratory problems, digestive, cardiovascular, endocrine, urinary, immune and nervous systems. Dr Patro

stressed the need of eradicating the ill effects of modern development and adopting Gandhian principles for a pollution-free environment and caring more for a healthier earth. OES secretary Dr Jaya Krushna Panigrahi in his welcome address stated that chemicals obtained from natural sources are not detrimental to humans and other organisms.

Thus, it is desirable that we make best use of the substances provided by nature to meet our bare needs and make the minimal use of hazardous substances from synthetic and industrial sources.

# CONTEMPORARIES

# Migrants: Not an exodus but a planned exit now



S JYOTIRANJANA

In between elections and political slugfest, the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic has made death, desperation and fear to brood over the entire nation. Another noteworthy occurrence of concern, that is taking place exact-

## Needed enhanced employment under MGNREGA, assured cash transfers

ly like the previous year, is the returning of migrants in cities like Mumbai and Delhi to their homes. However, unlike last year, the only respite for them is their planned exit from the big cities, which are unable to cater to their livelihoods as both the pandemic and pandemic prevail.

Last year, the scene was more of chaos with the heart wrenching scene of the migrants' long walk to home or accessing the services of illegal and exploitative private transporters amid economic shock and stringent mobility restrictions owing to the lockdown.

Last year on March 25 when the lockdown was enforced unprecedentedly across the entire country, it

amounted to movements beyond the understanding of common man and this led to acute disruptions like sudden loss of income, surge in debt coupled with the fear of viral disease, which was still not completely understood by mankind.

Apart from this, the complete absence of public transport with sealed State borders halted the momentum of the national life, made the sustenance and survival of migrants or urban labourers difficult.

However, irrespective of the swift exit of the working class from their workplaces this year, they continue to live with uncertainties and their distrust over the state have only increased over all these

months. What has happened in between the end of first wave and the outbreak of the second answers precisely the reason behind the prevailing uncertainties and migrants' distrust of the state. As in between the given timeline, the migrant workers on many occasions have made choices about whether to stay or return to their abodes.

And in most cases, while adult male members tried their luck in cities, women and children stayed at their natives while many of them were making to-and-fro movement from cities to back to their homes as opportunities brightened and dimmed over time.

And as such a complete year was spent among uncer-

tainty, shocks and new challenges, which rendered migrant and urban labourers economically, socially, psychologically and emotionally sick and unsettled.

And their financial recovery through state intervention even after taking into account employment through MGNREGA has been abysmally low and through private players have been quite too inadequate with little work and paltry wages. Besides, cash transfers and additional supply of rations through the PDS have been short-spanded although helpful.

And all these moments of lives of migrant and urban labourers have added to their experiences and have helped

them to make up their mind to face the second wave. Therefore, their actions have been well-calibrated and not desperate unlike last year as those were based on the premises of the strong suspicion that the government is less likely to come their aid and rescue, be it the need for cash, healthcare or food.

Why have the migrants resorted to planned exit; firstly because in the absence of strong state aid and intervention, this is the best financial strategy to escape further surge of debts arising from the need to bear costs of food and housing rent in the wake of an uncertain income.

Secondly, it is an easy way to escape from the tiring journey owing to an overwhelmed transport system and save lives from getting the viral infection

and subsequent deaths as the health system is already overburdened.

Besides, the fast-changing rules, irrational pattern of economic recovery and a fragile social security apparatus and resultant distrust over both market and state have added on to the decision of the migrants and urban labourers to make a planned home bound movement.

The city has by and large become a hostile place for the migrant labourers mainly owing to little or no bargaining power at workplace. So, the city remains both an opportunity and threat for the migrants and is controlled by forces beyond the power of the migrants.

The plights of the migrants have remained and despite the huge media attention to their struggles and sufferings. It is

now important to plan policies so as to cater to the requirements of the migrants and urban labourers in the face of such jerks and shocks arising from natural calamities, pandemics or even in a war-like situation and augmenting the state's preparedness to endure such situations with an assured and enhanced employment through MGNREGA and assured cash transfers and additional, uninterrupted supply of rations through the PDS throughout such challenging times.

(The writer is a lawyer and a public policy expert and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Law and Media Studies at School of Mass Communication, KIIT University. He can be reached at sjyotiranjana3@gmail.com.)



## 'Don't doubt Covid jabs; they have undergone multiple trials'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

To mark the World Immunisation Week 2021 observed from April 24 to 30, the AIIMS Bhubaneswar's Department of Community Medicine and Family Medicine (CM&FM) organised a webinar on April 30 on the theme 'Vaccine Brings Us Closer'.

Speaking on the role of vaccines in controlling the second wave of the pandemic in India, Dr Sanjay Rai of the AIIMS New Delhi Centre for community medicine said that when people are asking everywhere whether there is an end to this pandemic, the answer is 'yes'. This pandemic is going to get over through herd immu-

nity either through natural infection or vaccination. "The vaccines that are presently given to people are safe and shouldn't be doubted as they have been approved by the regulatory authorities after going through different phases of high clinical test by researchers," said Rai.

India has approved three vaccines, Covaxin, Covishield and Sputnik V, and all have gone through every phase of trials while five more vaccines are there which are under trials now, added Rai. Odisha Director of Health and Family Welfare Dr Bijay Panigrahy said that during pandemic, the State has been ensuring all kinds of immunisation

throughout. The objective has always been full immunisation coverage under the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP).

While in India the full immunisation coverage was 35.4% in NFHS-1 and reached 77.5% in NFHS-5, in Odisha the full immunisation coverage was 55% in Annual Health Survey (AHS); and during 2021 in spite of Covid pandemic the immunisation was 85.4%.

HoD of CM&FM Dr Sonu H Subba said that eventually vaccines would help people come closer; it is one of the most important public health discoveries. "Over the past 30 years, 50% of childhood deaths have been avoided because of

## AIIMS BBSR webinar on Immunisation Week held

vaccine. Thanks to vaccine, it became possible to eradicate a very dreaded disease like small pox and the polio mellitus," said Subba.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar Director Dr Gitanjali Batmanabane said immunisation clinic was one area of hospital which remained opened throughout pandemic even when our OPDs were closed. Vaccine would also help attaining herd immunity as vaccine requires six weeks to build protection, she added.

Around 15 crore people have been vaccinated as of January out of which 2.5 crore have been fully vaccinated and India stands 3rd globally in vaccinating its population.

## Min Susanta Singh drives ambulance with Covid patient

PNS ■ BARGARH

In an exemplary act, Labour Minister Susanta Singh drove an ambulance to carry a Covid-19 patient to a hospital in Sohela of Bargarh district on Sunday. On being informed that a youth of Tabada village under Sohela block of the district was suffering from Covid-19, the Minister reached the

locality by driving the ambulance himself. Singh then took the patient to the Sohela Hospital in the vehicle and facilitated his admission process. He also directed the doctors to ensure proper treatment of the youth. Notably, the Minister, who belongs to the district, has donated a new ambulance for Covid-19 management in the area.



## JSPL supplies 100 tonnes of oxygen daily

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Responding to the shortage of oxygen for treatment of Covid-19 patients in the country, the Jindal Steel & Power Ltd (JSPL), since April, has been supplying liquid medical oxygen (LMO) from its mega steel complex at Angul.

Several hospitals across the country have received oxygen despatched through tankers. The company is 100 tonnes of LMO every day. "For us, it is nation first."

I am sure together we shall defeat the pandemic," JSPL chairman Naveen Jindal had stated a few days before. The company continually produces LMO at its oxygen plant

at Angul and tankers are filled in round the clock. The tankers are being despatched to several States who need medical oxygen like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Delhi NCR, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and several other States as per the advice of the Government.

A dedicated team under the direct supervision of Naveen Jindal is working day and night to ensure the timely despatch of oxygen.

An Oxygen Express run by the Indian Railways also carried LMO tankers to other States. Two tankers airlifted from Maharashtra were also filled with LMO from JSPL Angul recently.



## No business in corona time 20K Jharsuguda truck owners' families on edge

Financial strains on loanees high

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

More than 20,000 families of truck owners have been pushed to the margins as Corona has brought their business to a halt.

The Covid 19 has proved to be an insult to injury when truck owners could hardly make ends meet after local industries decided to rely on rail rather than road transport for coal movement. Many truck owners' families of Brajrajnagar, Belpahar and Bandhbahal of Jharsuguda district are under tremendous financial pressure with no help in sight.

Earlier, power plants, steel plants, aluminium and sponge iron factories were transporting coal through trucks, trawlers and multi-axle trailers. But for the last two years, local industries moved significant volume to railways bleeding the trucking business dry.

Due to the district administration's efforts and pressure from the truck owners association and the local public, the private industries had restored



some of that business to truck owners. However, due to reduced production in mines in the Covid crisis, many drivers remained home for most of last year. The moratorium given by the Union Government on the EMIs gave a marginal reprieve to truck owners.

However, before the situation could revert to normal, the second wave of Covid cases has disrupted all hopes of an economic recovery for these families.

Looming uncertainty has also forced the drivers from other States to go back to their hometowns, as thousands of trucks stand on the roads.

As owners of these trucks are unable to pay their instalments on time, truck finance companies and their collection

## Gopabandhu Choudhury death anniversary held

Floral tributes paid

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

Freedom fighter Gopabandhu Choudhury was remembered on his death anniversary in a brief celebration held at his native village Kherasa here on Thursday.

The meeting was chaired by educationalist Nikunja Kishora Behera and attended by prominent personalities of Jagatsinghpur.

The speakers spoke about Choudhury's contribution to freedom movement during pre-independence period. Choudhury had relinquished the Deputy Collector's post under the British administration to join the freedom movement, which was a subject of hot discussion then.

Besides, coming from a Zamindar family, he had backed the abolition of the Zamindari practice. He had inspired his younger brother Nabakrushna Choudhury, a former CM of Odisha, and sister in law Malati Choudhury, they said.

The meeting was attended by former Municipality Chairman Biplab Choudhury, social activist Madhabnanda Behera, Krushna Chandra Pradhan, Lipu Mohanty, Amarjit Nayak and Sarada Prasad Sahoo. The district administration too paid floral tributes to Choudhury on his death anniversary.

District Collector SK Mohapatra, municipality Executive Officer Bimal Prasad Lenka and DIPRO Kaminiranjan Pattnaik visited Bangala Chowk and Kherasa village on Thursday and offered homage.

## Hosp mgmt cremates Covid patient sans kin's knowledge in Rourkela

PNS ■ ROURKELA

In a shocking incident, the authorities of Hi Tech Hospital in Rourkela allegedly carried out the cremation of a Covid-19 patient without informing his family members about his death.

According to reports, Dilip Saha of the Bandhamunda area here was admitted to the Hi Tech Covid Hospital two days ago and he died while undergoing treatment on Sunday morning. The concerned staffs of the hospital cremated the body without informing the deceased's family.

Later, Dilip's family members, who reached the hospital to know about his condition, were shocked to learn that he had died.

Tension ran high as they staged protest against the hospital authorities and blocked NH-143 at Gandhi Chhak here on Monday morning. An hour later, police reached the spot and pacified them.

## Isolation centre set up in B'pur Press Club

### For journalists, family members

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Following the death of five journalists in Ganjam district, the Press Club of Brahmapur has set up a Covid isolation cell exclusively for working journalists and their family members in its premises. This is said to be a first-of-its-kind initiative in Odisha.

The isolation cell, which has been established with the cooperation of the Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC), has eight beds. "We have put all required basic infrastructures at place like

oxygen, pulse ox-meter and infra-red thermometer along with the required medicines. It will of a great help for journalists with corona symptoms.

During the first wave last year, journalists had encountered great difficulties in home isolation due to non-availability of space and infrastructure," said former Press Club president Sisir Panigrahi.

He informed that a few more scribes with corona symptoms are currently in home isolation and undergoing treatment. Apart from these, a special vaccination drive has been launched for journalists from Monday onwards at the Baikunthanagar Urban Primary Health Centre, the BeMC Commissioner informed.

## Blind Dalit woman misbehaved by cop

Seeks justice from SP, CM

RAJESH BEHERA ■ KENDRAPADA

A case has come to the fore in which a visually-impaired Dalit woman was misbehaved by a woman police.

Pramila Jena of Chhadash under the Rajkanika police limits on April 23 had lodged an FIR against one Ajay Kumar Jena over a land dispute. On April 26, she again had gone to the Rajkanika police station to know what the police were doing based on her FIR.

However, Sub Inspector of Rajkanika police station, Kanunbala Sahu, after finding her at the police station, allegedly started misbehaving with her using slang, along with poking fun at her for being visually impaired. She also drove her out of the police station



by threatening to arrest her and forward her to court. Pramila recently knocked the doors of SP of Kendrapada, by urging him to provide justice by registering a case under SC/ST PA Act against the rowdy female SI of the Rajkanika police station.

The victim also filed a petition before the Chief Minister to provide justice to her. She also threatened to commit suicide if she was denied justice.

When contacted, Rajkanika police station IIC Umakant Nayak stated that the allegation against his staff was purely false and fabricated.

## Before Dinabandhu suicide Mittal was slapped with misbehaviour, graft slur

### Registrar, CoF apprised HE Secy seeking not to work under VC

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

Much before contractual worker Dinabandhu Mishra committed suicide on April 20, the Registrar and Controller of Finance (CoF) of Sambapur University had apprised the Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Saswat Mishra, on the alleged arrogance and misbehaviour of

Vice-Chancellor Sanjib Mittal to staff members. "It has become difficult for most of the staff members to work under him," they had written in the letter to the Principal Secretary on April 8. While Registrar Dr Ditaram Patel is a senior OAS officer, CoF Prasant Kumar Nayak is senior officer of finance services of the State Government.

"Me kisiko nehi chhodunga, sabaka buri halat karke chhodunga. (I won't spare anybody; I'll ensure others get the worst)" are the common words used by the VC to both the senior and junior staff members, the duo officers of the

university had written in the letter. They mentioned the dates when the VC used such rough words and misbehaved with almost everybody. Rude behaviour apart, the duo officers also had brought allegation of grievous financial irregularities against the VC since the day he joined. "The VC is purchasing different goods for university without following the official procedure.

He is calling the local vendors to his room and purchasing different goods. Later he is forcing all other concerned officers to release the payment and later regularize official procedures that are complete-

ly violating the financial rules under university Act," the latter by Dr Patel and Nayak said.

"Further he is sending files to different officers through his peon and forcing them to sign the files immediately, totally violating the financial rules," they mentioned.

Threatening officers for not becoming party to such illegal and unfair activities, he used words like "app logo ko pata nehi he, VC ka power kya he (you all don't know what's the power of the VC), they mentioned in the letter. They further alleged that the VC was misbehaving with officers before the sub ordinate staff

members and in meetings in presence of the other officers. The word - 'Sale' (ruffians) is a common word from his mouth which is unbearable.

On one occasion, he also forced the university doctor to make payment to a local vendor for purchase of different items that she denied and faced VC's anger, Dr Patel and Nayak mentioned.

While expressing their agony before higher authority and explaining the pressure and mental torture, they requested for reversion of their services to their parent department as they were working under deputation in university.

## INBRIEF

### PANDA CONGRATULATES MAMATA BANERJEE

Brahmapur: Senior BJD leader and former Deputy Speaker of Odisha Legislative Assembly Rama Chandra Panda has congratulated Trinamool Congress supreme and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the landslide victory of her party in the Assembly elections. "It is a clear victory of democracy and defeat of divisive and dictatorial politics," Panda remarked.



### SABUJA BAHINI HOLDS BLOOD DONATION CAMP

Brahmapur: A blood donation camp was organised by social organisation Sabuja Bahini in association with the Brahmapur Blood Bank here on Sunday. The programme titled 'Asantu Gadhira Rakta Sampark' is to meet the demand of acute shortage of blood for the treatment of Covid patients. A total of 17 units of blood were collected in the camp. The programme was coordinated by organisation president Sibaram Panigrahi, joint secretary A Prakash, Sima and members S Gauda, Ajaya Vanmil and Siba Sankar Biswal.



### SANSKARBADI HOLDS CORONA DRIVE

Brahmapur: Socio-cultural organisation Sanskarbadi conducted a corona awareness campaign here at Godabarish Nagar on Friday. Its president Trinath Maharana presided and stressed on strictly following the Covid-19 rules including sanitisation of hands at frequent intervals, putting face mask and maintaining social distancing. Soaps and face masks were distributed. Among others, Baristha Nagarika Manch secretary Himanshu Kumar Pattnaik, Narayan Gantayat, Lalit Mohan Rath and several other members and senior citizens were present.

### TWO BRAHMAPUR TEMPLES SEALED

Brahmapur: The BeMC Enforcement Squad sealed two temples, the Santoshi Maa and Swapneswar, of Bijipur area here on Friday, keeping the current surge in corona positive cases in the city. The administration had issued an order earlier to keep all the temples closed to prevent community spread. In the two temples, hundreds of devotees were found offering puja here on Friday without observing the Covid-19 protocols.

### BU PROF DAS ACCORDED FAREWELL

Brahmapur: The faculty members, researchers and students of the PG Department of Economics of the Berhampur University bid farewell to Prof Sandhyarani Das on her superannuation at Bhanja Bihar on Friday. A brief meeting was organised in the department in which Chairperson of the PG Council Prof Arundhati Rath graced as chief guest. A souvenir was inaugurated to mark the event. All the speakers in their address recalled the contributions of Prof Das. Among others, Head of the PG Department of Economics Dr Sudhakar Patra, Dr Bishnu Charan Behera, Dr Diptimayee Mishra, Pabitra Singh and several researchers and students joined.

### 3 HELD IN SUNABEDA IN SRABANI SUICIDE CASE



Sunabeda: Three accused have been arrested in Sunabeda in connection with the Srabani Mallick suicide case. Srabani, wife of former HAL employee late Ananada Mandal, had been found hanging in her room in HAL township on April 28. Though initial cause of the death was said to be depression, police are further investigating the case. The three arrested persons are grocery shop owner Sisir Kumar Lala and two HAL employees, Prasant Kumar Lenks and Harekrushna Nayak.

### DATTA APPOINTED ZIQITZA HEALTHCARE GOVT BIZ HEAD

Bhubaneswar: The Ziqitza Healthcare Limited has announced the appointment of Chandan Datta as Head, Government Business. Datta is a seasoned professional with over 30 years of experience in managing business operations in diverse sectors.



## Scrap traders in league with bike lifters in K'jhar

### Police seize 15 bikes from scrap unit; 2 held

RAJENDRA K SAHU ■ CHAMPUA

The Barbil police seized 16 bikes from the godown of a scrap dealer and arrested two

persons in this connection. On Sunday, Barbil police station IIC Sushanta Kumar Dash on a tip-off raided the house of one Sushil Kumar Tripathy of Bhadrashahi near Barbil and recovered a stolen bike of one Chaitanya Patra of Jurrudi under Bamebari police station who had lodged a complaint in the local police station on April 4 regarding the theft of his bike.

On interrogation of Tripathy, he revealed that there are also some bikes in the godown of Surabuddin Seikh, the scrap dealer with whom he was working as the manager. Police raided the scrap unit and seized 15 bikes.

When scrap trader Surabuddin failed to furnish any documents of the vehicles, police arrested him and his manager Tripathy.

Sources further revealed that in the year 2016-17, the then SP, Rajesh Pandit, Keonjhar had put a ban on any type of scrap trading to put a check on the metal theft but after the withdrawal of the ban last year, metal theft including theft of motorbike and cycles going on nonstop in the district.

It is alleged that the scrap traders mostly those who hail from outside of the State like Bihar and West Bengal befriend with bike and cycles lifters who serve them ready-made client for purchasing stolen bikes and cycles which are then dismantled to be used as spare parts.

It is demanded that once again there be a complete ban on scrap trading in the district and strong action be taken to regularise activities of flourishing scrap trading in district.



# SII CEO: Cannot ramp up jab production overnight



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

States seem to have to wait smore to get the adequate supply of vaccines, particularly Covishield with its manufacturer Adar Poonawalla of Serum Institute of India (SII) on Monday categorically stating that his firm cannot ramp up production overnight as vaccine making is a specialised process.

The statement of Poonawalla comes days after he had said that due to "pressure and aggression" for him and his family temporarily leaving the country for the UK, as "everyone wants the vaccine to be available in the quickest possible time." This is likely to impact the vaccination drive that was kicked off from May 1 to cover 18+ population i.e. about 60 crore people.

In a statement here, Poonawalla said that it has orders from the Government to supply 11 crore more doses over the next few months on top of 15 crore already supplied, Poonawalla said. He further said that another 11 crore doses will be supplied to



states and private hospitals in the next few months. "We have got all kinds of support, be it scientific, regulatory and financial. As of today, we received total orders of over 26 crore doses, of which we supplied more than 15 crore doses. We have also got 100 per cent advance of Rs 1,732.5 crore by the GOI for the next tranche of 11 crore doses in the next few months," he said.

Earlier in the day, the Union Ministry of Health said that 11 crore doses of Covishield are to come from SII during May, June and July. Another 5 crore doses of Covaxin have been ordered from Bharat Biotech India Ltd for the same months.

Poonawalla, however, did not give a timeline for supplying the vaccines. Pune-based SII can produce 6-7 crore doses a month and is reportedly planning to ramp up production to 10 crore by

July. Though the Centre has among various steps opened up vaccination for all above 18 years from May 1, the procurement of jabs has been left to states and private hospitals. This has led to state after state rushing to SII, which can meet only a small part of the demand.

Serum is licensed to manufacture COVID shots from AstraZeneca Plc and Novavax Inc. But so far, the government has approved only AstraZeneca's Covishield vaccine for use.

The Government has also approved the homegrown Covaxin vaccine of Bharat Biotech. Russia's Sputnik V vaccine too has been approved for emergency use.

SII CEO Poonawalla, who is currently in London, said the population of India is huge and to produce enough doses for all adults is not an easy task.

# IAF airlifts O2 from Germany to ease Indians' breathing



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sustaining the tempo of air-lifting the much-needed oxygen from abroad, an aircraft of the IAF flew non-stop for 12 hours to bring home oxygen from Frankfurt, Germany. The C-17 transport plane ferried four empty cryogenic containers from there and landed at the Hindan airbase, Ghaziabad.

Similarly, another C-17 aircraft airlifted 450 oxygen cylinders from Brize Norton in the UK to the Chennai airbase in Tamil Nadu. In the

past few days, the IAF planes carried out numerous sorties to ferry the containers from Singapore, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

An Italian air force transport plane landed here on Monday with a team of medical experts, oxygen generation plant and ventilators to help India fight the pandemic. The oxygen generation system capable of supplying the gas to the entire hospital will be deployed at the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) hospital in Greater Noida.

# Covid-orphaned kids adoption appeals alarm child rights body

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Alarmed at various requests appearing on social media such as twitter regarding the adoption of kids whose parents have died due to Covid-19, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has warned the common citizens/NGOs to refrain from doing so and written to States and Union Territories, urging them to inform child protection authorities about such orphans.

"The commission has been made aware of instances where it has been seen that many NGOs are advertising about the children who have become orphans after losing both their parents to Covid-19," NCPCR chairperson Priyank Kanoongo has written to chief secretaries across the States in a letter.

He said that "in such a sad situation of the surge in Covid-19 cases in the country there are situations arising where the child has lost both its parents or is found to be abandoned. It may be noted that the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 provides for the procedure to be followed for children who have lost their family support and have become children in need of care and protection."



The missive followed complaints that a few NGOs and individuals had been on their own on the social platforms like twitter and WhatsApp urging people to help such kids "get a new life and spread the word," while sharing their contact numbers.

The procedure under the JJ Act, 2015 ensures that children are provided all the minimum standards of care and their rights are upheld and protected, Kanoongo said.

"Therefore, it is of utmost importance that these children who have lost their family support must be produced before the child protection authorities of the district, and information about these children must be shared with the

authorities" He also pointed out that it was necessary for every individual, entity, organisation or NGO to ensure that any information received about orphaned and abandoned children during these Covid times is shared on the helpline 1098.

"Similarly, it is further requested that if any such information for an abandoned or orphaned children is received by any entity, organisation, NGO then the same can be also be informed to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights either through email (cp.ncpcr@nic.in) or through telephone (011-23478250) for assistance and help to the children," the letter said.

# MHA orders 5,000 paramilitary officials' deployment in J&K for law and order

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has ordered deployment of 50 additional companies (5,000 personnel) of the Central paramilitary forces in Jammu and Kashmir to augment law and order security grid in the Union Territory from May 7. The move comes after a request from the Centre the next day.

The mobilisation is being made "for augmentation of existing deployment grid to effectively manage law and order and security duties."

On the decision for



deployment of the 50 Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) or Central paramilitary companies, the order said, "The matter has been considered in this Ministry, it has been decided to provide 50 companies of CAPF (CRPF-20, BSF-10, SSB-10, ITBP-05 and CISF-05 com-

panies) to Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by May 7.

"The UT Administration of Jammu & Kashmir is requested to work out the detailed deployment plan in consultation with the respective CAPFs and the deployment of the CAPFs companies

may be made only after completing the mandatory quarantine period to break the chain of coronavirus, reads the order issued on April 28.

Keeping in view the Covid-19 situation, the Home Ministry advised the Jammu and Kashmir administration to take necessary transportation/logistics/accommodation and other arrangements required in connection with deployment of the CAPFs within the UT, as per the Government guidelines on the subject. The deployment of the additional paramilitary personnel will be organised by UT Administration, added the copy of the order.

Presently, 60 battalions of the CRPF and 10 battalions of other CAPFs are deployed on the ground in the Union Territory for law and order as also for the security duty roles, sources said. The additional troops are likely to be also used for the conduct of the Amarnath Yatra, they added.

# 'Erring' cops booked in ISRO spy case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Monday said it has registered a case in connection with the "ISRO spy case" in compliance to a Supreme Court order of April 15 this year for taking action against the erring police officials who allegedly framed scientist S Nambi Narayanan in a false espionage case.

Earlier, the case was registered by Kerala Police on October 20, 1994, as Crime No. 225/94 at Police Station Vanchiyoor, Trivandrum against a Maldivian National under Foreigner's Act on the allegations of overstaying in India after the expiry of the visa.

Subsequently, another case as Crime No. 246/1994 dated November 13, 1994, was also registered at Vanchiyoor Police station under Official Secrets



Act 1923 and Section 34 (common intention) of IPC against two accused Maldivian nationals on the allegations that they, in collusion with some others, had taken part in the activities against the sovereignty and integrity of India and indulged in other activities which would harm the cordial relations of India with its neighbours.

Later, the investigation of both the said cases was entrusted to a SIT of Kerala police. In Crime no. 246/1994, besides said two accused, four more persons including two scientists working at Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) of ISRO were arrested on the charges of espionage

activities.

Further, the investigation of both these cases was transferred to CBI. In the Espionage case, CBI submitted Final Report (charge sheet) before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ernakulam (Kerala) which was accepted by the Court. While submitting the said report in the Espionage case, the allegations pertaining to espionage were found to be false.

One of the scientists S Nambi Narayanan took the matter for taking action against the erring officials to the apex court by way of filing a civil writ petition.

The SC, in its judgement dated September 14, 2018 in the Civil Appeal No. 6637-6638/2018, awarded compensation of Rs 50 lakh to Narayanan on several counts and also ordered the consti-

tution of a Committee, for obtaining actual scenario including arrest, false implication of the said scientist and to find out ways for taking appropriate steps against the erring officials, the CBI said.

Accordingly, a Committee under the Chairmanship of a retired judge of the SC, was constituted by the Union Home Ministry, it said.

The Committee, after conducting inquiry, submitted its report before the apex court. Based on the said enquiry report, the SC through an order on April 15 directed the CBI to proceed in the matter in accordance with law, being a Court directed enquiry.

"Accordingly, as per the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court, CBI has registered a case," the agency said in a statement.

# Jaishankar rebuts Jairam over oxygen 'shortage' in Embassies

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday took on the Congress, which had attempted to project that the Central Government had collapsed and foreign embassies were reaching out to the Opposition for help with their Covid-19 medical emergencies.

On Sunday, the New Zealand Embassy in New Delhi tweeted an SOS tagging youth leaders of the Congress, saying, "Could you please help with oxygen cylinder urgently at the New Zealand High Commission? Thank you."

Youth Congress president BV Srinivas responded to the request and tweeted an hour later saying, "We have reached New Zealand High Commission with oxygen

cylinders. Please open the gates and save a soul on time."

However, the New Zealand Embassy apologised soon after, saying, "We are trying all sources to arrange for oxygen cylinders urgently and our appeal has unfortunately been misinterpreted, for which we are sorry."

The apology came after Jaishankar rebutted Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who had on Saturday accused the Government of being completely dysfunctional and unresponsive towards medical emergency at the Philippines Embassy.

On Saturday, the Indian Youth Congress had tweeted a video claiming that its members were providing medical emergency services at the Embassy of the Philippines in

New Delhi.

Ramesh tweeted the video, saying, "While I thank @IYC for its stellar efforts, as an Indian citizen I'm stunned that the youth wing of the opposition party is attending to SOS calls from foreign embassies. Is the MEA sleeping @DrJaishankar?"

To this, Jaishankar tweeted on Sunday morning, "MEA checked with the Philippines Embassy. This was an unsolicited supply as they had no Covid cases. Clearly for cheap publicity by you know who. Giving away cylinders like this when there are people in desperate need of oxygen is simply appalling. Jairamji, MEA never sleeps; our people know across the world. MEA also never fakes; we know who does."

# Congress: Central Vista essential service, but jab will come in July, is this joke?



IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Reacting to reports of the Central Vista as essential service, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera has attacked the Union Government and raised questions about the vaccines.

Addressing a Press conference on Monday Khera said, "Central Vista is an essential service, amid this pandemic in the Capital where thousands are dying every day, lakhs are suffering and struggling for hospital beds, for oxygen, for medicines, in the same capital city, the Central Vista is an essential service, but the vaccine will come in July, is that a joke?"

He said over the last 15 days, the tragedies in the hospitals that we have all witnessed in Delhi, which is the capital city, a few kilometres from the Central Vista, hospitals are pleading through social media, through media, they are pleading, begging for oxygen.

"Is the vaccine available? We

**The Congress demanded auditing and distribution of foreign aid like injections, oxygen**

have been told by the manufacturers that it wouldn't be available before July. I don't want to remind Hon'ble Prime Minister what he said in January at the World Economic Forum that by August, 300 million people would be vaccinated," he said.

The Congress demanded auditing and distribution of foreign aid like injections, oxygen and other drugs. "We request and demand from the Government, every day, please make public, share it with every Indian, where has this aid come from, where is it going -- which state, which hospital, which agency," he said.



Fourth consignment of medical supplies containing 60 ventilators arrives from UK

PTI

# FICN racketeer held from Bengal gets 6 years in jail

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

A special NIA court in Kerala's Ernakulam on Monday sentenced a fake Indian currency note (FICN) racketeer to six years rigorous imprisonment besides imposing a fine in connection with the Thrissur FICN case.

An NIA spokesperson said here that the special court for NIA cases in Ernakulam convicted Ali Hossain aka Mohammed Ali Hossain, 30, a resident of Murshidabad district in West Bengal, under several sections of the Indian Penal Code in a 2018 FICN case and sentenced him to six years rigorous imprisonment besides imposing a fine of Rs 85,000 on him for his role in procuring, possessing and circulating FICN in Kerala.

The official said that a case



was originally registered at the Thrissur East police station on August 19, 2018 against Hossain following the seizure of two FICNs of Rs 2,000 denomination from his possession.

Based on Hossain's interrogation, 101 fake notes of Rs 2,000 face value each were recovered from his residence in Palakkad district.

NIA had taken over the case on October 27, 2018.

The official said that investigation had revealed that in 2018, Hossain had conspired with accused Alim Sheikh, a Bangladeshi national who is according to, smuggle FICN into Kerala, with an intention to use the same as genuine Indian currency for unlawful gains.

# MHA seeks report from Bengal Govt on post-poll violence

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Monday sought a report from the West Bengal Government on the post election violence in the State targeting Opposition political workers.

The Home Ministry in a letter to the West Bengal Chief Secretary has asked him to submit a detailed report on the violence that broke out in parts of the state on Sunday evening even as trends and results from the Assembly election were pouring in.

The houses and vehicles of some Bharatiya Janata Party candidates were allegedly attacked and a party office at

Arambagh was set on fire. The vehicle of Suvendu Adhikari, who defeated Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram, was also reportedly attacked.

"MHA has asked West Bengal Government for a report on the post election violence targeting opposition political workers in the state," the Home Ministry Spokesperson tweeted.

After the violence, Trinamool Congress leaders, however, said they had nothing to do with any such incidents in West Bengal and urged people to maintain peace and follow Covid-19 protocols.

At Natabari, the car of BJP

candidate Mihir Goswami was learnt to be damaged after the Election Commission announced his victory from Natabari in north Bengal defeating Rabindranath Ghosh, minister and senior TMC leader.

A BJP party office at Arambagh was set ablaze where the party's candidate Madhusudan Bag defeated TMC's Sujata Mondal by around 7,100 votes.

At Siuri, a BJP office was ransacked and the local party leader's tractor was set ablaze.

A similar incident was reported from Kolkata's Belegata constituency where a BJP candidate's garage was set on fire.



# Pak targets BSF patrol party, shatters peace

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Shattering peace prevailing along the 194 km long international border between India and Pakistan across Jammu frontier, the Pakistani rangers early Monday morning targeted a BSF patrol party in the Ramgarh sub sector of Samba by opening 'unprovoked' firing on them.

This is the first incident of 'unprovoked' firing on the Indian border guards after both India and Pakistan had renewed their mutually brokered ceasefire agreement from the midnight of February 24-25.

Luckily, the BSF patrol party escaped unhurt. Official sources in the BSF confirmed, "no loss of life/injury was reported on ground zero".

According to official sources, "early Monday morning Pakistani rangers stationed at one of the Pak post 'Tipu' and 'Hussain' fired around 20 rounds of small weapons targeting the working party of BOP Majra near mount no 8/36 pillar no 81". In response, BSF jawans exercised utmost restraint but maintained a close watch on the activities of the Pak rangers.

After gathering inputs and making preliminary assessment of the ground situation, PRO BSF, DIG SPS Sandhu, Jammu frontier in a formal statement claimed, "Pakistani r a n g e r s resorted to 'unprovoked' firing at 06:15 a.m in Ramgarh sector on BSF patrolling party ahead of fencing." No loss of life/injury was reported, he added.



Interestingly, the Ramgarh sector was witnessing hectic activity for the last couple of weeks.

On March 16, 2021 alert BSF jawans had killed a Pakistani intruder in the same sector after he refused to retrieve inside the Pak territory and kept advancing towards the Indian side.

Several aeroplane shaped balloons with PIA written on it were also recovered from agricultural fields in the Hiranagar, Arnai and RS Pura sectors of Jammu frontier.

Meanwhile, local villagers in the border areas were living peacefully for the last two months and focusing on harvesting their wheat crops standing in the fields.

Local civilians bore the maximum brunt of cross border firing in the past and were leading peaceful lives since the past more than two months in the forward areas.

## Yogi Govt to launch mega testing drive in villages

**Lucknow:** In order to prevent Covid surge in the rural areas in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath Government is going to launch a mega testing campaign for Covid infection in all the revenue villages of the state from May 5.

The Chief Minister, while presiding over a high-level Covid review meeting, said that the rural areas have been a matter of huge concern and we have to protect the villages from the Covid spread.

To curb the Covid numbers in rural areas, the government has decided to ramp up testing in around 97,409 revenue villages of the state from May 5.

The focus is to contain the spread of the infections in rural areas. "We have to protect villages from Covid infection at any cost. There is a need for special vigilance in the villages. In such a situation, a massive campaign of Covid testing should be conducted in all the 97,409 revenue villages of the state", he directed. The initiative starting from May 4, aims to drive down Covid-19 rates and transmission in the rural areas by identifying positive cases.

The Chief Minister has asked the officials to make all the necessary preparations.



The number of RRTs (Rapid Response Teams) should be increased to check Covid spread in the villages of each district. Members of RRTs should make door-to-door visits and check body temperatures, record oxygen level and check for other symptoms in people who are into home isolation.

The Chief Minister also ordered the health department to complete preparations for the successful implementation of this large testing drive which will begin from Tuesday.

"We are hoping that the villagers will recognize the benefits of getting tested to help reduce the spread of the virus," said a government spokesman.

Yogi Adityanath asked the officials to seek help from the monitoring committees. Those who are found unwell or those who tested positive, should be given treatment according to Covid medical protocols. **IANS**

## Frightening pictures from hospitals exposing tall claims of UP CM: Akhilesh

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday accused the ruling BJP Government in Uttar Pradesh of remaining in "isolation" and said the frightening pictures coming from hospitals are exposing the tall claims of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

"The BJP government did nothing in past four years and remained in isolation due to which it has put entire state in isolation now. The tall claims of Adityanath is exposed in frightening pictures and videos coming from hospitals daily," Yadav said in a statement here.

He also questioned the work being done by chief minister's 'Team-9', saying that in some cases, entire families are COVID-19 positive and no one is there to take care of them. The SP leader also alleged that alive people are being declared dead in hospitals.

"There is no proper supply of oxygen and no beds in hospitals. Hundreds of people are dying due to mismanagement and BJP government is responsible both administratively and morally," Yadav said, adding that such irresponsible government is of no use to people.

## Parents abandon body of 2-month-old Covid+ baby in Jammu hospital

**Jammu:** In a shocking incident, parents of a 2-month-old dead Covid positive baby abandoned the body at a hospital in Jammu district and fled, an official said on Monday.

S.M.G.S. Hospital Medical Superintendent, Dr Dara Singh, said the parents ran away from the hospital. "The baby was admitted to the hospital on Sunday with congenital heart disease and other problems. The baby, who had tested positive for Covid-19, expired and the parents were told to test themselves for the virus. Instead of testing themselves or taking the dead baby's body, the parents ran away from the hospital," he said.

"Our efforts to trace them have failed so far and we have kept the body in the hospital mortuary. **IANS**

# Maha deaths drop to 567

N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a relief to the health authorities, the number of Covid-19 triggered deaths in Maharashtra dropped further to 567 on Monday, while the state logged 48,621 new infections.

A day after the state recorded 669 deaths and 56,647 new cases, the daily deaths dropped by 102 while the infections came down by 8026.

The drop in the number of daily deaths in the state should be seen in the context of the fact that the daily deaths had gone up to 10-35 on April 28, while the state witnessed 802 deaths on May 1 and 669 deaths on May 2. With 567 new deaths, the total number of deaths in the state climbed from 70,284 to 70,851. Similarly, with 48,621 infections, the total number of cases rose from 47,22,401 to 47,71,022.

As 59,500 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March last year went up to 40,41,158. The recovery rate in the state for the first time in several days rose from 84.31 per cent to 84.7 per cent.

The total "active cases" in the state dropped from 6,68,353 to 6,56,870 cases. The fatality rate in the state stood static at

1.49 per cent.

With 78 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai increased from 13,294 to 13,372,

while the infected cases went up by 2624 to trigger a jump in the infections from 6,55,997 to 6,58,621.

## Mumbai BMC chief urges people to come forward for Covid testing

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Concerned by the sudden decrease in the number of Covid-19 tests being conducted in the metropolis, Mumbai Municipal Commissioner I S Chahal on Monday appealed to the citizens in the city to come forward to get tested so that "a minimum of 40,000 tests are done every day" in the country's commercial capital.

In an appeal made on a day when the number of daily Covid-19 tests dropped to 23,542 as against 56,000 tests done in a single day the metropolis last month, Chahal said: "It has been the consistent policy of MCGM to do maximum testing to flush out Corona virus from Mumbai's environment".

"Our highest single day testing from March 2020 till 10th Feb 10, 2021 when second pandemic wave hit Mumbai was 24,500," the civic chief said.

"However, immediately thereafter our testing was more than doubled & touched 56000 tests on a single day in April 2021. Our average daily testing in the month of April 21 was nearly 44000 per day," Chahal said.

"It has been observed that the testing figures have fallen in last few days from 50,000 plus to 38000 day before & 28,000 yesterday. It's likely to fall further during weekends," the civic chief said in the morning.

As per the Covid-19 update released by the Birhanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the number of Covid-19 tests done on a single day dropped to 23,542 on Monday.

"Our aggressive testing policy has resulted in reduction of the positivity rate. This might have reduced the natural demand for home collection of swabs by our citizens in the last few days," Chahal said.

## J&K records 51 deaths on Mon

**Jammu:** The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on Monday recorded 51 deaths, highest so far in one single day while 3,733 new cases of coronavirus tested positive taking the tally of active positive cases closer to 35,000 cases.

According to a media bulletin, only 11 Covid ICU beds have been left vacant in GMC, Jammu, four in Chest Diseases Hospital, 20 in Gandhi Nagar hospital, three in ASCOMS Hospital. The situation in Srinagar is no different. As per the media bulletin, only 1 Covid ICU bed was vacant in SMHS hospital in Srinagar, 2 in SKIMS, Soura.

Meanwhile, there has been no let up in the total number of new cases. On May 3 out of

3733 new positive cases 1294 were reported from Jammu division and 2439 from Kashmir division.

The death toll due to Covid 19 touched 2421 after 35 deaths were reported from Jammu division and 16 from Kashmir division.

Moreover, 1536 more Covid-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals including 626 from Jammu Division and 910 from Kashmir Division.

Both the capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu continue to record the highest tally of positive cases despite observing corona curfew. On Monday, Srinagar recorded 1136 cases taking the tally of active positive cases to 10,143. **PNS**

## TN CM Palaniswami resigns

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami submitted his Government's resignation to Governor Banwarilal Purohit on Monday morning as a follow up to the Election Commission of India declaring the results of the Legislative Assembly election held on April 6.

M K Stalin, president of the DMK, who led his party as well as the Secular Front to an impressive win in the election would be sworn in as the next Chief Minister on Friday. The newly elected MLAs of the DMK are meeting at the party headquarters in Chennai on Tuesday to formally elect Stalin as the leader of the legislative assembly. Stalin had told media persons late Sunday evening that the swearing in would be

held at the Raj Bhavan in Chennai and it would be a simple affair. The mission to ensure a smooth transition of power began late Sunday evening and continued throughout Monday with bureaucrats and police officials calling on Stalin at his palatial residence many times.

In the 234 strong Legislative Assembly, the DMK would have 133 members while the AIADMK with 66 members would don the role of the principal opposition party.

The Indian National Congress, the principal ally of the DMK, won 18 of the 25 seats it contested, while the two Communist parties shared two seats each. The VCK, a Dalit outfit, managed to win four seats. The DMK will not include any of the allies in its government as the party commands a safe and secure strength in the House.

The PMK and the BJP, allies of the AIADMK, won five and four seats respectively. The Anna Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam launched by TTV Dhinakaran and the Makkal Neethi Maaim, launched by film actor Kamal Hassan failed to win at least one seat from the State. Both Dhinakaran and Haassan were defeated in the hustings.

Sixty eight year old Stalin would be the oldest person to be sworn in as Chief Minister. His predecessor Edappadi Palaniswami was 63 when he took oath of office as chief minister in 2017, while M Karunanidhi, Stalin's father had become the chief minister at the age of 45. K Kamaraj was 57 when he was sworn as chief minister while C N Annadurai, the first DMK chief minister was 60 when he became the chief minister.

### COVID BRIEFS

#### PUDUCHERRY: LOCKDOWN EXTENDED TILL MAY 10

Puducherry: Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday announced that the lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19 would be extended till May 10. She announced this while speaking to reporters after inaugurating a separate OP booth on the premises of Rajiv Gandhi Government Maternity Hospital here.

#### ANDHRA LOGS 18,972 FRESH CASES

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh crossed the One million mark in total recoveries of Covid-19 patients even as it added 18,972 fresh cases of the infection in the 24 hours ending 9 am on Monday. The latest bulletin said 10,227 patients had recovered in 24 hours, taking the gross to 10,03,935.

#### AHMEDABAD: W RLY SETS UP 19 ISOLATION COACHES

Ahmedabad: The Ahmedabad division of the Western Railway has set up 19 isolation coaches with 304 beds here in Gujarat amid the shortage of beds in hospitals given the surge in COVID-19 cases. Thirteen of these coaches, equipped with required medical facilities including oxygen cylinders, have been stationed at the city's Sabarmati railway station, while six coaches are parked at Chandlodiya railway station, it said on Monday.

#### 5 COVID +VE UNDERTRIALS FLEE FROM HOSP IN JAIPUR

Jaipur: Five Covid-19 positive undertrial prisoners getting treatment at the Chittorgarh District Hospital fled from the facility on Monday, but two of them were nabbed soon afterward, officials said.

#### SIKKIM: 27 NEW CASES, 1 MORE DEATH

Gangtok: Sikkim's COVID-19 tally rose to 8,468 as 27 more people tested positive for the virus while one new fatality pushed the death toll to 150, a health department bulletin said on Monday. The new COVID-19 cases were reported from East Sikkim district (13), West Sikkim (10) and South Sikkim district (4), it said.

## BJP likely to send Central observers to Assam to pick next State CM

**New Delhi:** The BJP is likely to finalise its choice of Chief Ministerial nominee for Assam in a day or two as internal consultation within the party has begun amid a suspense over whether it will continue with incumbent chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal or bring in a new face.

Sonowal and his powerful ministerial colleague Himanta Biswa Sarma are being seen as the two most obvious contenders for the top job. BJP sources said internal con-fabulation is on in the party, and the its parliamentary board may soon name central observers to preside over the meeting of its newly-elected party MLAs in Guwahati where they will pick their leader.

Central observers generally convey the choice of the party top brass to the state leadership which in turn is endorsed by the

MLAs.

The ruling BJP-led NDA has retained its grip on Assam, bagging 74 of the 126 assembly

constituencies that went to polls, while the opposition Congress-led grand alliance managed to clinch just 50 seats. **PTI**

## Assam CM thanks people for victory of BJP-led alliance

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal thanked all sections of people for giving a clear mandate to the BJP-led alliance in the assembly election, results of which were declared on Sunday.

Expressing his gratitude to the people belonging to Barak and Brahmaputra valleys, and other parts of the state, the chief minister in a statement on Monday said, they had reposed their faith in

the BJP-led alliance due to its performance in four key areas. The areas were 'development carried out by the BJP-led government which manifested in every nook and corner of the state, its unrelenting fight against corruption, initiatives to strengthen peace and harmony, and committed efforts of the government to safeguard the identity and existence of the Assamese people from the influx which had significantly altered the demography of the state, especially lower Assam', the statement said.

## Coordinate with Centre to hike O2 quota: Raj CM to officials

**Jaipur:** Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has instructed officials to maintain constant coordination with the Central Government to increase the allocation of medical oxygen in view of the ever-increasing active cases of Covid in the state. Along with this, he has also directed to strongly advocate for providing tankers as per requirement to Rajasthan out of the oxygen transport tankers being imported through the central government.

The Chief Minister has said strict adherence to the Covid protocol is very important for lifesaving. He instructed that the epidemic red alert starting from Monday should be strictly followed the guidelines of Public Discipline Fortnight, there should not be any laxity in it.

Shri Gehlot was reviewing the supply of oxygen, availability of medicines, Covid condensation and the epidemic



ic Red Alert - Public Discipline Fortnight starting Monday through video conference on Sunday night.

He said that the consumption of oxygen in the state is increasing rapidly due to increasing compaction. Since the central government is allocating oxygen under the National Plan, it is very important to increase the amount of allocation in view of the need of Rajasthan. He said that there has been an additional increase of 350 metric tonnes in the production capacity of oxygen at the Jamnagar plant. In such a situation, Rajasthan gets an allocation of extra oxygen from there.

## Aligarh hospital demands ₹8,000 to hand over body

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

During the covid pandemic, it has been seen that the sensitivity of Deendayal Hospital staff is dead. Beena Ghosh, resident of Begumbagh, died on April 30, but Rs 8,000 were demanded to hand over the body.

Son Shankar was upset due to lack of money. After the matter went viral on social media, the DM in charge took cognizance and the investigation has been handed over to SDM. After this, the body was also handed over to Shankar.

Bina Ghosh was tested positive on 24 April, the same day she was admitted to the corona ward of Deendayal Upadhyaya Joint Hospital.

## Agra residents urged to return empty cylinders

PTI ■ AGRA

Two major NGOs here that have been providing oxygen to Covid patients, have urged their families to return empty cylinders.

About 200 oxygen cylinders and 15 concentrators, provided by the two nonprofit organisations — Shri Chetra Bajaj Committee and Help Agra — are lying with people being treated in home isolation, they told PTI.

"Some people are renting our cylinders further to other people at heavy rates. When we call them, they refuse to return them and tell us to keep the security amount," Shri Chetra Bajaj Committee Spokesperson Nandkishore Goyal said, adding the security amount varied from Rs 5,000 to Rs 6,000.

## NEW INNINGS IN LOCKDOWN



A married couple on their way to pray at the holy river Ganga amid lockdown in Varanasi on Monday



A bride and bridegroom wearing masks leave after registering their marriage at Bandra court, amid lockdown, in Mumbai, on Monday

### MAHA PHONE TAPPING CASE

## Rashmi Shukla moves SC, seeks no coercive action against her

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a new development in the much-discussed phone tapping case, senior IPS officer Rashmi Shukla on Monday moved the Bombay High Court, seeking a direction to the Mumbai police not to take any coercive action against her and urging the court for an urgent hearing in the case registered under the Official Secrets Act and other laws for allegedly leaking certain confidential documents.

In a criminal writ petition filed through her advocate Sameer Nangre, Shukla — who is currently Additional Director General (ADG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) based in Hyderabad — sought a direction to the police to not take any "coercive action" against her. She also sought an urgent heading in the case, as she was apprehending her

arrest in the case.

Shukla's counsel said in the petition: "My client is one of the senior most officers of 1988 cadre in police service for more than 30 years...The approach of the respondent state is to arm-twist the petitioner by bogus and frivolous case".

"The petitioner has exposed the nexus between ministers and politicians and other gross corruption involved in assigning posting to police officers...This reveals courage and integrity of the petitioner in performing her official duties and making her best endeavours to expose and eliminate the corruption by bringing the guilty to books," Nangre stated in the petition.

"Instead of applauding and appreciating the work of the petitioner, the government authorities are involved in framing the petitioner in a false criminal case," the petition

stated.

The petition pertains to an FIR registered by the police at the BKC Cyber Police Station on March 26 based on a complaint filed by the State Intelligence Department (SID) against unknown persons for the alleged illegal phone tapping and invoked sections of the Official Secrets Act, Information Technology Act and Indian Telegraph Act.

Before the BKC police registered an FIR in the phone tapping case, Maharashtra Chief Secretary Sitaram Kunte had claimed in a report submitted to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray that "it appears that Ms. Shukla herself had leaked the confidential report (to the former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis)". On her part, Shukla skipped the summons issued to her to appear before the BKC on April 26 and April 28 for recording her statement in the

case.

It may be recalled that the SID had lodged a lodged a complaint with the police after Maharashtra's former chief minister and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis had on March 23 gone to town demanding a CBI inquiry into the alleged racket involving the transfers and promotions of police officers ranging from inspectors to high-ranging IPS officers.

Fadnavis had made his demand based on a confidentially submitted to it in August last year by the then State Intelligence Commissioner Rashmi Shukla through the then the Director-General of Police Subodh Jaiswal on August 25, 2020 allegedly involving corruption in matters relating to the transfers and promotions of police officers ranging from inspectors to high-ranging IPS officers.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Emphatic victory

The BJP lost the plot when it focused more on damning Mamata than advancing its core agenda

It's a classic case of "glass half full" battle of jibes for both the BJP backers and their critics. For the supporters of the saffron outfit, the victory in Assam and Puducherry and the massive rise in both the vote percentage and the number of seats in West Bengal are a reflection of the BJP's unmatched electoral management and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity. The saffron baiters have their own arguments. They contend that the BJP's victory against the Congress in Assam was predictable because the latter is no more a potent political force. Similarly, in Puducherry, it's the personal victory of All India NR Congress (AINRC) leader N Rangasamy and the BJP has merely benefited from the alliance. But in Bengal, where the real battle of 2021 took place, the BJP came a cropper. After all, it had thrown in everything it had in its ever-growing kitty of resources — political, financial and others. The Prime Minister himself addressed 18 rallies and Home Minister Amit Shah held dozens of massive road shows. Several other Chief Ministers, MPs, MLAs and party president JP Nadda camped in Bengal for months together and tried to create the necessary media buzz to defeat the TMC in the psychological space. Coincidentally, several initiatives of the CBI and the I-T department against the TMC leaders also came in handy for the BJP. Mamata and her supporters also kept alleging that the Election Commission was acting as a player rather than an arbiter.

On the other hand, Mamata got little support from the anti-BJP bandwagon. Though the Congress-Left alliance threatened to cut into her Muslim votes, a few erstwhile UPA leaders came in to campaign for her. Devoid of any serious policy and programme narratives, the campaign became highly personalised with Modi greeting Mamata with "Didi o Didi" catcalls and the TMC supremo hurling the choicest invectives at Shah. The BJP lost the plot when it focused more on damning Mamata than advancing its core political agenda. The Bengali-identity politics turned out to be far more assertive and lethal for the BJP which didn't realise that lord Ram would not threaten a woman who epitomised goddess Durga for millions of Bengalis. In fact, the more the BJP leaders ridiculed Mamata, the more sympathy she drew from the people of the State. The presence of a leader who could give a face to identity politics cost the saffron party in a big way. Most of the borrowed players — described as "rotten eggs" by Prashant Kishor — were seen as opportunists even by the BJP's own supporters. It's obvious that any cadre-based party can't assimilate such an overnight influx without alienating a section of its own supporters. The lesson for the BJP is loud and clear: Wherever the party is pitched against satraps, it would need to focus more on local issues and identity politics. The record of the last seven years shows that the BJP has not been successful in winning against powerful regional players in the State-level elections.

### PICTALK



People buy vegetables at a crowded market during the lockdown in Jalandhar

PTI

## Crunch time

The Centre must plan meticulously before it agrees to the SC's advice for another lockdown

Devastated by COVID-19's second wave, the nation is anxiously looking for solutions but seemingly can't find any. The Prime Minister, who had last year announced a hard lockdown, is now advocating a "micro-containment" strategy while the Supreme Court recently asked the Centre to consider imposing another lockdown. But considering the ferocity of the second wave — the exponential rise in cases, mounting death toll, shortage of medical oxygen, vaccines and hospital beds — and the loss of crucial time in the conduct of the Assembly elections and the Mahakumbh, the moot question is: Would another lockdown help contain the infection? There has been no significant improvement in Delhi even after a two-week lockdown — now extended for a third week — as the positivity rate continues to be alarmingly high. Further, even if a pan-India lockdown is imposed as a knee-jerk reaction to the court's suggestion, its impact on breaking the transmission chain is debatable. There's no doubt, however, that it would be a death blow to millions of underprivileged citizens already facing an existential crisis. We have seen how the hapless migrant workers again rushed back home from big cities fearing a lockdown, even before it was announced.

It is the duty of the Centre to make adequate arrangements for the return of these workers if it plans to enforce another lockdown. It must ensure that these people are not stuffed into trains or buses like last year because that would be another super-spreader. A reasonable period, at least two weeks, must be allowed for their safe return before the lockdown is effected. The Government should also transfer some funds via the DBT schemes into their bank accounts. Also, with the Supreme Court observing that no person shall be denied hospitalisation for lack of identity proof, the Centre must now consult States and formulate a national policy within two weeks. The situation is already out of hand and the entire population must be vaccinated as early as possible. With vaccine shortage and an uneven pricing policy haunting the States, getting the desired outcome from the inoculation drive is easier said than done. With reports that the second wave may hit its peak between May 11-16 before declining by May end, we must be prepared for the worst.

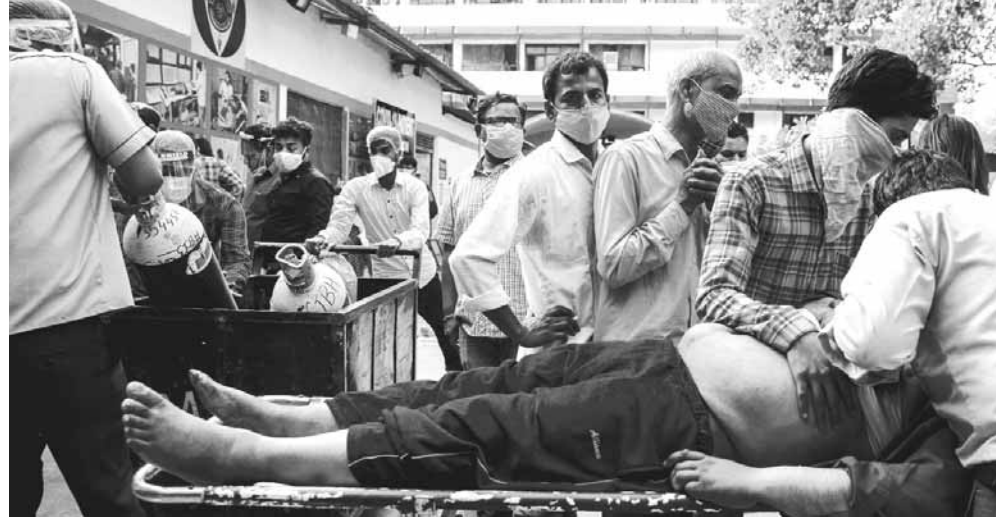
# Ignoring the warning signs

We were wilfully unprepared for this tsunami of an outbreak of COVID-19, though the telltale marks were all in plain sight

Anybody who has seen videos of the horrific 2004 tsunami that killed an estimated quarter of a million people, and there are several of these on YouTube, might have noticed in some videos that as much as 10-15 minutes before the tsunami actually hit the shore, water had started withdrawing from the beach. The students of middle-school geography will remember that it is taught as a classic warning sign of an impending tsunami; and we are actually taught at a very early age that one needs to find higher ground in such a situation. This lesson is redoubled in many coastal areas. Maybe some people did seek shelter when they noticed this, many did not. Yes, the tsunami might have gotten many of those who escaped anyway; it was so devastating that running away could do only so much. But even if it saved a few lives, the lessons in school would have been worth it.

That was a real tsunami, what we have in India right now is not a second wave of COVID-19 infections. We have an overwhelming tsunami of COVID-19 infections and, in Delhi and in many other cities across India, the healthcare system is overwhelmed. We know that at least 3,500 people are dying every day, at least in official statistics. India is inching up to 2,50,000 deaths and almost every family in Delhi at least knows either a loved one or a close friend who has died from the Coronavirus Tsunami. While the authorities now struggle with managing the situation, we have to start taking into account as to why we all ignored the warning signs.

And these were there. These were there for all of us to see and read about in the news. We knew there was a deadly new British variant doing the rounds; we knew that there was a new "double mutant" variant. Even with limited testing, we knew that there were hotspots emerging in and around Mumbai and Pune. But instead of herding



people to a higher ground and safety, like we should have if this were a real tsunami, we were mesmerised and walked into the exposed seafloor, trying to pick up coral and seashells. We travelled to Goa, crowded planes and airports and instead of managing travel from hotspots like the United Kingdom, or even domestic travel, we "celebrated" the rising numbers of air passengers through tweets. Instead of restricting air travel, either within India, from India or into India, we allowed hundreds of people to come in likely carrying new and exotic variants of the virus. The world, however, is scared of the new variants emerging from India and has pretty much closed its doors to India.

Some of us had read about the sudden rise in cases in Brazil, starting with the Amazonian city of Manaus and spreading across that South American country, and wondered whether India too could see such a tremendously debilitating tsunami of cases. Instead, we were told stories of Indian exceptionalism, how India had beaten



INSTEAD OF UNDERSTANDING WHY INDIA WAS SPARED THE 'FULL' IMPACT OF THE ORIGINAL CORONAVIRUS, WE ROLLED OUT A GRADUAL VACCINE PROGRAMME AND INDEED MADE A SONG AND DANCE ABOUT EXPORTING MILLIONS OF VACCINES ABROAD

back the virus and taking a cue from our leaders, across fields from politics to sports, we all let our guard down. Instead of understanding why India was spared the "full" impact of the original Coronavirus, we rolled out a gradual vaccine programme and indeed made a song and dance about exporting millions of vaccines abroad. Nothing against India's generosity to the world, but maybe here following a more selfish American philosophy might have ensured that more people in India were vaccinated and the death toll from this outbreak might have been less.

Yes, a large majority of those who have died were elderly and had led full lives, and while many of them might have died in this tsunami also, the issue is that a large number of people who died need not have died had the arrangements for more beds and oxygen been made earlier. Yes, the system might still have been overwhelmed, meaning that those who caught the disease early benefited from more resources but if the special COVID-19 hospitals in Delhi and

Mumbai had been established a week earlier, if a proper logistical programme had been thought out for oxygen transport a month earlier, many lives might have been saved. The Government is going around tom-tomming India's "low" COVID-19 Fatality Rate; in fact, with a bit of planning and organisation, it could have been lower still.

The fact of the matter is that we saw the warning signs but chose to ignore these; we all bought into the story of Indian exceptionalism. We blithely chose to ignore what was happening elsewhere in the world and believed that once we all start getting vaccinated, things will get even better. We went ahead and planned for massive religious functions like the Mahakumbh, we had parties on Holi and we put ourselves at risk. We ignored the warning signs, even though these were in plain sight for all of us to see. No wonder, now we find ourselves drowning in a tsunami.

(The author is Managing Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal.)

### SOUNDBITE

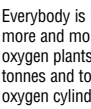
So far, refrained from ordering a sweeping lockdown. But if the people do not comply with the restrictions, harsher steps might have to be taken.

Punjab Chief Minister — Amarinder Singh



What we've witnessed over the last several years is China acting more repressively at home and more aggressively abroad.

US Secretary of State — Antony Blinken



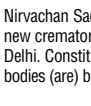
Everybody is building more and more oxygen plants, getting tonnes and tonnes of oxygen cylinders. How are we compensating for all the oxygen that we are forcefully drawing from the environment?

Actor — Kangana Ranaut



Yeah, Sanju Samson is good fun to bat with. We all know he is a chilled fun character. He walked in and smacked his first ball for a six, which was quite amazing.

Rajasthan Royals opener — Jos Buttler



Nirvachan Sadan is the new crematorium in Delhi. Constitutional bodies (are) burnt here.

TMC leader — Mahua Moitra

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### MATCHES ARE AN OASIS THESE DAYS

Sir — The Indian Premier League (IPL) match between archrivals Mumbai Indians (MI) and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) recently was a perfect entertainer and certainly the match of this season so far. Kieron Pollard's stunning onslaught took the Mumbai Indians to an improbable win in a run-fest. The defeat also ended the Super Kings' five-match winning streak.

The MI came out with flying colours in a last-ball thriller. With 138 needed from the last 10 overs, they knew there was just one way to go about it and, in Pollard, they found the man to pursue the Herculean task. He muscled Jadeja for three sixes in the 13th over before smashing two more off Lungi Ngidi in the next. By the end of 14 overs, Mumbai were 130 for three. At the same stage in their innings, the Super Kings were 126 for four. Pollard raced away to 50 in 17 balls, the fifth joint-fastest in the IPL, and reduced the equation to 66 required from the last five overs. A match that witnessed an equal number of fours and sixes (30 each) is absolutely a bad memory for the bowlers. Remarkably, both teams displayed true teamwork to arrive at such a mammoth total. But Ravudu and Moeen Ali from CSK and Pollard and Krunal Pandya from MI deserve special applause. Let's hope the richest cash league will offer the best entertainment in the remainder of the series.

Satish Reddy Kanaganti | Nalgonda

#### IT'S TIME TO BE HOPEFUL, CAREFUL

Sir — Winning over the first wave of COVID-19 was no mean feat for India. Buoyed by it, New Delhi started vaccine diplomacy to help other nations during the crisis. However, things turned upside down as the second wave hit us hard and sent our healthcare system reeling. Some sceptics applaud other countries for beating the second wave and compare it with India's "failure". However, we must keep in mind that we have a huge population and there are several other barriers. Despite all the constraints, our recovery rate is far better and mortality rate is too low. Even the US and Russia, among the developed

## BJP should introspect its failure



In the West Bengal Assembly elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) fell way below its expected number of seats. But in a surprise turn, Mamata Banerjee lost to Suwendu Adhikari, her former party colleague who switched sides months earlier and joined the BJP. It's time for the BJP and its leaders, who were earlier claiming to win more than 200 seats, to introspect about what led to their defeat. In an embarrassment for the BJP, its stalwarts such as Union Minister Babul Supriyo, former Rajya Sabha MP Swapna Dasgupta and Lok Sabha MP Locket Chatterjee fell like ninepins. The Assembly election

nations with top medical infrastructure, were devastated by the second wave.

The Centre and State Governments are doing their best to fight the pandemic and utilising their resources to the optimum. The services of final-year MBBS students can be utilised for providing services like tele-consultation and monitoring of mild COVID cases after due orientation by and under supervision of faculty. It's time for all of us to work together and overcome the pandemic. The darkness will soon go away if every citizen follows the rules and precautions at individual level.

Aman Jaiswal | New Delhi

#### TAMIL NADU'S DRAVIDIAN ICONS

Sir — These Tamil Nadu Assembly elections were the first time in the last five decades without the towering presence of the icons of Dravidian politics. This time, the State may well have seen the emergence

result is a dampener for the BJP if compared with the outcome of the 2019 Lok Sabha election. It had won 18 of the 42 seats and taken a lead on 121 of the 294 Assembly segments by garnering 40.2 per cent vote share. However, in this election, it won 77 seats — 44 seats less than the lead it had taken in the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

The people of West Bengal chose to rally behind Mamata Banerjee despite the vigorous canvassing against her by tall BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. It seems that the Trinamool Congress was successful in consolidating the Muslim votes and that had a direct impact on the election results. In Kerala, the LDF Government got due recognition from the voters for its efficient management of the State during the severe flood and its proper handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. It's good for the BJP to be ambitious but the recent Assembly results have shown that over-ambition is counterproductive.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

of one, perhaps two, new icons. Now the State has newly elected MLA and to-be-Chief Minister M K Stalin who is well suited for this new generation and for the DMK. He is 68 years old and has finally reached where he wanted to be for five long decades in the shadow of his father and one of the leading lights of the Dravidian movement, the late Muthuvel Karunanidhi.

However, the AIADMK hasn't done as badly as was expected, especially with the weight of an alliance with the BJP which was more like a liability. Stalin, because of his genealogy, long years in politics and two successive wins, in 2019, when the DMK-led grouping won 38 of the 39 Lok Sabha seats in the State, and now, can stake claim to being the next Dravidian icon.

Anshita Rochwani | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com





## FIRST COLUMN

## TIME FOR COURSE CORRECTION

The Govt must reformulate the plan for the resurgence of India with the help of the Opposition and social groups



SHIVAJI SARKAR

Economic activities have been hit so hard by the lockdown that traders have cried for deferment of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and other taxes. According to the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), the daily loss of business owing to the lockdown in Delhi is likely to be around ₹600 crore while the total loss across the nation could be nearly ₹30,000 crore if full and partial lockdowns, night curfews and other forms of restrictions are taken into account. CAIT's secretary general Praveen Khandelwal says that non-compliance with these tax stipulations will attract huge penalties on traders across the country. There is no policy or revival plan and the economy is shrinking as people's incomes are in a tailspin, markets have sagging demand and activities are at a virtual thaw. A hard lockdown was imposed on March 24, 2020 without giving a simple thought on how 130 crore Indians would survive if their livelihoods were snatched away. It happened and the next three months revealed that the decision to close down all activities, except those centered around COVID-19, had led



the country to a devastating path. Lakhs of the 18 crore migrant workers hit the road amid loss of work and dignity. Nearly 13 months down the line, the Government should have come out with a road map till now but, alas the nation became complacent about having conquered COVID-19 only to realise too late that the virus has not gone and has hit us with greater ferocity. Consequently, there has been an exponential surge in infections, a mounting death toll, lack of medical oxygen and medicines.

The State has largely remained a mute spectator compelling the courts to intervene and stop the administration from smothering voices being raised against the Government's monumental failure. Despite its massive failure to deal with the crisis, the Centre has claimed that all arms of the Government are working unitedly and rapidly to deal with the situation. The nation is still expecting some decisive action against the pandemic but with its ailing healthcare system and mounting death toll the situation is becoming grim day by day. Reports from the countryside say that half-baked hospitals are doing more harm and how the bodies are cremated remains a mystery. "The State has failed in its fundamental obligation to protect the basic fundamental right that is the right to life under Article 21", said Delhi High Court on April 30. The Bench, earlier during the same hearing, had noted the "complete failure of the State" when dealing with other pleas.

We have not suddenly plummeted into such a state. It appears that the nation was in euphoria of collecting brownie points and has given up all thoughts about the lives of its own people or the state of its economy. The latest indicators from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) about the banking system do not bring any comfort. The bank losses or Non Performing Assets (NPA) are mounting. In such a scenario, credit squeeze is obvious. The Rupee is plunging and petrol prices are at an artificial high. The time for correction has come. The Government needs to own up to failure on its part to control the pandemic. Further, it must also admit that it failed to provide employment and prevent loss of jobs following the demonetisation exercise and pushed the country into severe social and economic crisis. The Centre must reformulate the plan for resurgence of the country with the help of the Opposition, religious leaders and social groups not merely for Gross Domestic Product figures but for survival of the informal sector and the free flow of cash. It must give up all political ego. Healthcare should now become the bedrock of the nation's resurgence, supported by a prudent economic policy, even if that means forming a national Government.

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

## Make the COVID jabs free for everyone

There is a dire need to vaccinate at least one billion people within a short time and, given the pitfalls of differentiated pricing, the Centre should opt for inoculating everyone free of cost



UTTAM GUPTA

Under the 'Liberalised Pricing and Accelerated National COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy (LPANCVS)', announced on April 19, which was kicked off from May 1, the Centre has plans to vaccinate all adults above 18 years of age. Before this, the inoculation drive that was launched on January 16, covered healthcare and frontline workers and people above 50 years of age and those with comorbidities. In the second phase of the drive the age limit was brought down to those above 45. Vaccine manufacturers were giving all their supplies to the Government of India (GOI) and charging ₹150 per dose even as the latter was arranging for inoculation of eligible people free at Government vaccination centres (GVCs). However, those opting to get vaccinated at private hospitals needed to pay ₹250 per dose. The GOI incurred a subsidy on vaccination done at GVCs equal to ₹150 per dose, plus the cost of administering it. It was funded from the Union Budget.

Even as the above arrangement involved differential pricing, like free for those who got vaccinated at GVCs and others getting the jab at private hospitals for a price, the proposed system from this month is much more complex. Under it, of its total supply, the vaccine manufacturer would give 50 per cent to the GOI at the rate of ₹150 per dose and make the remaining 50 per cent available to State Governments, private hospitals, industrial establishments at a price to be declared in advance (the price charged for vaccination by private hospitals would be monitored). People can make an "informed" choice at the time of booking an appointment at a private vaccination centre.

The vaccines will not be available for sale at pharmacists or chemist shops in the open market. The present system of private hospitals inoculating those above 45 years for ₹250 per dose will cease to exist as they will no longer be getting any supplies from the GOI quota and will have to procure directly from vaccine manufacturers at the price notified by the latter.

Meanwhile, the manufacturers have announced prices they intend to charge from the State Governments and private hospitals. The Serum Institute of India (SII), the maker of Covishield, will charge ₹300 per dose on supplies to States and ₹600 per dose from private hospitals. Bharat Biotech, the maker of Covaxin, will charge ₹400 per dose from States and ₹1,200 per dose on supplies to private hospitals. Both will continue to supply to the GOI at the rate of ₹150 per dose (this is as per a statement issued by Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare).

Putting all pieces together, there will be a minimum of five prices for the COVID-19 vaccination dose i.e. zero, ₹300, ₹400, ₹600, ₹1,200 (the cost to the recipients will be higher by an amount equal to the "service charge" levied by the State Governments/private hospitals to cover the cost of administering the vaccine) depending on the vaccine type and the channel through which it is done.

Meanwhile, more vaccines like Sputnik V, Nasal Covaxin and so on, are expected to get approval shortly. But those are likely to be priced



THE COST OF PURCHASE I.E. ABOUT ₹40,000 CRORE CAN BE MET FROM THE ALLOCATION OF ₹35,000 CRORE MADE IN THE UNION BUDGET FOR 2021-22 (AN ADDITIONAL ₹5,000 CRORE WOULD BE NEEDED TO MAKE UP FOR THE DEFICIT). AS FOR THE SERVICE CHARGE FOR VACCINATION, THIS COST MAY BE PAID BY THE STATES FROM THEIR BUDGETS

The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.



even higher. The earlier arrangement was far from optimal as it entailed differential treatment of eligible people depending on the place they got the jab. While, those going to GVCs got it free, others opting for private hospitals, paid ₹250 per dose. Even as the involvement of private hospitals was justified in view of the need to cover a large number (there are 300 million in the 45 plus group) within a short time frame, putting a price tag to it and that too ₹100 over and above the price they paid to manufacturers militated against this objective. Indeed, this was a potent factor behind dismal results thus far with only about 20 million in a total of 300 million having got both the shots (even as other factors such as the initial vaccine hesitancy among the public at large as also supply constraints were equally responsible).

Under the new regime, even as the facility of getting a jab for ₹250 per dose at private hospitals for persons in the 45 years plus category has been withdrawn, the Central Government wants over 500 million people (50 per cent of about one billion of the adult population i.e. over 18 years whom it expects to get jabs from States and private hospitals' quota) to pay a price high enough to destabilise the budget of even a middle income family.

Consider the following two scenarios: First, let's take the low-end in the price spectrum i.e.

Covishield — supplied for ₹300 per dose to States. Add service charge of ₹200 per dose (67 per cent of the price; this is the mark-up applied to ₹150 per dose being the price billed to private hospitals under the erstwhile dispensation), the recipient will pay ₹500 per dose. For two doses, this comes to ₹1,000. A family of four will have to shell out ₹4,000.

At another extreme, consider Covaxin supplied for ₹1,200 per dose to private hospitals. Plus service charge, the recipient will pay ₹2,000 per dose. For two doses, this will be ₹4,000. In this case, the dent on this family's budget will be ₹16,000.

Given the high prices at State centres and much higher at private hospitals and considering that vaccination from the GOI quota (50 per cent of total supply) is for free, people will tend to gravitate towards the latter. The clamour for getting vaccinated at GVCs will be so pronounced as to cause a complete breakdown of this network. This could be averted if only the State Governments decide to do free inoculation even out of the paid quota; however, this will require them to give heavy subsidy from the State Budget.

Already, some States like Maharashtra, Delhi and so on have announced their intent to give it all free and others are likely to follow suit. If, it has to be free for all involving subsidisation by the Centre or States then why go

through such a cumbersome route?

Considering that the crisis is of an unprecedented magnitude (once in a lifetime) afflicting the entire population, there is a dire need for vaccinating at least one billion within the shortest possible time frame and given the pitfalls of differentiated pricing, the Centre should opt for inoculating everyone free of charge.

Apart from GVCs, all other stakeholders like the State health facilities, private hospitals, industrial establishments and so on should be involved in the vaccination drive. They can pick up their requirements directly from the manufacturers even as the GOI does overall coordination, negotiates a good price and makes payment.

Given the mammoth numbers i.e. two billion doses, a price of ₹200 per dose should be good enough to cover the cost and give good return to the manufacturers (here, it is pertinent to recall a statement by Adar Poonawalla, CEO, SII, "the firm was making a profit even at a price of ₹150 per dose"). The cost of purchase i.e. about ₹40,000 crore can be met from the allocation of ₹35,000 crore made in the Union Budget for 2021-22 (an additional ₹5,000 crore would be needed to make up for the deficit). As for the "service charge" for vaccination, this cost may be paid by the States from their Budgets.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

I THINK THAT THE PEOPLE OF BENGAL MADE A HISTORIC MISTAKE BY NOT GIVING THE BJP A CHANCE AND BY RE-ELECTING THIS CORRUPT AND CRUEL LADY.

—BJP MP

BABUL SUPRIYO



IT IS THE VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF BENGAL AND THE VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY. BENGAL HAS SAVED INDIA TODAY. THIS VICTORY HAS SAVED HUMANITY.

—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

MAMATA BANERJEE



## The mysterious end of the quest for knowledge in India

What happened that made the development of science and technology less important after the great burst of scientific creativity in ancient India?

Joseph Needham a brilliant British bio-chemist who had obtained a doctorate from Cambridge University in 1925, visited China several times. In his book 'Science and Civilisation in China' Needham posed the problem, known as "Needham's grand question", in respect of China, but which applies equally to India.

The question is this: Why did China (and India), which were far ahead of Western countries in science and technology at one time, later fell behind, did not have an industrial revolution, became backward and consequently victims of imperialism and colonisation?

There is no doubt that both India and China were at one time far ahead of the Western countries in science and technology. China invented gunpowder, the magnetic compass, paper and printing,



MARKANDEY KATJU

The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India. The views expressed are personal.

which, according to Francis Bacon, were the three most important inventions facilitating Europe to pass from the dark Middle Ages to the Modern age. But why did China's progress in science and technology stop thereafter? According to Needham it could have been the Confucian philosophy, which was incompatible with scientific development, which was responsible for this. But is this explanation not superficial?

As for India, it was far ahead of the West in ancient times. Indians invented the decimal system in mathematics, which was one of the revolutionary inventions in history. The numerals in the decimal system were known as Arabic numerals by the Westerners, but the Arabs called them Indian numerals. Were they really Arabic or Indian? To answer this we

may note that the languages Arabic, Persian, and Urdu are written from right to left. But if we ask an Arab, Persian, or Urdu writer, to write any number (say 259 or 1,379) he will write it from left to right. This indicates that these numbers were taken from a language which is written from left to right. And now it is accepted universally that the decimal system and the number zero, was invented in India.

The importance of zero can be understood by considering the following: The ancient Romans built a great civilisation of Caesar and Augustus. But if we were to ask an ancient Roman to write the number one million he would have been stumped. The reason for this is that the ancient Romans wrote their numbers in alphabets, V standing for five, X standing for ten, L for 50, C for 100, D for 500, and



M for 1,000 (or millennium). There was no alphabet expressing a number greater than 1,000. So if an ancient Roman had to write 2,000 he would have to write MM and if he wanted to write one million he had to write M a 1,000 times.

On the other hand, according to the system invented by Indians, to write one million they had only to write one and

then put six zeros after that. The ancient Greeks and Romans just did not have the imagination to conceive of a number called zero. By using zero our ancestors could conceive of astronomically large numbers. Thus, 1,000 had three zeros after one. If we add two more zeros we get one lakh and so on.

Aryabhatta, who reputedly lived in the 5th Century AD worked on quadratic equations, the binomial theorem and calculated the value of pi to a fairly accurate degree. He also made significant contributions to astronomy, being perhaps the first person in the world to prove that the Earth rotates on its axis, thus causing day and night.

Brahmagupta and Bhaskar also made great contributions in mathematics and so on. In medical science India was at least 1,000, if not 1,500, years

ahead of any country. Thus, Sushrut, the father of surgery, invented plastic surgery in the 6th century BC while the Britishers discovered it only towards the end of the 18th century AD during the Anglo-Mysore wars, and that too, from a traditional physician who lived near Pune.

The harbour at Lothal in Gujarat, which is regarded as quite modern in its construction, was built around 5,000 years ago, and is regarded as part of the Indus valley civilisation. Why, then, did we fall behind the West? Why did we not have an industrial revolution? Why was our advance in science and technology blocked, while Europe produced Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Descartes, Robert Boyle, Cavendish, Priestly, Lavoisier, Maxwell, Gauss, Max Planck, Rutherford, Heisenberg, Pauli,

Niels Bohr, Einstein, Schrodinger, Chadwick, Madam Curie, Otto Hahn in physics, chemistry and mathematics, William Harvey, Ross, and so on in medicine, Edmond Halley and so on in astronomy, James Hutton in Geology, Linnaeus, Buffon, and Darwin in biology, and so on. No doubt we produced CV Raman, Srinivasa Ramanujan, Chandrasekhar, S Bose and so on but these are just a handful

What happened that made in the history of India the development of science and technology less important (after the great burst of scientific creativity in ancient India), while in the West it became more important? This mystery is yet to be solved. Were there cultural, economic, or historical factors involved in this deceleration in learning? A lot of scientific investigation is called for.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 war, and the Palestinians want it to form the main part of their future state. Nearly 5,000,000 Israeli settlers live in more than 100 settlements scattered across the West Bank, which is home to some 2.5 million Palestinians.



# Govt waives IGST on import of Covid-relief material

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday waived Integrated GST (IGST) till June 30 on the import of Covid-related relief material donated or received free of cost from outside India for free distribution.

The Finance Ministry in a statement said the government had received a number of representations from charitable organisations, corporate entities, and other Associations/entities outside India seeking exemption from IGST on the import of Covid-19 relief material, donated/received free of cost from outside India for free distribution.

Accordingly, the Central Government has ... Granted exemption from IGST on import of such goods received free of cost for free distribution for covid relief," it said, adding the exemption would be applic-

able till June 30.

This exemption would also cover goods already imported but lying uncleared at the Customs ports.

The Government has already exempted from customs duty import of a host of COVID-related relief materials, including Remdesivir injection and its APIs, Inflammatory diagnostic (markers) kits, medical grade oxygen, oxygen therapy related equipment such as oxygen concentrators, cryogenic transport tanks, etc, and Covid vaccines.

The IGST exemption given on Monday would be subject to nodal authorities, appointed by the state governments, authorising any entity, relief agency or statutory body, for free distribution of such relief material.

The said goods can be imported free of cost by a state government or, any entity/

relief agency/ statutory body, authorized in this regard for free distribution anywhere in India.

The importer shall before clearance of goods from Customs produce a certificate from the said nodal authorities that goods are meant for free distribution for Covid relief.

After imports, the importer shall produce, to the Deputy or Assistant Commissioner of Customs at the port within a period of six months from the date of importation or within such extended

period not exceeding nine months, a statement containing details of goods imported and distributed free of cost.

This statement shall be certified by the said nodal authority of the state government.

"This exemption shall thus enable import of the Covid

relief supply imported free of cost for free distribution without payment of IGST (up to the 30th June, 2021). As customs duty is already exempt, these imports will not attract any customs duty or IGST," the ministry added.

India's single day COVID infections had crossed a record 4 lakh mark last week. On Monday, 3.68 lakh new infections and 3,417 deaths were reported.

Last week, the government slashed IGST rate on import of oxygen concentrators for personal use to 12 per cent, from 28 per cent, for two months till June 30.

Under Goods and Services Tax (GST), the tax levied on consumption of goods or rendering of service is split 50:50 between the Centre and the state. Such tax is known as Central-GST or CGST and State-GST or SGST.

## Covid crisis, rollback of stamp duty cut impact Mumbai home sales

ANS ■ MUMBAI

The second wave of Covid-19 and the rollback of the stamp duty cut in Maharashtra impacted the housing sales in April, showed a report by Knight Frank India.

The report noted that Mumbai recorded upwards of 10,000 residential property registrations in April 2021.

However, upon delving deeper into the property registrations data, it was found that, only 7 per cent of these registrations were from new

residential sales concluded in the same month, while 93 per cent of the registrations were from properties transacted between December 2020 to March 2021 for which applicable stamp duties were paid during the lower rate window, it said.

The Maharashtra state government in December 2020 had given a leeway of four months to homebuyers to register a property after the payment of stamp duty in order to prevent crowding of registration offices.

## Corporate revenue seen growing 6% in FY22 as second wave takes a toll: Ind-Ra

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With the second wave of the pandemic disrupting supply chains for most industries, India Ratings has projected an overall 6 per cent median revenue growth for corporates this fiscal over FY20.

However, this will be a high 21.2 per cent over FY21, the year of the pandemic when half of the year was almost lost in lockdowns; and the forecast is more than its own earlier assumption of 4.4 per cent, though.

The service-oriented sector is the worst hit so far when it comes to supply-side disruption from the second wave of the pandemic, the report said on Monday, adding this has pushed back their recovery beyond the current fiscal.

While FY22 is likely to be better than FY20 for most of the sectors due to an improvement in revenue benefitting largely from elevated prices and pent-up demand resulting in higher volume growth, volatile commodity prices along with interest rates reversal and the rupee fall are like-

ly to cap profitability, the report added.

"Given these, we expect an overall median revenue growth of 6 per cent for corporates in FY22 over FY20 and 21.2% over FY21," India Ratings said, and pointed out this is an increase from its earlier estimate of a median growth of 4.4 %.

The gains in FY22 is primarily a result of some level of consolidation resulting in bipolarisation, meaning larger companies growing faster than smaller ones, it said. Moreover, excess cash used for deleveraging across sectors will result in higher operating leverage supporting the overall credit profile of corporates, the agency noted.

But sectors like pharma, chemicals, cement and steel may witness some capex on account of higher liquidity cushion with them, it added.

Lower revenue growth is likely to test the credit profile in FY23 due to the moderation in consumption and investment demand outlook and smoothening out of supply chain issues, and the consequent possible moderation in prices, the rating agency said.

## High frequency indicators show economic activity 'softening': Crisil Research

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

India's high frequency indicators have started to show a softening trend in economic activity, Crisil Research said on Monday.

"In India, the impact of state-announced restrictions are more clearly showing up across high frequency indicators - they all trended down for the second consecutive week," it said. Retail mobility fell 8.2 percentage points (pp) on average in the week ending May 2, while workplace mobility slowed 7.1 pp.

Besides, toll collection through electronic mode declined 2 per cent on-week. Similarly, Goods and Services Tax e-way bill collection (volume) declined 6.9 per cent on-week for week ending April 25.

Lately, India's crushing second Covid-19 wave has been making new peaks with every passing day, as daily cases near the 4 lakh plus level.

"If it was any consolation amid the steep rise in daily cases and deaths, growth in

recoveries, which lagged cases till last week, grew faster by 57 per cent in the week April 26-May 2. That compared with 16 per cent growth in cases."

"Growth in daily cases in major affected states, such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh too slowed down, compared with the week ending April 25. But recovery rate has declined to 82 per cent as of May 2, due to the high base of confirmed cases," Crisil said.

Furthermore, it said that Covid-19's second wave is closing in on rural India.

"The share of predominantly rural districts in new cases in April was 30 per cent up from 21 per cent in March. This is still lower than the peak reached in the first wave (at 40 per cent in August 2020)."

"Further, daily vaccinations are slowing as vaccine supplies are choked. They dropped from 1,992 per million in the week prior to 1,585 per million on average, in the week ending May 02. This is the third straight week that daily vaccinations have declined."

## India's manufacturing output inches up as demand rises: PMI

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

Demand growth pushed India's manufacturing sector output higher in April, showed IHS Markit India Manufacturing PMI report on Monday.

Accordingly, the report said economic conditions in India's manufacturing sector remained favourable in April, as companies scaled up production in line with a further improvement in demand.

Consequently, the headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) inched up from 55.4 (index reading) in March to 55.5 in April.

The PMI ranges between 0 and 100, with a reading above 50 indicating an overall increase compared to the previous month.

Besides, the report said consumer goods sector was the strongest-performing category, followed by capital goods and then intermediate goods. "While output and sales

THE PMI RANGES BETWEEN 0 AND 100, WITH A READING ABOVE 50 INDICATING AN OVERALL INCREASE COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS MONTH

increased at the slowest rates since last August due to an intensification of the Covid-19 crisis, there was a faster upturn in international orders," the report said.

"Moreover, quantities of purchases expanded at one of the strongest rates seen for over nine years as firms sought to boost their inventories."

Furthermore, survey participants signalled a steep increase in input costs, the quickest since July 2014, and upward revisions to selling prices.

"The rate of charge inflation climbed to the highest in seven-and-a-half years."

## Sugar production reaches 29.91 mn tonnes in Oct-Apr of 2020-21: ISMA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's sugar production has reached 29.91 million tonne till April of the ongoing 2020-21 marketing season, industry body ISMA said on Monday.

With regard to sugar exports, mills have contracted for shipments of 5.4 to 5.5 million tonne so far. Out of which, 3.5 million tonne has been exported, while another 1 million tonne is expected to be done by this month, it said. On ethanol, Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said mills have supplied 117.72 crore litres of ethanol to oil marketing companies till April 19 of this year against the total contracted quantity of 302.53 crore litres, it added. Releasing updated production figures, ISMA said mills across the country have produced 29.91 million tonne of sugar during the Oct-April period of the 2020-21 marketing season (Oct-Sept).

ISMA has estimated sugar production to be 30.2 million tonne in the 2020-21 marketing season, higher than 27.42 million tonne achieved in the previous season. As per the ISMA data, Sugar production in Uttar Pradesh, the country's largest sugar-producing state, remained slightly lower at 10.56 million tonne till April of this year, as against 11.65 million tonne in the year-ago period.

Whereas the output in Maharashtra, the country's second-largest sugar producer, rose substantially to 10.56 million tonne from 6.09 million tonne in the said period. Similarly, output in Karnataka, the country's third-largest sugar-producing state, rose to 4.16 million tonne till April of this year as against 3.38 million tonne in the year-ago period. Most mills in these key producing states are expected to close their operations in the next fortnight or so.

## 75 lakh people lose jobs in April as lockdowns sprout; unemployment at 4-month high, says CMIE

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The second wave of Covid-19 and the resultant localised lockdowns have impacted over 75 lakh jobs, taking the unemployment rate to a four-month high of 8 per cent, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) said on Monday.

The situation on the employment front is expected to continue to remain challenging going forward as well, CMIE's managing director and chief executive Mahesh Vyas said.

"In the month of April, compared to March, we have lost 75 lakh jobs. That is what has caused the jump in the unemployment rate," he told PTI.

The national unemployment rate touched 7.97 per cent as per the centre's proprietary data, with urban areas witnessing higher stress at 9.78 per cent and rural joblessness at 7.13 per cent.

The national unemployment rate had stood at 6.50 per cent in March, and the number on both rural and urban front was lower.

The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a slew of pockets going

under lockdown-like situation with only essential activities being allowed, which result in a chill in a bulk of economic activities and a resultant impact on jobs.

"I do not know about the peaking of the COVID wave, but I can see stress on the employment front," Vyas said.

What is likely to happen is that unemployment can remain at high levels, he said, adding that the labour force participation rate can also fall. "In worst situation, both can happen," Vyas added.

He, however, said that the situation right now is not as dire as the one witnessed in the first lockdown, when the unemployment rate had touched up to 24 per cent levels.

The country is reporting around 4 lakh new infections a day and over 3,000 deaths. In an address to the nation last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had advised states to look at lockdowns as a last resort, because of its impact on economic activity.

## SBI allocates ₹71 crore for fight against coronavirus

**New Delhi:** The country's largest lender SBI on Monday announced allocating ₹71 crore towards the fight against Covid-19, a part of which will be used to set up a makeshift 1,000-bed hospital for the treatment of patients in some of the worst-affected States.

State Bank of India (SBI) has allocated ₹71 crore to undertake various support initiatives to combat the second wave of Covid-19, SBI said in a release.

The State-owned lender has allocated ₹30 crore for a makeshift hospital while ₹21 crore will be used to support initiatives such as procurement of life-saving healthcare equipment, oxygen supply to hospitals, Covid-care centres, ambulances, PPE kits, masks as well as food relief efforts. Besides, ₹0 crore will be used to supplement government's effort in genome sequencing, and ₹10 crore will be earmarked to collaborate with on-ground NGOs to address the community needs, SBI said.

## PIL seeks removal of hoardings promoting beer: HC seeks Delhi Govt, NDMC stand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A PIL in the Delhi High Court on Monday sought direction to the Delhi government and the NDMC to remove the hoardings put up by a Bengaluru-based beer manufacturer advertising its product.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jasmeet Singh issued notice to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and the beer manufacturer - Pegasi Spirits - seeking their stand on the plea by a lawyer.

Advocate Dhruv Chawla, in his plea, has said that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) in September last year put out an advisory for private satellite TV channels to ensure that liquor, tobacco and other intoxicants are not advertised directly or indirectly on their channels in violation of existing law.

In March this year he came across several hoardings across Delhi advertising the alcoholic beverage of Pegasi and filed a complaint with the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI) regarding the same.

He also filed an application under the Right to Information Act seeking details with regard to any sanction or permission given by NDMC to put up the hoardings.

**KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD**  
(A Government of India Undertaking)

**OPEN E-TENDER (SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM) INVITATION NOTICE.**  
Name of Work: Modification / Crossing up to 33KV Overhead lines / infringing the ongoing Railway Electrification project between Ratnagiri to Verna on Konkan Railway route in the State of Maharashtra and GOA) complete into under ground cable. Tender Notice No: KR/CO/EL/RN-Verna/xing/TT/4/2021, Date: 04/05/2021. Completion Period : Three Months. Estimated Cost: Rs.5,56,10,922/-, Excluding GST. Last Date & Time for Online Submission of Tender : 25/05/2021 up to 15.00 Hrs. Opening of Tender : On 25/05/2021 at 15.30 Hrs. Amendments/Corrigendum if any, would be uploaded on IREPS website only. Submission of Tender Documents : Through IREPS. Manual Tender Documents shall not be accepted.

## SEARCH OF MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl, (depicted in the photo), **Name:** Ritu, **D/o:** Sh. Surender Rai, **R/o:** H.No. 18-B, Gali No. 6, Salapur Khara, Bijwasan, New Delhi, **Aged:** 15 years 9 months, has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of PS Kapashere, New Delhi since 17.03.2021 at 06.15 AM. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 098/21 u/s 363 IPC, Dated 17.03.2021, has been registered at P.S. Kapashera, New Delhi.** Her physical description is as under: **Height:** 5' Feet, **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Clothing:** Sky Blue Colour Top and Jeans and Slippers in her feet. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing/ kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Kapashera, New Delhi at **E-mail:** [cicbci@cbi.nic.in](mailto:cicbci@cbi.nic.in) or **website:** <http://cbi.nic.in> **Fax:** 011-23011334, **Tele No. :** 011-23014046 (Direct), 011-23015229, 23015218 extn. 210



Ritu

**S.H.O**  
**P.S. Kapashera, New Delhi**  
**Ph. 011-25063758, 25066105**

DP/608/SW/2021.

## Markets recoup initial losses to end flat; RIL, banks weigh

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex staged a smart recovery from the day's low to end with marginal losses on Monday, propped up by robust buying in FMCG and telecom counters.

Reliance Industries and banking stocks accounted for most of the losses, while a rebounding rupee also provided support, traders said.

After plunging over 750 points in early trade, the 30-share BSE index made a U-turn to finish 63.84 points or 0.13 per cent lower at 48,718.52.

In similar movement, the broader NSE Nifty closed 3.05 points or 0.02 per cent higher at 14,634.15.

Titan was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, shedding 4.58 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, Kotak Bank, ITC, SBI, ONGC and ICICI Bank.

On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, HUL, Maruti, Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, NTPC

and Nestle India were among the gainers, climbing up to 3.98 per cent.

"Domestic equities recovered sharply from day's low despite weak global cues. While growing uncertainties about collection efficiency and asset quality of banks/NBFCs dragged heavy weight financials, strong buying in FMCG and Metals supported recovery in markets," said Binod Modi, Head Strategy at Reliance Securities.

While persistent rise in second wave of COVID-19 cases has weighed on investors' sentiments, steady corporate earnings with positive managements' commentaries offered support to markets, he noted.

On the macroeconomic front, India's manufacturing sector activity was largely flat in April, as rates of growth for new orders and output eased to eight-month lows amid the intensification of the COVID-19 crisis, a monthly survey showed on Monday.

## World shares mixed after retreat on Wall Street

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Shares were higher in Europe on Monday after a retreat in Asia, where some markets including those in Tokyo and Shanghai were closed for holidays. London was also closed for the May Day holiday.

Hong Kong and Seoul declined while Paris and Frankfurt advanced. US futures were higher.

Oil prices were mixed and the yield on the 10-year Treasury note was steady at 1.62 per cent.

Markets have mostly climbed in recent weeks as investors remain optimistic that the pandemic is slowly and steadily coming to a close, at least in the United States.

## Rupee rises by 14 paise to close at nearly 1 month high

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee rose by 14 paise to close nearly one-month high of 73.95 against the US dollar on Monday following losses in the American currency in the global markets.

A fall in crude oil prices and positive economic data helped the local unit pare early losses.

The rupee had opened lower at 74.25 and hit the day's low of 74.33 later in line with early losses in the domestic equities.

The local unit, however, pared its losses in afternoon trade on the back of dollar sale by exporters, positive manufacturing data and a recovery in stock indices.

## T Rabi Sankar takes over as new RBI Deputy Guv

PTI ■ MUMBAI

T Rabi Sankar on Monday took over as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a period of three years, the central bank said in a statement. Sankar has filled the vacancy created after the retirement of B P Kanungo on April 2.

The other three deputy governors are Michael D Patra, who heads the all-important monetary policy department; Mukesh Kumar Jain, the commercial banker-turned-central banker; and Rajeshwar Rao.

Sankar was Executive Director of the Reserve Bank before being elevated to the post of deputy governor.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet cleared Sankar's appointment as the new RBI deputy governor on Saturday.

"In pursuance with the Government of India notification dated May 3, 2021, T Rabi Sankar took over as the Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India today for a period of three years or until further orders, whichever is earlier," the RBI said.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**Tender Notice (Through e-tendering)**

Name of work with its location	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for TPWS equipment both On board and Tracksides equipment for section NDLS-PWL for three years.
Approx. cost of the work (₹)	₹28,59,616/- only
Address of the Office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055
Date & Time for upload the tender/Closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time 02.06.2021 up to 15:00 hrs
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055

Tender No. 558-Sig-16-M-Tender-AMC-048-2021-22 Dated : 03.05.2021 959/2021  
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## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of female **Age:** Approx 60 years, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Height:** 155 Cms., **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Round, was wearing Black colour Salwar & Suit, was admitted in Safdarjung Hospital vide MLC No. 131860/21 on dated 28.04.2021.

She was declared brought dead by doctor. In this regard a DD No. 40A, dated 28.04.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

**SHO**  
**P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-24106346, 24106345**

DP/649/SW/2021

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo), **Name:** Unknown **S/o** Unknown **R/o** Unknown **Age :** about 65 years, **Height :** 5'5", **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Face :** Oval, **Built :** Thin, **Wearing :** Red colour T-shirt & Khakhi half pant was found in unconscious condition at Gate No. 6, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. He was admitted to Lady Harding Medical College Hospital, Delhi, where doctor declared him brought dead on 27.04.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No : 56A, dated 27.04.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Tilak Marg, New Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hrs in Lady Harding Hospital Mortuary, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following:-  
**SHO**  
**P.S. Tilak Marg, New Delhi,**  
**New Delhi Distt., Delhi**  
**DP/266/NDD/2021 Ph. No. 011-23364100, 8750870526**

DP/266/NDD/2021

## Public Notice

I Kamlesh Kumari Bagai W/o Late Ramesh Chander Bagai, identified by Aadhar no. 711905158139 do affirm and declare that I had given a public notice in The Pioneer News Paper published on 24th April 2021, affirming that my medical records confirm that I do not need any psychological treatment and anyone claiming to have any such record may share the same with me. I affirm that this public notice was given on my own free will and I am firm on the same. I do not take responsibility of any contradictory digital communication, affidavit or document created in my name to contradict the public notice published on 24th April 2021. Kamlesh Kumari Bagai.



## DOCYARD

DR HP BHARATHI

Deputy Chief Medical Officer

JINDAL NATURECURE INSTITUTE



## Time to heal naturally



One of the most common chronic diseases of the respiratory system, asthma affects more than 300 million people across the world with around one-tenth of them in India. While the prevalence of asthma is higher in developed countries, the burden of asthma-related deaths is much higher in developing countries like India. In fact, according to a report published by the World Health Organisation (WHO), over 80 per cent of asthma deaths take place in developing countries.

While environmental allergens like dust, pollen, insects and domesticated animals are the leading triggers of asthma, outdoor air pollution has also emerged as a problematic trigger. Researchers from the French Institute of Health and Medical Research found that high traffic intensity and ozone exposure has increased the risk factors in individuals living with asthma. With rising environmental pollution, the incidence of respiratory disease is increasing in India, particularly among children. It is important therefore to introduce a holistic approach towards the management of this condition through the use of naturopathy and yoga. Evidence suggests that a naturopathic approach can offer long-term health benefits to people with asthma by reducing the intensity of the disease, improving symptoms and lung function while significantly reducing drug requirement.

**While modern medicine works in a reactive approach to manage symptoms when they arise, naturopathy works to eliminate the cause and reduce the severity of the disease**

approach which is much safer and sustainable.

Naturopathy is holistic rather than a compartmental way of treating and managing a condition. While modern medicine works in a reactive approach to manage symptoms when they arise, naturopathy works to eliminate the cause and reduce the severity of the disease. The Alternative system of medicine believes that all diseases are caused due to an accumulation of toxins or morbid matter in the body and negative vibrations in the mind. The therapeutic plan in naturopathy is executed in three phases — the eliminative phase, which focuses on cleansing the body of accumulated toxins, the soothing phase, which focuses on rejuvenating the body and supplying the necessary nourishment, and the constructive phase, in which the body's metabolic activity is regulated.

The treatment is divided into three therapy sections — Nature cure therapy, Diet therapy and Yoga therapy. Nature Cure therapy consisted of chest pack applied from 30 minutes to an hour once or twice a day depending upon the clinical condition of the patient. This was accompanied by a combination of hot foot and arm bath, partial massage therapy to upper back and chest, fomentation, Asthma Bath, Oxygen Bath, Steam and Sauna Bath, Enema, Steam Inhalation and Drainage therapy. Under the diet therapy, patients were prescribed nutritionally calcium-rich, non-mucus and non-acid generating food-items along with herbs and lots of water. Yogic kriya, Yogasana, Pranayama and Yoganidra spanning into a three-week programme with a gradual gradation in the severity of the practices was the third pillar of the treatment approach.

The study combined with a year follow up of patients had shown highly promising results. The naturopathy approach helped these patients to improve their lung function and symptoms while reducing the requirement of drugs in most patients.

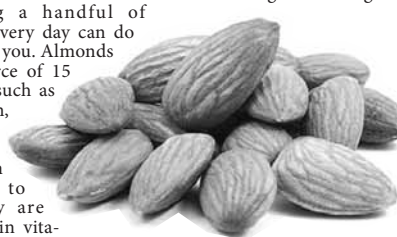
## COVIDCARE

**ALMONDS:** Immunity has taken centre stage during the pandemic. So much so, that anything and everything that has immunity booster written on it is running off the shelves real quick. However, heightened immunity can be achieved at home without too much efforts.

Eating a handful of almonds every day can do the job for you. Almonds are a source of 15 nutrients such as magnesium, protein, riboflavin, zinc, etc. In addition to this, they are also high in vitamin E, which acts as an

antioxidant to support pulmonary immune function. Vitamin E is also known to offer protection against infections caused by viruses and bacteria. It also helps prevent cold.

Alternatively, you can soak five-six almonds overnight and have them as the first thing in morning.



## DEALING WITH DOUBLE TROUBLE

On the occasion of World Asthma Day, MUSBA HASHMI speaks with doctors to tell you how one can manage the disease during Corona and what to do if one is unsure whether he is experiencing an asthma attack or COVID symptoms

Breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing, does these sound like COVID symptoms to you? Most probably, yes. However, the fact of the matter is that all these symptoms echo with asthma too.

While it is hard to identify whether a person is having an asthma attack or COVID because the patients are now presenting with newer symptoms, experts say that asthma patients should continue with their medications.

"People feeling breathless may sometimes confuse between Covid symptoms and an asthma attack. The major symptoms seen nowadays in Covid positive patients are breathlessness instead of fever or any other common Covid symptoms such as sore throat, headache, cough etc. In such a situation it is best to use the inhaler so the asthma attack can be managed. In case of asthma patients having contracted Covid, inhalers and bronchodilators as well as other medications should be continued as per schedule. Nebulisers are again very useful in handling Covid induced bronchospasms. Asthma patients can easily use nebulization, with or without steroids, to help alleviate chest congestions and pressure," Dr Sandeep Nayar, Senior Director & HOD, Chest & Respiratory Diseases, BLK-MAX



## Things to keep in mind

■ If you've recently recovered from an acute Covid infection, delay getting the vaccine until you're fully recovered and done with self-isolation and quarantine measures

■ Also, if you had the infection after receiving the first dose of vaccine, then wait at least 1month after recovery before getting the other dose

■ If, along with asthma, you also have other conditions causing immune deficiency like HIV or cancers, consult your doctor before getting the vaccine

■ Do not step out of home. If unavoidable, wear a double

mask while going out

■ Quit smoking as it can be very dangerous for patients with asthma or other respiratory illnesses

■ Avoid outdoor exercises, focus on breathing exercises, and doing yoga indoors

■ Take prescribed medicines and inhalers. Keep necessary medicines stocked up

■ Eat a healthy diet rich in nutrients and proteins. Avoid eating out and foods rich in oil

■ Take steam twice daily to avoid chest congestion

■ Keep anxiety and stress levels as low as possible

**In case of asthma patients having contracted Covid, inhalers and bronchodilators as well as other medications should be continued as per schedule**

— Dr Sandeep Nayar

causing pneumonia. Hence, early medical advice should be sought in case of symptomatic deterioration," Dr Arunesh Kumar, Senior Consultant & Head Respiratory Medicine/Pulmonology, Paras Hospital, says.

Nayar adds that all asthma patients above 18 years of age must get vaccinated to prevent the deadly implications of the virus even if they get infected.

"Vaccination will not just help in protecting from the virus but will also help reduce the severity of the symptoms. However, those having had an immediate or severe allergic reaction to the vaccine or any of its ingredients, must consult their physician," Nayar says.

Many people don't consider asthma as a serious condition, however, asthma compounded by other infections can increase the risk. An important aspect for all patients is to know the triggers so one can keep away from them and be protected from another attack.

"Identify your triggers. If dust causes problem, try and keep your surroundings dust free. Maintain proper cleanliness at all times. At such a time, when differentiating between COVID and asthma attack has become a task, it is advisable that you are on optimum guard and eliminate anything and everything that can aggravate asthma," Dr. Deepak Verma, Internal Medicine, Columbia Asia Hospital, Ghaziabad, explains.

## TRACK THE PROGRESSION

The second wave of COVID-19 has reported a surge in moderate to severe cases. DR ISRARUL HAQUE tells you how one can monitor the progression of the disease



The second wave of COVID-19 has been characterised by a sharp spike in cases that has overwhelmed the healthcare system in India. Scenes depicting patient and attendants waiting for tests, oxygen and medicines have become common these days. The only solution is to fight back.

The first important observation during this time is that vaccinated people seem to be protected against severe form of the disease. Except a few rare cases, the vaccinated people have mostly recovered well. In addition to this, the infection rate among vaccinated people does not appear to be significantly lower than unvaccinated people. Third, vaccination doesn't provide absolute protection against infection or reinfection. This makes it clear that all citizens need to follow guidelines like wearing of masks, regular hand washing/use of sanitisers and social distancing norms. Fourth, the proportion of people with moderate or severe disease appears to be higher as compared to previous years pandemic. This too has overburdened the healthcare system. Fifth deterioration of patients in second week (from symptom onset) has been reported frequently. The most frequent deterioration has been reported from day seven to day 12 of symptom onset. Deterioration includes rapid decline in oxygen saturation level, markedly increased breathlessness overnight, chest pain, appearance of high grade fever after few days of being afebrile etc. Sixth, though elderly people and people with comorbidities appear to be at higher risk of adverse outcomes but severe disease isn't infrequent among healthy unvaccinated adults.

The picture appears to be gloomy. What can be done at this stage to minimise the loss of lives? Here are a few basic facts that are essential to manage the ongoing pandemic. The first part focuses on what can be done at home. The first step involves classification of disease severity at home. First, anybody testing positive for Covid-19 by rapid antigen kit or RT-PCR needs to isolate himself and monitor his oxygen saturation. Person with oxygen saturation of 94 per cent, 90 to 94 per cent and less than 90 per cent at room air are considered to have mild, moderate and severe disease respectively. These needs to be monitored at least four times a day till two weeks are completed or the person is completely symptom free. Second, we need to identify factors which predict the progression to moderate and severe disease. One important test which can be done at home itself is measuring pulse rate regularly along with oxygen saturation. If the pulse rate is persistently more than 100 on repeated measurement and oxygen saturation drops by more than five per cent on walking for six minutes then there are higher chances of progressing to moderate and severe disease. High Resolution Computed Tomography scoring is informative of disease severity too if it is done on day six of symptom onset.

By following the basic precautions and getting vaccinated will help us beat the virus.

The writer is Consultant Physician, Department of Medicine, Patna Medical College, Patna and is also functioning as Nodal Officer of COVID-19 Ward PMCH, Patna

## DadiKaKehna

*Pearly white teeth and picture perfect smile is on everyone's bucket list. ROSHANI DEVI shares simple and easy to follow home remedies that can help*



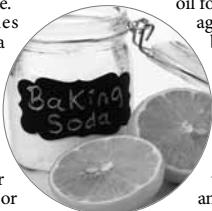
Dazzling white teeth is a dream of many. Everyone wants to get rid of yellow teeth for that perfect smile. Of course, one can visit a dentist but that will fall heavily on your pocket. Here are home remedies for the same.

Most homes have baking soda and yes, it can be used for almost anything — from cleaning toilets to getting rid of that stain in your favourite dress or shirt to even whitening the teeth.

Take two-four teaspoons of baking soda and add lemon juice to make a paste. Depending on the amount of baking soda, the added liquid will differ.

Apply a liberal amount onto the toothbrush and brush teeth for two minutes. Repeat the process a few times a week or until the desired results are achieved.

Believe it or not rinsing the mouth with coconut oil for whitening is age-old. Prior to brushing your teeth, use a spoon to scoop an appropriate amount of coconut oil up. Take one-and-a-half table-spoon of coconut oil and put it into your mouth. Like the mouthwash, swish the liquid around for 10-15 minutes. Spit out the oil and then brush teeth. Repeat as necessary.



## TB care is need of the hour

India accounts for over 27 per cent of the world's 10.8 million TB cases. Experts throw light on the ailment and talk about the role of community and survivors

TB has killed more people in history than any other infectious disease. Mycobacterium Tuberculosis continues to ravage communities and societies across the globe since its emergence 9000 years ago. India bears disproportionately large burden of the global TB incidence, accounting for over 27 per cent of the world's 10.8 million TB cases. This burden is further exacerbated as India also is a leading country for people with multiple drug-resistant forms (MDR-TB) that do not respond to commonly used medicines and aggravate mortality.

Multiple factors contribute to the growing rates of TB: Tuberculosis is a social disease. The under-privileged are disproportionately affected due to poor living conditions, malnutrition and access to healthcare. Stigma leads to underreporting and ostracization within the

community and the workplaces. The long treatment period leads to poor compliance, and the chronic nature of the disease leads to rising mortality.

"The severity of the epidemic has led to a host of TB control initiatives in the country with the Government committed to eradicating TB by 2025. We have made great strides in TB care. The scaling-up of diagnosis and treatment and an efficient system has saved millions of lives. However, while these successes are commendable, there remain gaps, such as the medicalised perception of TB, that need to be addressed. For too long, the focus has been on diagnosis and treatment of disease, with minimal attention to supportive services, making TB redressal a challenge," Dr Dalbir Singh, President, Global Coalition for TB, says.

TB is a multifaceted issue involving society, gender, and

inequalities. Viewing it through a solely medical lens hinders our opportunities for patient care. A TB patient's first interface with a medical service is often an unfamiliar hospital environment, where a heavy emphasis on technical knowledge and treatment procedures reinforces the patient's growing anxieties. A large part of making TB services accessible involves demystifying the disease. While counselling services ensure that patients are adequately sensitised regarding their illness, these are still centralised facilities that are inaccessible for many. We need to move towards decentralised patient-centric approaches that serve to reduce the burden on marginalised communities.

"While we work towards making TB care more accessible, we must also consider the experiences of those affected by TB. Often, programmes are designed from a position of expertise that

fails to account for the needs of those the programme aims to benefit. There is a glaring absence of the patient's voice in our TB control initiatives and a subsequent lack of understanding of the patient experience. The voices of those affected by TB matter because they break through pre-existing perceptions and provide real experiences and needs of those that have survived TB. There is a need for a sustained effort focused on benefiting them, easing their experiences, empowering them and making them the voice for change," Dr Rajeev Gowda, Former Rajya Sabha member, adds.

The fight against TB requires the combined effort of many sectors. The pandemic has shown us that it is possible to tackle such diseases if we work together and that there is much to be learned from the COVID-19 response.





# UPGRADE YOUR OFFICE



## Decor can influence how productively you work from home, says RAGHAV GUPTA

With Covid-19 impacting us like never before, most of us are spending more time at home. Working from home, around the same environment, can become a mundane task. Along with work stress, being locked up at home, can impact us majorly. Changing the set up at home can increase our productivity as what we see and interact with directly influences our well-being.

A home office that inspires creativity is easy. It is also a great way to utilise quarantine time. Here are three basic tips which you can play around with and also infuse with your personal style.

Use bright colours as these help you stay awake and alive while keeping lethargy away. An accent piece is a great way to add a fun element to your space. Stress can sneak up on you but the good news is that you can keep the levels

down by simply using the right colours in your home. You might not even notice it, but your body and mind react to colours. For 2021 Pantone hasn't chosen one but two colours of the year — the neutral 'ultimate grey' together with a lovely yellow called 'illuminating'. This mix of colours conveys a message of strength and hopefulness that is both enduring and uplifting. Practical and rock solid but, at the same time, warming and optimistic, this union is one of strength and positivity. As grey is a neutral, soothing shade, hints of yellow can bring in a bright element that your space would be happy to have.

Working from home is the norm for plenty of professionals, but for some of us, we're just getting in the groove of working remotely for the first time. As we get used to that work-from-home life, it's important to rearrange your home work space in an organised way



that will keep you focused on your daily tasks with all the essentials you need. To help you upgrade your new work station, avoid getting too cosy or comfy, invest in a good office chair, a desk and, maybe, then add a fashionable cushion to go along with the arrangement. WFH can get boring and it's here to stay, so keep changing your cushions every month or so as these can add a new look to your home-office every month.

Last, keeping your surroundings

clutter-free can change the entire game. With fewer distractions around, your eyes will remain focused on tasks at hand. It's essential for your productivity — and your mental health — to keep your workspace organised. It may seem like a daunting task, but the incentive to start organising is undeniable.

—The author is director of e-commerce of an Indian brand of handmade rugs and accessories that are exported to over 90 countries across the world



## Shweta advocates sustainable fashion

Actress Shweta Tripathi encourages sustainable fashion for the sake of the environment. "I am a big advocate of sustainable fashion and I think if one is conscious of the environment, they'd always choose ethical clothing over anything else. Right from thrift stores to second-hand shopping, I'd like to encourage people to indulge in these practices and make a difference," Shweta said.

The actress treats her clothes with a lot of love and care to ensure they are not torn or damaged.

"The problem is that everyone thinks someone else will save the world. It's time to be that someone. If we all do our little bit, the world will be in a better place. I'd also like to tell people that even when it comes to sourcing for shoots, we try our best to cut down on new things," she added.

In her new web-series, the thriller *Escapade Live*, Shweta wears her own footwear. "For my character in *Escapade Live*, I'm wearing my own footwear as opposed to buying new ones because if there's something that already fits, I think it's really unnecessary to purchase new ones," she said.

—IANS

## Look good, feel great

Were you always curious about the secrets that beauty experts personally use? Here are some pro tips from SHAHNAZ HUSAIN



Beauty is a matter of cultivating some good habits to last you a lifetime. Here are some tips that I swear by to give you that extra edge:

Remember to cleanse your face every night, removing make-up and pollutants that are deposited during the day. I use an aloe vera and lemon cleanser for normal to dry skin. Glowing skin that is free from blemishes is the result of daily, appropriate cleansing.

Remove all creams, like cleansing creams, nourishing creams, under-eye creams with moist cotton wool, so that there is no moisture loss. Moist cotton doesn't



absorb moisture from the skin.

Moisture and protection are the life of skin, especially in winter, to keep the skin soft and smooth. Sun-exposure also causes moisture loss. Use sunscreen or sun-block before going out in the sun. Choose high SPF for sun-sensitive skin, while SPF 25 would suit most skins. Use a sunscreen gel for oily skin. When you are at home, apply moisturiser.

I have normal to dry skin. So, I apply nourishing cream at night, after cleansing, massaging it on the face with outward and slightly upward strokes. I include the neck in my massage routine and wipe off cream with moist cotton

wool before bedtime.

Use a facial scrub for blackhead-prone, oily skin at least twice a week. Avoid scrubs on pimples, acne or rash, as well as very dry, dehydrated skin. It can deplete both oil and moisture, causing flaking of the skin. For normal skin, a scrub may be used once a week.

Use a face pack at least once or twice a week. I use a face pack daily. It consists of herbal powder and seaweed lotion, mixed with yogurt, honey and egg white. If your skin is oily, apply it more often. Packs help to deep cleanse the skin and tighten it, delaying ageing signs. The Shahnaz Husain Home Pack suits all skin types.

Keep your hair clean and never neglect shampooing the hair. It is very vital to your hair looking its best and staying healthy. Use mild herbal shampoo and hair rinse. After washing the hair wrap it in a towel and allow it to soak up moisture. Avoid rubbing the hair. Avoid brushing wet hair. Use a wide toothed comb.

—IANS

According to National Eating Disorders Association, the International No Diet Day on May 6 encourages the rejection of diet culture. This movement, started by Mary Evans Jones in 1992, celebrates the importance of body acceptance, diversity, and respect for all body shapes and sizes.

The day is dedicated to promoting a healthy lifestyle with a focus on health at any size. It aims to educate people about the right way to diet and not feeling guilty about indulging once in a while; create an acceptance of how your body looks and its uniqueness; and to end weight discrimination.

Nutritionist, sports consultant, psychologist Shweta Bhatia, who is among the few dietitians recognised by the Indian Dietetic Association, Mumbai, shares her thoughts on the day's importance that may make you rethink your approach to dieting culture.

"We must respect people of all sizes and their unique battles with body shaming and weight loss. However positive body image in no way should be an excuse for quitting and remaining unhealthy. As humans we do have a psychological association with food. This can reach unhealthy proportions in the form of emotional eating," Bhatia says.

She emphasises, "Shooting for unrealistic body types is harmful. The focus should be on health and fitness rather than a certain size or number on the scale. Shape is largely determined by your genes. So is the tendency to store fat and build muscle in certain areas. Even when you begin to lose



## In diversity we trust

Despite thin being equivalent to fit in popular culture, an ideal body type is a misnomer



fat, it leaves areas that were never meant to store it first," she says.

With major celebs in her list of clients, Bhatia, 43, is a well-known name in the fitness and nutrition field. She says: "A fit body always looks good. Aesthetics is the by-product when you have more muscle and less fat. Spot reduction does not work. When you exercise, it is working the muscle rather than burning the fat sitting above it. Fat burning is

targeted through the diet. A diet is a combination of nutrients your body needs on a daily basis to survive, repair and adapt. Being on a diet therefore means doing the right things most of the time in line with your health and fitness goals. Going off the diet then means letting go once in a while in a way that it does not throw you off the wagon."

Finally, she advises: "Stop obsessing over calories and consumed and burnt: Exercise

is for improving fitness, not trying to cancel out cheat meals. Calorie burning is the bonus and not the goal of the exercise program. The caloric value of foods is measured in a controlled environment in a lab. But in your body, your hormones and enzymes decide how these calories are released and used.

All calories are not equal. Foods with similar calories take different pathways once digested and their fate depends on our hormones. Calorie counting without paying attention to quality and quantity of nutrients does not make sense, even within a calorie deficit plan. You may lose weight but healthy weight loss means less fat mass while gaining or maintaining muscle."

—IANS

## TRENDBLAZER



### COMFORT THE CHILD: MADHAVAN

Actor **R MADHAVAN** says it's important for people to explain the ongoing situation to children. "In all this chaos, uncertainty, and stress please spare a thought for the young kids at home. Their world has become frightening and they are being mostly neglected. Explain to them what's happening and make sure that they feel comforted and secure," he said. The actor makes his directorial debut with *Rocketary: The Nambi Effect*, based on the life of scientist and aerospace engineer S Nambi Narayanan.

### fairtalk DEEPIKA PADUKONE



As millions of us (me and my family included) strive to stay afloat, let us not forget that our emotional well-being in this current crisis, is equally important! Remember, You Are Not Alone. We are in this together. And most importantly, there is HOPE!

### dailytalk ANUSHKA SHARMA



I would like to appeal to everyone to unite and support our country in this hour of crisis. Virat and I are coming together to do our bit. We will share the details soon so that you can also become part of this movement. Remember, we are all in this together. Guys, please stay safe and take care of yourself.

### VICTORIA ON HOME SCHOOLING

**VICTORIA BECKHAM** spoke about how she spent her lockdown with David and their children. "When lockdown first happened, the schools were closed and we said the priority had to be the children. The most important thing was to sit and watch movies with the kids and cuddle them. I appreciate teachers so much more, home schooling is no joke. I can run a business, I can sit in a board meeting, but home schooling the kids is really, really tough."





# Covid bursts IPL bubble

## KKR-RCB match postponed after Varun Chakravarthy, Sandeep Warrier test +ve; CSK non-playing staff which includes bowling coach Balaji also caught up

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Covid-19 outbreak left the star-sprinkled IPL on tenterhooks as Kolkata Knight Riders' Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier tested positive for the dreaded virus, forcing postponement of their game against Royal Challengers Bangalore, while cases also came to light in the Chennai Super Kings camp.

The match, which was to be held in Ahmedabad on Monday evening, will be rescheduled some time later during the tournament, which will conclude on May 30.

"Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier were found to be positive in the third round of testing in the last four days. All other team members have tested negative for Covid-19," the league, which features the biggest names in International cricket, said in a press release.

Apart from this, Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Viswanathan, bowling coach Lakshmi Prasad Balaji and a bus cleaner with the contingent tested positive on Sunday.

A top BCCI official, after declaring all three cases to be "false positives", later clarified that Balaji along with the unnamed cleaner had come out positive even in the repeat test.

"Three members of CSK contingent, CEO Kasi, bowling coach L Balaji and a bus driver had tested positive in the morning followed by negative Rapid Antigen



Kolkata Knight Riders spinner Varun Chakravarthy

test report," the source said.

"However second RT-PCR report found Balaji and bus driver positive again. The others in the team especially playing members have tested negative," he added.

CSK, currently based in Delhi,

virus.

However, Delhi and Districts Cricket Association (DDCA) chief Rohan Jaitley asserted that "none of the groundsmen on duty" are among them.

The BCCI continued to insist that the league will go on but Monday's developments have definitely cast a shadow on how the Covid-19 threat would be managed for an event being staged across six venues — two at one time.

Leg-spinner Chakravarthy and pacer Warrier, both 30, have been isolated and the rest of the KKR contingent has returned negative reports for now. Of the two, Warrier has not yet made the playing XI in any of the seven matches KKR have played.

"The Medical Team is in continuous touch with the duo and are monitoring their health. Meanwhile, the Kolkata Knight Riders have now moved towards a daily testing routine to identify any other possible cases and treat them at the earliest," the IPL stated.

"The Medical Team is also determining the close and casual contacts of the two positive cases during the 48 hours prior to collection of the sample that returned the positive test results," it added.

KKR last played on April 29 against Delhi Capitals in Ahmedabad and the development is bound to trigger anxiety in the league, which had been going along smoothly so far in a bio-secure bubble in front of empty stands.

"Now, the DC players (currently in Ahmedabad) will also have to be tested and every member of the team contingents that

## Balaji's +ve test inside bubble puts Delhi IPL games in fix

New Delhi: Chennai Super Kings bowling coach Lakshmi Prasad Balaji testing positive for Covid-19 has left the BCCI in a fix about the next few IPL games in Delhi after postponement of Monday's evening match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bangalore in Ahmedabad.

While the entire KKR team has gone for a six-day hard quarantine, starting Sunday, after Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier returned positive, Balaji, who is a regular feature

in the CSK dug-out has gone into isolation after returning with two RT-PCR positives on Monday.

"Balaji's positive report is certainly a cause of concern although the CSK players have tested negative. But normally, a lot of people start showing symptoms from the fifth or sixth day. There are discussions whether it is safe to go ahead with the next two matches in Delhi," a senior BCCI source told PTI. While DDCA president Rohan Jaitley told PTI that he hasn't been informed about any re-scheduling, PTI

came in contact with Chakravarthy and Warrier will also be contact traced through the app watch that has been given to everyone," a BCCI source said.

According to IPL's Standard Operating Procedure for Covid-19 management, any close contact of an infected person has to isolate for six days and return three negative tests on days 1, 3 and 6.

It is learnt that KKR's pace spearhead Pat Cummins revealed the latest development to all the Australian players in the IPL after Chakravarthy, while undergoing some shoulder scans for a niggle after Thursday's game, tested positive for the virus.

Chakravarthy has appeared in all of KKR's matches so far and been one of their most successful players with seven wickets under

his belt.

KKR and CSK had clashed on April 21 in Mumbai.

IPL had dealt with positive cases before the tournament started, including some high-profile names like Axar Patel and Devdutt Padikkal.

However, this is the first instance of positive cases in the middle of the tournament.

"The BCCI and the Kolkata Knight Riders prioritise the health and safety of everyone involved and all measures are being taken in that endeavour," the IPL stated.

Foreign players, who were already anxious about getting home with travel restricted from India, are edgier right now. But franchises would prefer the league to continue with necessary safeguards.

### boundarymeter

4s	810
6s	379

PLAYER	RUNS
1. Shikhar Dhawan (DC)	380
2. KL Rahul (PBKS)	331
3. Faf du Plessis (CSK)	320

PLAYER	WKTS
1. Harshal Patel (RCB)	17
2. Avesh Khan (DC)	14
3. Chris Morris (RR)	14

MOST SIXES	
1. KL Rahul (PBKS)	16
2. Jonny Bairstow (SRH)	15
3. Ambati Rayudu (CSK)	13

### SUMMER SLAM

#### MOTION PICTURE



Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting chats with opening batsman Shikhar Dhawan after DC's 7-wicket win over Punjab Kings on Sunday night

#### CA to donate AU\$ 50K to support India

Cricket Australia on Monday pledged 50,000 Australian dollars to support India's fight against the devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic and will also raise more funds in partnership with its players' association and UNICEF. The funds raised by CA will be donated to UNICEF Australia, which will utilise it in various relief initiatives in India.

#### Cummins allocates donation to UNICEF Aus

KKR Australian pacer Pat Cummins on Monday said he has allocated his \$ 50,000 donation to UNICEF Australia's India Covid-19 Crisis Appeal, a week after pledging the amount to PM CARES Fund.

#### 'Warner's days with SRH coming to end'

South African fast bowling great Dale Steyn said that David Warner's days with SunRisers Hyderabad may be coming to an end after he was removed as captain and dropped from the team for their match against Rajasthan Royals. "It's strange that he isn't a part of the playing eleven. It's understandable if they want to change ownership of captaincy for the next season, and keep Kane (Williamson) there. But David is still a phenomenal batter and I would still keep him in the eleven. But this might be the last time we see Warner in the Orange Army," Steyn told ESPNcricinfo.

### POINTS TABLE

		P	W	L	NRR	PTS
1	DC	8	6	2	+0.547	12
2	CSK	7	5	2	+1.263	10
3	RCB	7	5	2	-0.171	10
4	MI	7	4	3	+0.062	8
5	RR	7	3	4	-0.190	6
6	PBKS	8	3	5	-0.368	6
7	KKR	7	2	5	-0.494	4
8	SRH	7	1	6	-0.623	2

### shortpasses

#### VALENCIA SACK GRACIA

VALENCIA: Valencia fired coach Javi Gracia on Monday with the club placed 14th in La Liga though safer from the relegation threat.

#### PERERA RETIRES

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka all-rounder Thisara Perera on Monday announced his retirement from Int'l cricket with immediate effect.

#### SL SEAL TEST SERIES WIN

PALLEKELE: Sri Lanka beat Bangladesh by 209 runs in the second Test to clinch the two-match series 1-0 at Pallekele on Monday.

#### VARANE OUT OF CHELSEA GAME

MADRID: Raphael Varane is set to miss Real Madrid's Champions League second leg against Chelsea on Wednesday after the club confirmed he has sustained an adductor injury.

#### BALE'S HATTRICK LIFTS SPURS

LONDON: Gareth Bale scored a hat trick as Tottenham stayed in the CL qualification race with a 4-0 win over relegated Sheffield United.

#### MESSI LEADS BARCA WIN

VALENCIA: Lionel Messi missed a penalty but still scored twice, as Barcelona edged a five-goal thriller with Valencia to stay within touching distance of the top of La Liga.

#### LYON DAMAGE MONACO'S BID

PARIS: Monaco's bid for the Ligue 1 title took a huge hit after an incident-packed 3-2 home defeat to Europe-chasing Lyon.

OTHER SPORT

IN THE COURT OF THE JUDGE, FAMILY COURT, JYPORE, DIST. KORAPUT	
CIVIL PROCEEDING 46 OF 2018	
Between: Niranjan Dash	... Petitioner
vs.	...
Dimple Sahu	... Opposite Party
To Dimple Sahu, aged about 31 years, W/o. Niranjan Dash, Resident of Raut Penho Street, City Post Office, PS-Balabazar, Berhampur, Dist.Ganjam.	
Whereas the above named Petitioner has initiated a case against you ... restitution of conjugal rights U/s.9 of the Hindu Marriage Act in the above mentioned Court. That you are deliberately avoiding to receive the summons issued against you in the above noted case.	
Hence you are hereby summoned to appear before the Court in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the suit / case or who shall be accompanied by some person able to answer all such question on the 18 <sup>th</sup> day of June 2021, at 10.30/00 AM to answer the claim, and that you are hereby directed to produce on that day all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your defence.	
Take notice that in default of your appearance on the date before mentioned, the suit / case will be heard and determined in your absence.	
Given under my hand and seal of this Court this 29 <sup>th</sup> day of April 2021.	
Sd/- Judge, Family Court, Jypore	

**A-95**  
**1st Corrigendum to e-Procurement Notice- Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1/2021-22, Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1(A)/2021-22, Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1(B)/2021-22, Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1(C)/2021-22, Bid Identification No.-SEM/MDB-1(D)/2021-22, Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1(E)/2021-22, Bid Identification No.- SEM/MDB-1(F)/2021-22 can be seen in detail in the e-Procurement portal <https://www.tenderodisha.gov.in>**

Sd/-  
**Superintending Engineer**  
**Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar**

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**P.H. DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR AT CHATRAPUR**  
**Phone - 06811 263909- FAX - 06811 263950 - E-mail - eephchpr@gmail.com**  
**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement**  
**Bid Identification No. 03/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021**

Invitation for Bids (IFB)							
Sl. No	Name of the work	Identification No.	Estimated cost (Rs. In Lakhs)	Period of completion	Availability of Bid Documents for online Bidding		Name & address of Officer inviting Bid
					From	To	
1	Laying of pipe line for improvement of water supply to Baliguda NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-1/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	70.70	6 (Six) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	Executive Engineer, P H Division, Bhanjanagar at Chatrapur
2	Improvement of source with pumping arrangements and other ancillary works for provision of water supply to Pakalipali Marathi sahi, Santoshima Mandir Marathi sahi and adjoining areas of ward no.12 to 18 of Aska NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-2/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	54.88	6 (Six) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-
3	Improvement of water supply to Phulibani Municipality under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-3/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	78.14	6 (Six) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-
4	Laying of pipe line in uncovered areas and scarcity pockets of ward No.1 and 4 of Khalikote NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-4/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	89.98	9 (Nine) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-
5	Laying of distribution pipe line for universal coverage of house connections in Bellaguntha NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-5/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	14.40	4 (Four) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-
6	Construction of storage reservoir with jointing of pipe line and ancillary works for improvement of water supply to Damodarpur & adjoining areas of Ganjam NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-6/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	20.78	6 (Six) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-
7	Provision of independent water supply to I.Belapada Ward No.6 of Kodala NAC under State Plan 2020-21	Identification No. 03-7/ 03 / SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt. 29.04.2021	34.84	6 (Six) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs of 06.05.2021	17.30 Hrs of 25.05.21	-do-

The technical bid shall be opened on dt.27.05.2021 at 11.30 A.M

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://www.tenderodisha.gov.in>

OIPR-13013/11/0002/2122

Executive Engineer  
P.H. Division, Bhanjanagar  
at Chatrapur

## 'There's no going back now'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Players, especially overseas recruits, are feeling edgier following the emergence of two Covid-19 cases in the Kolkata Knight Riders camp on Monday but teams feel "there is no going back" and the IPL should continue despite the ever-increasing threat of the raging pandemic.

Questions are being raised on how a strict bio-bubble created for the world's biggest T20 league was breached after KKR's Varun Chakravarthy and Sandeep Warrier got infected with the deadly virus.

Foreign players, who were already anxious about getting home with travel restricted from India, are a more worried lot.

"There is no going back now with half of the tournament done. The news (positive cases in KKR) makes the BCCI's job more challenging," a franchise official said.

"We have been hearing that

a player got infected because he was taken outside the bubble for scans. So, it could have happened outside the bubble. As far as I know, everyone is strictly following the protocols laid out by the BCCI and there was no breach there," he added.

Another team official said the tournament should continue as long as more teams are not affected by the virus.

"Even if you have to pause the tournament, how long can you hold back? The only way is to keep isolating the positive cases and keep playing. The players are naturally more anxious now but it is mainly because they are not sure about how they would get back home," said the official.

UK, Australia and New Zealand have banned travellers from India and a sizable number of players competing in the IPL are from these countries.

"We should let the BCCI decide what is best for all of us.

## No charter flight for Aussies at this moment: Hockley

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Cricket Australia currently has no plans to arrange a charter flight to bring its players back home from Covid-19-ravaged India once the IPL gets over, its chief Nick Hockley said on Monday.

Hockley insisted that Australian players are feeling safe and secure in the IPL bio-bubble but his comments came before it emerged that two KKR players have tested positive for the dreaded virus.

Mumbai Indians batsman Chris Lynn had recently requested Cricket Australia to arrange for a charter flight for Australia players after the tournament concludes on May 30.

"There's no suggestion at the moment of any charter flight," Hockley told Melbourne radio station SEN.

"We're working closely and talking closely with the Australian Cricketers' Association, with the players and with the BCCI to make sure everyone's okay and the people have got full information.

"We've been in touch with the players there and they are generally in good spirits. The work the BCCI has done around the (bio-secure) bubble means they are feeling safe and secure, and those we've talked to are generally planning to complete their playing commitments."



The Cricket Australia boss said they are monitoring the situation and a decision will be made but not immediately.

"The BCCI have come out and said they understand and want to support the players in making sure they get home safely at the end.

"The tournament doesn't finish until the 30th of May, so for the moment it's monitor the situation and as we get closer to the end of the tournament we'll need to see where the situation is at," he said.

## Slater lambasts Aus PM

New Delhi: Cricketer-turned-commentator Michael Slater, who is currently doing commentary in the IPL here, has launched a scathing attack on his country's Prime Minister Scott Morrison for not allowing its citizens to return from Covid-19 hit India, calling the travel ban a "disgrace".

Australia has shut its borders and not allowing any commercial flights from India because of the massive Covid-19 surge here which has led to all the players, support staff and commentators, who might have wanted to leave the IPL in a fix.

"If our Government cared for the safety of Aussies they would allow us to get home. It's a disgrace!! Blood on your hands PM. How dare you treat us like this. How about you sort out quarantine system. I had Government permission to work on the IPL but I now have Government neglect," Slater tweeted.

Threatening a five-year jail term or hefty fine, the Australian Government temporarily barred its citizens from entering the country if they happened to be in India within 14 days of their intended arrival.

PTI