

ANALYSIS 7
CORONA: SOME REAL,
THOUGH SOME HYPE**MONEY 8**
Q4 EARNINGS, PACE OF VAX, TRENDS
TO DICTATE MARKETS**SPORTS 12**
IGA IS QUEEN
OF ROME

HYDERABAD, MONDAY MAY 17, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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SHILPA SHETTY
IN MAHESH-
TRIVIKRAM'S
STORY
Page 11**PETROL, DIESEL PRICES HIKED AGAIN;
PETROL PRICE NEARS RS 99 IN MUMBAI**

Petrol price on Sunday was increased by 24 paise per litre and diesel by 27 paise, pushing rates across the country to record highs and that of petrol in Mumbai to near Rs 99 a litre. The increase led to rates in Delhi climbing to Rs 92.58 per litre and diesel to Rs 83.22, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. Rates had already crossed Rs 100-mark in several cities in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and with the latest increase, price in Mumbai too was inching towards that level. A litre of petrol in Mumbai now comes for Rs 98.88 and diesel is priced at Rs 90.40 per litre.

**CONGRESS MP RAJEEV SATAV WHO HAD
COVID DIES, RAHUL GANDHI SAYS 'BIG LOSS'**

Senior Congress leader and MP Rajeev Satav died at a private hospital in Pune this morning, days after recovering from coronavirus infection. "It's a big loss for us all," Rahul Gandhi tweeted, addressing Mr Satav as 'my friend' who embodied the ideals of the Congress. "Rajeev Satav became RT-PCR swab negative on May 9, 2021. However, after a prolonged illness he succumbed to secondary pneumonia with multi-organ dysfunction on May 16 at 4:58 am," Jehangir hospital, where the Congress leader was admitted, said in a statement. The 46-year-old Congress leader was in critical condition after he was diagnosed with a new viral infection, according to Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope.

**COVID-19: LOCKDOWN EXTENDED IN
DELHI BY ANOTHER WEEK**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday announced extension of the ongoing lockdown by one more week in the national capital, saying the gains made so far in combating COVID-19 cannot be lost due to any relaxations now. During a visit to the GTB Hospital, he said Delhi has recorded a "good level" of COVID-19 recoveries in the past few days and the number of cases is also reducing "very fast". "But we do not want the gains made in the past few days to be lost all of a sudden. So, the lockdown is being extended for another week till 5 am on May 24," Kejriwal said.

**FREE WI-FI NOW AT 6,000
RAILWAY STATIONS**

The railways has enabled free Wi-Fi at its 6000th station as the facility went live at Hazaribagh town of Jharkhand on Saturday, the national transporter said. The railways provided Wi-Fi facility first at the Mumbai Railway station in 2016, reaching its 5000th station, at Midanpore in West Bengal. On May 15, Jarapada station in Angul District of Odisha was also provided with Wi-Fi facility, it said on Sunday. "The Wi-Fi facility at railway stations meets the objectives of the aspiring 'Digital India' programme of government of India."

**Mango growers again
hit by Covid**

3

**Maha CM asks family
docs to join fight
against Covid**

5

**Covaxin effective
against India, UK
strains: Biotech**

8

TODAY**ALMANAC****Month & Paksham:**
Vaishakha & Shukla Paksha
Panchangam**Tithi :** Panchami: 11:34 am**Nakshatram :** Purnavasu: 01:22 am**Time to Avoid :** (Bad time to start any important work)**Rahukalam :** 07:23 am - 08:59 am**Yamagandam :** 10:36 am - 12:12 pm**Variyam :** 09:53 pm - 11:35 pm**Gulika :** 01:48 pm - 03:25 pm**Good Time :** (to start any important work)**Amritakalam :** 10:45 am - 12:29 pm**Abhijit Muhurtham :** 11:46 am - 12:38 pm**HYDERABAD
WEATHER****Forecast:** Partly cloudy**Temp:** 34/23**Humidity:** 61%**Sunrise:** 05:43 am**Sunset:** 06:41 pm**Current Weather Conditions****Updated May 16, 2021 5:00 PM**

Centre's new SOPs to battle Covid in villages amid surge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Village-level surveillance, tele-consultation with community health officers, and training in rapid antigen testing are among the several areas of focus in the Centre's new SOPs to battle COVID-19 as the pandemic gradually moves to the semi-urban and rural areas of the country.

It is important, the SOPs suggest, to ensure that community-based services and primary health infrastructure in these areas are equipped to manage infections.

"In every village, active surveillance should be done for influenza-like illness/severe acute respiratory infections (ILI/SARI) periodically by ASHA with the help of Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC)," the guide-



lines say. "Symptomatic cases can be triaged at village level by teleconsultation with community health officers, and cases with comorbidity/low oxygen saturation should be sent to higher centres," they say.

Depending on the intensity of the

surge and the number of cases, contact tracing must be done as far as possible based on the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme's guidelines.

2

**Keep ration shops open
on all days, for longer
duration: Centre**

The Centre on Sunday asked the state governments to keep ration shops, also called fair price shops, open for a longer duration and on all days to ensure timely and safe distribution of both subsidised and free foodgrains to the poor. An advisory in this regard has been issued by the Union Food Ministry following representations that during the current lockdown in some states/UTs, ration shops' timings have been curtailed due to which the intended beneficiaries might not be getting adequate time to lift their entitled foodgrains.

2

Second batch of Sputnik V vaccine reaches Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As the second batch of the Sputnik V landed in Hyderabad, Telangana on Sunday, Russian Ambassador to India, Nikolay Kudashev termed the Russian-Indian fight against COVID-19, as an example of the special and privileged strategic partnership and an effective model of international anti-pandemic cooperation.

"We are very happy to see that the Russian-Indian joint fight against the COVID-19, which is one of the vital areas of our bilateral cooperation nowadays, has firmly stood on rails and moving forward," the Russian envoy told ANI.



Sputnik V has become the first foreign-made vaccine to be used in India contributing to the world's

largest COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Inoculations with Sputnik V in Hyderabad started Friday followed

by the arrival of the first batch of the vaccine in India on May 1, 2021.

Ambassador Kudashev said that life-saving humanitarian assistance delivered last month by the Russian side is being successfully used to help Indians to overcome the consequences of the disease.

"That is indeed a brilliant example of the special and privileged strategic partnership and an effective model of international anti-pandemic cooperation that does not know any unnecessary obstacles," he said.

Kudashev called the delivery of the second batch of Sputnik V vaccine "very timely" after the recent launch of the Russian vaccine in the Indian vaccination campaign.

AP HC directs CID to shift 'wounded' YSRC rebel MP to private hospital

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Sunday directed the Crime Investigation Department of the state police to immediately shift the arrested YSR Congress MP K Raghu Ramakrishna Raju to a private hospital for treatment in tune with the orders of a special CID court.

It found fault with the CID for lodging the MP in Guntur district jail in violation of the designated court's order to admit him to a hospital for treatment of injuries allegedly inflicted by the police.

A special division bench of the High Court, comprising justices C Praveen Kumar and K Lalitha heard the MPs case on Sunday



evening after a medical board submitted its report after examin-

ing Raju.

The medical board, headed by the superintendent of Government General Hospital in Guntur, submitted that there were no external injuries on Raju, though his legs and feet were swollen.

The medical board also certified that the rebel MP is in good health after conducting an examination of his heart as he underwent a surgery four months ago.

The bench read out the medical report during the hearing.

Additional Advocate General P Sudhakar Reddy objected to the admission of the MP in a private hospital as it was facing criminal cases (in a different matter).

2

TS dedicates 2 hospitals for black fungus treatment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Black Fungus or Mucormycosis is being spread widely in Covid patients and the Telangana government has decided to dedicate two hospitals for the treatment of the patients with Black Fungus symptoms. It was decided to designate the gandhi General Hospital and state-run ENT Hospital as main centers for its treatment.

The necessary guidelines to prevent the fungal infection were also issued by the Directorate of Health and Family Welfare. A statement was released by Dr G Srinivasa Rao, the director of Public health in which he said "Black fungus is not a new disease. Mucormycosis is more common in people with diabetes and organ

transplants. It is treated with antifungal drugs along with surgical debridement." He further added, "It is known that the disease is spread due to over-use of steroid medication given to patients during Covid and improper cleaning of oxygen delivery devices." The health Department had earlier said that the condition was rare and limited to immunocompromised patients. The director of Medical education, Dr. K Ramesh reddy, issued orders designating ENT hospital as the nodal center for treatment of mucormycosis cases. If they are still Covid positive or need multidisciplinary treatment, those cases may be referred to gandhi Hospital. Wherever there is a need for ophthalmologist intervention, the services of SD Eye Hospital need to be used."



Israel air strikes kill 33 Palestinians

PNS ■ GAZA

Israeli air strikes on Sunday killed 33 Palestinians, including eight children, Gaza health officials said, as militants fired an early morning barrage of rockets into Israel. With no sign of an end to the worst outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence in years the United Nations Security Council was due to meet later on Sunday to discuss the hostilities.

The death toll in Gaza overnight jumped to 181, including 47 children, amid an intensive Israeli air and artillery barrage since the fighting erupted last Monday. Ten people have been killed in Israel, including two children.

The pre-dawn attacks were on houses in the centre of Gaza City, Palestinian health officials said. A spokesman for the Israeli military said he would look into these reports. Palestinians working to clear rubble from a building wrecked in the air strikes recovered the bodies of a woman and man.

TS & AP receive 200 MT oxygen

ANUSHA PUPPALA
■ HYDERABAD

Telangana and Andhra Pradesh received 200 tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen on Sunday through Oxygen Express.

While Guntur received the second Oxygen Express to Andhra Pradesh, Sanath Nagar in Hyderabad received the sixth Oxygen Express to Telangana.

Close on the heels of receiving the first Oxygen Express, the second Oxygen Express to Andhra Pradesh,

Tough questions will be asked from PM, arrest us: Cong leaders dare

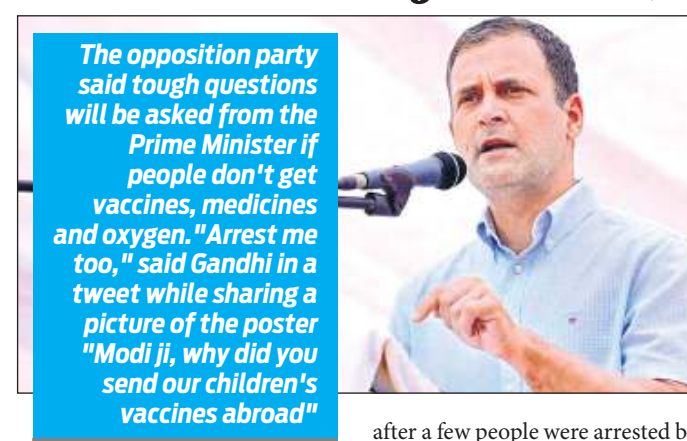
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leaders on Sunday slammed the police action against some people for allegedly putting up posters critical of the prime minister and dared the government to arrest them for raising questions on the export of COVID vaccines.

Led by Rahul Gandhi, Congress leaders changed their profile pictures on Twitter with the poster asking why COVID vaccines were sent abroad.

The opposition party said tough questions will be asked from the prime minister if people don't get vaccines, medicines and oxygen.

"Arrest me too," said Gandhi in a tweet while sharing a picture of the poster "Modi ji, why did you



send our children's vaccines abroad". The challenge was posed

after a few people were arrested by Delhi police for putting up posters in the national capital on the vaccine issue.

The Delhi Police also registered a number of FIRs and arrested people for pasting posters critical of the prime minister.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh dared the prime minister and home minister to arrest him, saying he was putting up such posters on his compound wall.

"Putting up critical posters against PM is now a crime? Is India run by the Modi Penal Code now? Is the Delhi Police so jobless in the middle of a raging pandemic," he asked.

"I am putting up posters on my compound wall tomorrow. Come get me," Ramesh dared.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khara said at a press conference that questions will be asked from

the prime minister if people don't get vaccines, medicines and oxygen they desperately need to fight COVID.

"I dare you to arrest me. Where is my vaccine, where is my oxygen? We will continue to ask you questions," he said while alleging that people are being "arrested for asking questions". Khara said most of the deaths could have been avoided and people are dying not because of COVID, but due to the mismanagement in handling the pandemic.

He alleged that the government had created man-made shortages and there was chaos all around.

"The Government of India did not manage the crisis well," he said.

2

Monday Mirchi

Lack of coordination or communication?

The decision to regulate entry of ambulances with Covid patients at Telangana borders has created a stir in the administration in both the Telugu states. While the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh called his counterpart to convey the AP government's displeasure, Telangana Chief Secretary reportedly conveyed that he had 'no role' in the decision to stop the ambulances. This has raised serious questions about who is actually taking such important decisions in the government. Both the governments have come under fire for the 'inhuman' decision, due to which Covid patients were stuck at the borders with some losing their lives. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Y S Jaganmohan Reddy did not call his Telangana counterpart even as patients died at the border waiting for emergency medical help, though his aides advised him to call K Chandrasekhar Rao to sort out the issue. At the same time, the Telangana CMO waited for some 'higher level' intervention to sort out the problem as they have a defence in the form of 'state-wise quota' from the Centre.

"We are getting 675 Tocilizumab injections to the state from the Centre. We are reserving them for our Telangana patients. If patients from other states flood our hospitals, how can we manage our meagre supplies from the Centre?" questioned a senior official. Though it seems to be quite logical on the face of it, none could defend the 'inhuman' treatment meted out to the patients from the Andhra Pradesh. Even as AP, TS are fighting over this, patients from Karnataka, Maharashtra continue to flood Hyderabad hospitals. All of this has exposed lack of communication between the two states and lack of coordination at the official level during the pandemic.

Wish babus could think out of box

Only babus can think of a circuitous route to reach medical supplies during an emergency. That is because they work in silos, obey political masters without thinking, and invariably resist change for the better. Babus at the Centre have not risen to the occasion even during the present pandemic-induced national crisis. Just look at the time an Oxygen Express reached Krishnapatnam in Nellore from Durgapur Steel Plant in West Bengal. "Absolutely cannot understand this logic! Vizag Steel Plant oxygen is supplied elsewhere and Durgapur Steel Plant sends oxygen to Vizag! What a colossal wastage of resources! Bureaucracy still drives the divinity," goes a tweet. Two cryogenic containers, each carrying 20 MT of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) from Durgapur Steel Plant reached Krishnapatnam port in Nellore district on Saturday. Another train with 60 MT of liquid oxygen, after starting from Durgapur on Saturday evening, was expected to reach Nellore within 24 hours. These two trains will be running in opposite directions to ensure assured supply of 60 MT per day to Rayalaseema districts and Nellore. This being so, five units of oxygen making plants in the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant are in operation,

loading and dispatching of cryogenic tankers with LMO. Rising to the nationwide demand for LMO, RINL-Vizag Steel's cumulative dispatch has crossed 11,900 MT mark since the outbreak of the pandemic. The bulk of it is being dispatched primarily to other states. On April 22, the first Oxygen Express, carrying 100 MT of LMO in 7 cryogenic tankers, was dispatched to Maharashtra to meet the emergency requirement in the state. At least subsequently the Vizag Steel Plant's oxygen could have been allotted to Andhra Pradesh, while sending Durgapur's output elsewhere, to save time and resources, say observers.

Stay home, stay safe

'Stay home, stay safe' is the latest catchphrase that helps one realize the dire need to keep coronavirus at bay. The governments are telling people to stay at home and not come onto roads as corona is literally in the air. Moreover, Telangana State has imposed lockdown. However, government offices, including the ad hoc Secretariat, are working from 10 am to 5 pm with 30% staff. Still, most employees, motivated by the slogan, are staying at home. Post demolition of the Secretariat buildings, the departments have scattered and no one knows which department is working from where. So, one can only hope that the 30% staff required to work from office are really going to their workplace. An employee's union leader said: "There is no mechanism in place to track the 30% employees who are expected to attend the office and to determine which employee has to come on which day". Employees, based on mutual understanding, decide who has to come to office on which day. In other words, it is one big vacation for most employees; call it lockdown induced by corona or whatever. The government is also not in a position to ask the employees why they are not attending duty. A senior officer said: "If the government provides vaccine to employees on priority, then it has a right to ask".

Babus in loop line elevated after Eatela's exit

Following the ejection of former health minister Eatela Rajender from the state cabinet, officials in loop line, particularly those sidelined by him, are being elevated. An important source of the TRS supremo was sidelined and given a nominal role after Eatela took over as health minister. However, now that official has been elevated to serve in the CMO. A fortnight after the dramatic exit of the health minister, the doctor has been appointed as Officer on Special duty in CMO. Dr T. Gangadhar, moved and asked to head the nephrology wing in NIMS, was a made member of the Task force committee on Covid last year. Possibly it was the first indication of the coming events for Eatela. The doctor is the fourth OSD in CMO. About a fortnight ago, he became a member of the Core Committee of Experts for the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which is involved in developing guidelines and policies for handling Covid positive patients.

- Yours truly

WB polls effect: Centre changes attitude towards T'gana, Andhra

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

Following the debacle of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the two recent bye-elections – Nagarjuna Sagar and Tirupati seats– and its not-so-good performance in the West Bengal Assembly elections, there is a perceptible shift in the Centre's attitude towards the two Telugu States. This is in line with the expectations of the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This also explains why their current expectations are being met by the Centre, especially in connection with the distribution of oxygen, vaccine and medicines to fight the pandemic.

There has been a lot of difference in the attitude of the Centre towards the Telugu states in May, compared to that in April, observers feel. The Central government has increased the quota of oxygen

and vaccine supply to both TS and AP as per the requests made by the respective Chief Ministers.

Before May, the Centre faced lot of criticism from opposition parties and non-BJP ruled states over the assistance provided in tackling the Covid pandemic. In April the Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi alleged that the BJP-ruled states had been receiving preferential treatment in getting medical equipment. The states ruled by opposition parties alleged that they were getting step-motherly treatment from the Centre in getting supplies of oxygen, vaccines and other items to fight the pandemic.

Prior to the West Bengal Assembly elections, the Chief Ministers of Telugu states had indicated that they expected a change in the attitude of the central government towards non- BJP ruled states,

should TMC win the polls. The two states were then facing difficulties in getting from the Centre adequate medical equipment and supplies to fight Covid -19. Moreover, in the bye-elections -- for the Nagarjuna Sagar Assembly seat in Telangana and the Tirupati Lok Sabha seat in Andhra Pradesh -- the BJP lost its deposits. Local BJP leaders of both Telugu states had told the BJP high command that they were going to give a tough fight to the ruling parties in the bye-elections. But the results of the bye- elections had shown the BJP where they stood in both the Telugu states. In the West Bengal Assembly elections, the BJP leadership thought that their party would come to power. But the BJP has occupied the principal opposition's position and not the position of the ruling party. In the light of these developments, the Telugu states'

Chief Ministers, K Chandrasekhar Rao of Telangana and YS Jaganmohan Reddy of Andhra Pradesh, expected that the Centre would give preference to their states in all aspects, including the fight against Covid-19 pandemic. In keeping with their expectations, the central government has increased the quota of oxygen, Remdesivir injections and supply of Covid-19 vaccines to Telangana State.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal called Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Saturday to convey Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to increase the quota. At the same time, the central government has increased the supply of oxygen - 80 tons per day - from Jamnagar Reliance plant to Rayalaseema as requested by the Chief Minister of AP YS Jaganmohan Reddy.

Tauktae intensifies into...

Continued from page 1

The IMD has also issued a yellow alert for the coasts of Gujarat and Diu and Daman.

According to the Cyclone Warning Division of the IMD, by May 18, the wind speed is expected to increase to 150-160 kilometres per hour, gusting up to 175 kmph. The IMD said wind speed reaching 70-80 kmph gusting to 90 kmph is likely along and off south Maharashtra-Goa and adjoining Karnataka coasts, and 40-50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph along and off the north Maharashtra coast on May 16. It is likely to increase to 65-75 kmph, gusting to 85 kmph along and off the north Maharashtra coast from May 17 till the morning of May 18.

Squally wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph is likely over the northeast Arabian Sea and along and off south Gujarat and Daman and Diu coasts from morning May 16.

First batch...

Continued from page 1

"In the ongoing second COVID-19 wave, a large number of patients are facing severe oxygen dependency and need hospitalisation. The drug is expected to save precious lives due to the mechanism of its operation in the infected cells," the ministry had said.

The anti-COVID therapeutic application of the drug has been developed by the INMMS, a leading laboratory of the DRDO, in collaboration with Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL) in Hyderabad.

Tough questions will be asked...

Continued from page 1

The Congress leader alleged that when it came to negotiating with vaccine manufacturers or putting in place the vaccine policy, everything was "centralised and individualised".

"PM Modi wanted to be known as a vaccine guru, but now the entire world and every Indian is asking tough questions," he said.

"You can't have centralised decision-making and decentralised responsibility," he said.

Centre's new SOPs to battle...

Continued from page 1

"Monitoring of oxygen saturation is important for monitoring of Covid patients. For this, it is desirable for each village to have an adequate number of pulse oximeters and thermometers," the SOPs say.

A home isolation kit shall be provided to all active cases. Each kit must include medicines like paracetamol, ivermectin, cough syrup, and multivitamins, besides a detailed pamphlet indicating the precautions to be taken, a proforma to monitor the patient's condition, contact details in case major symp-

Keep ration shops open on...

Continued from page 1

"In view of ongoing lockdown in some States/UTs, that may curtail the functioning hours of Fair Price Shop (FPS), an advisory has been issued on 15th May, 2021...to keep the FPSs open, preferably on all days of the month," the ministry said. The Centre is distributing highly monthly subsidised foodgrains of

5 kg per person at Rs 1-3 per kg via ration shops to over 80 crore poor under the NFSA. Over and above this, additional 5kg of free grains are being distributed to the same beneficiaries under the PMGKAY scheme for two months -- May-June in order to minimise economic hardships being faced by the NFSA beneficiaries during the second wave of the Covid.

toms showing up or deterioration of health. "Patients under home isolation will stand discharged and end iso-

lation after at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and no fever for three days," the guidelines say.

AP HC directs CID to shift...

Continued from page 1

"Shifting him to that private hospital is like lodging him in the Telugu Desam Party office," the AAG remarked.

The court asked the AAG to file an affidavit with the objections. He said the designated court gave the order late on Saturday night after the High Court constituted the medical board for examining the MP.

A designated CID court had on May 15 remanded Raju to 14 days in judicial custody but directed that he

be admitted to a hospital for treatment of injuries allegedly caused due to police torture. Raju's advocate B Adinarayana told the high court that the CID chief met the MP while he was being examined by the medical board, which was an illegal act as the former was in judicial custody.

Though the designated court ordered that the MP, who was arrested two days ago on various charges including sedition, be examined first in the GGH and later in the private hospital,

the sleuths lodged him in the district jail in violation of the court order.

The bench came down on the CID over this and asked why the court orders were not implemented. Meanwhile, TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu wrote a letter to Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan asking the latter to intervene and protect the MPs life and save democracy in the state. Chandrababu Naidu alleged that custodial violence was unleashed on the MP by "five masked men" and was brutally injured.

A tale of two verdicts of Madras High Court

■ HC UPADHYAY

It is said that the courts are not the propounders of gospel truth. Even judges are fallible, since they are also human beings; and to err is human. However, in a country like ours where a vast majority of people look at the courts as temples of justice, those adorning the august posts as judges owe extra responsibility to people.

Seen in this context, the two judgments delivered by the Madras High Court recently deserve special consideration. However, the din and dust over the first judgment relating to the Election Commission of India (ECI) has been subsequently cleared in an appeal by the apex court vide its 31-page judgment dated April 30. Earlier, the Madras High Court had castigated the EC for its utter disregard for the people and going ahead with the elections in Tamil Nadu even when people were dying due to Covid-19 pandemic. The court had gone to the extent of describing the ECI as killer of the people.

Aggrieved by such caustic remarks by the Constitutional court against it which too, is a Constitutional body, the ECI filed an appeal in the Supreme Court. The appeal, titled Election Commission of India Vs. Vijayabhaskar & Others was heard and decided by a division bench comprising Justice Dr.Dhananjay Chandrachud and Justice M.R. Shah. The said judgment indeed is an excellent example of tight-rope walking. While the apex court on the one hand,

has upheld the powers of the High Court under Art.226 as also the media's right of reporting and expression, on the other it has upheld the importance of the ECI and eulogized its role in conducting free and fair elections in the last seven decades. The apex court, obviously applying the principle of obiter dicta, has observed that since nothing has gone into the judgement in written form, there is nothing to quash. In other words, the

apex court has felt that the harsh words used by the judges of the Madras High Court have not been considered as ratio decidendi and therefore, the ECI need not feel offended.

True, as the highest court of the land, the apex court has done what it could be expected to do to douse the fire. Still, it ought to have overtly or covertly at least 'advised' the judges of not only of the High Courts but also all other subordinate courts to refrain from using harsh words against a litigant in the open court in course of hearing or trial of a case, because any way such oral observations or outbursts by the presiding

officers are not going to form the part of their orders or judgments. Further, the readers of newspapers and viewers of televisions are generally devoid of the knowledge about legal fine line between the oral observations of the court and what will form the part of the

final order or judgment. Therefore, they are likely to form a wrong opinion about a party to the case. Lastly, if the judges behave in dignified manner without losing temper, there will not be any question of gag on media's reporting of court proceedings.

Another judgment by a division bench of the Madras High Court, comprising Justice N.Kirubakaran and Justice P. Velmurugan, delivered on May 9 is an eye-opener to the 'secular' band wagon. The fanatic Muslim elements of V.Kalathur village in Parambalur district of Tamil Nadu had the audacity to knock on the doors of the High Court for registering their resistance to Hindus taking out religious procession through Muslim-dominated areas on the ground that Islam considers taking out a religious procession of other religions as a 'sin'.

The High Court, while dismissing the Writ Petition, observed that allowing religious intolerance is not good for a secular country and

'resistance' by the religious group, if reciprocated by another, could lead to chaos and riots. Alas! Even after repeated judicial warnings, what prevents the government of the day to declare the country as a Hindu Rashtra still remains a riddle. **Allahabad HC on juvenile justice**

A single-judge bench of the Allahabad High Court, comprising Justice Ajay Bhanot, in a recent judgment has held that using criminal prosecution faced by a candidate as a juvenile to form an opinion about his suitability for appointment is arbitrary, illegal and violative of Art.14 and 21 of the Constitution of India. The bench further observed: "As a sequitur prosecution faced as a juvenile is not a relevant fact for forming an opinion about the criminal antecedents and suitability of the candidate for appointment, such prosecution cannot be made a basis for denial of appointment."

The observation came in a writ petition, titled Anup Kumar Vs. State of A.P. &

Others assailing the order dated September 3, 2020 passed by the Commandant of Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), Etah wherein the petitioner was found as being not suitable for the post of Constable by the Competent Authority as the petitioner had not disclosed in the application for employment his criminal prosecution as a juvenile.

However, in the instant case the petitioner was 15 years, 8 months on the date of offence. The Court clarified that these observations shall not apply to cases beyond the ambit of Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 and also in cases of heinous crimes committed by persons in the age group of 16 to 18 years.

Temple hauled up in US for labour law violations

The Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), which brought some 200 workers to the US as religious volunteers from India and made them perform manual labour for as many as 87 hours a week for \$ 450

(approximately Rs.28,000-31,000) per month --which is a wage well below the wage fixed by the State and Federal governments - is now facing a law suit.

As per the plaint, the workers were recruited from India to come to the United States with R-1 religious visas to do stonework and other construction work during the construction of the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Robbinsville, New Jersey. The plaint further alleged that the workers were forced to live and work in a fenced, guarded compound, which they were not allowed to leave unaccompanied by overseers affiliated with BAPS. Further, BAPS had confiscated the workers' passports to prevent them from leaving, the plaint added.

Filed by Jaffe Glenn Law Group, the suit stated that the actions of BAPS constitute forced labour, document servitude, conspiracy and confiscation of immigration documents with the intent to engage in fraud in foreign labour contracting.

TS & AP received 200 MT Oxygen

Continued from page 1

loaded with four tankers and filled with 76.39 tonnes of LMO, was received on Sunday in Guntur. The train was loaded from Kanalus in Gujarat. The sixth Oxygen Express to TS, with six container tankers filled with 120 tonnes of LMO, started its journey from Kalinganagar in Odisha and reached Sanath Nagar Container Depot on Sunday. This will help boost oxygen stocks in Telangana.

With the Indian Railways operating these Oxygen Express trains along green corridors, both the trains have been running with an average speed of around 60 kmph. Adequate precautions are being taken to ensure that the cryogenic cargo is safely transported across various states. The movement of the train as well as the supporting infrastructure is being simultaneously monitored closely to ensure that the Oxygen Express trains reach their destination States at the least possible duration.



Mango growers again hit by Covid

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For the second consecutive year, mango growers are experiencing an acute absence of buyers. Famous varieties of mangoes have hit the market, but the prolonged Coronavirus lockdown is keeping the buyers away.

The drop in mango sales due to Covid situation has caused immense loss to the farmer. At a time the sales are supposed to pick up, the state government has imposed lockdown, leading to plummeting of the demand.

On account of lockdown, there is no local demand. Moreover, there is no possibility of exporting it to other states. It would lead to collapse of prices for mangoes pushing farmers deep into losses.

In Telangana, the total area under mango gardens is put at 3.07 lakh acres. The total output would be 12.34 lakh tons.

The total area under Alphonsa variety is put at 8-85 per cent of the total area under mango cultivation. Similarly, Himayat, Dussehri, Kesari, Malika, Rasaalu are being cultivated in the rest of the area.

The mangoes cultivated in Jagtial, Kollapur mangoes



cultivated in Nagarkurnool district enjoy demand at home and also abroad. Earlier, the mangoes were exported to Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad. The crop yield plummeted to 8 lakh tons due to heavy rains experienced in April this year for 25 days.

Even if the farmer wants to sell whatever meagre harvested mangoes, there is lockdown in many states. The

exports have come down, sweets and jams are not being made in bakeries and sweet shops. The mango jelly units also remained shut reducing the demand for mangoes.

For want of business, no wholesale trader is coming forward to purchase mangoes. Mangoes were sold at Rs 6,000 to 7,000 a quintal in the month of May last year, as against Rs 3,000 to 4,000 now.

In May, Kothapet fruit market usually used to receive 1,700 to 1,800 tonnes of mangoes per day. During the current season, the arrival has come down to 1,400 to 1,500 tonnes. On Saturday, the market received only 500 tonnes. As markets remained shut after 10 am, people are not allowed to go out after 10 am, the business is very much dull.

Last year, the Horticulture Department of state government received orders online and dispatched mangoes at the doorstep of the people through postal department. Gated communities, colony residents were supplied mangoes in bulk last year. It took steps to supply mangoes attending 1,000 orders per day.

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The Horticulture Department set up outlets at Public Gardens, Jeedimetla and other areas. It pressed into service mobile outlets. This year, such measures were absent, causing losses to the farmers.

‘Telangana is in better position in availability of oxygen, medicines’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana is in a better position compared to other states when it comes to the availability of oxygen and medicines, state Industry Minister KT Rama Rao said on Sunday.

He claimed that the state government is ensuring a continuous supply of oxygen to avoid any deaths due to the oxygen crisis. The Minister was talking to reporters after receiving 200 oxygen concentrators donated by leading renewable energy firm Greenko. A special flight from China carrying the concentrators landed at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

KTR said that the state government is taking all the steps to combat the Covid pandemic. He also claimed that irrespective of political affiliations, public representatives are working as a team to combat the pandemic. Noting that Hyderabad has been providing Covid treatment to the patients coming from neighbouring states, KTR thanked the Centre for increasing the supply of oxygen, Remdesivir injections, and also vaccines to the state. He said this would help treat



Greenko's consignment of O2 concentrators lands at RGIA

Greenko group said its first of the five dedicated cargo planes is landing here on Sunday with 200 large medical grade oxygen concentrators with 10 litres per minute capacity to aid in India's fight against Covid. Greenko Co-Founders, Anil Chalamalasetty, and Mahesh Kolli were also present at the airport for the maiden arrival of the cargo flight, it said.

"Within the next 5 days, four more dedicated aircrafts will land in Hyderabad, Bengaluru and New Delhi with 1,000 medical grade oxygen concentrators. This will aid our medical teams in tier 2 and tier 3 cities for stabilisation of patients and help combat the Covid that has put severe strain on our healthcare infrastructure and support systems," Anil Chalamalasetty said.

the patients on time. "Under the leadership of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, the government is working with complete coordination with the

medical institutions. The public representatives and officials are on the ground to take stock of the situation and are acting swiftly during an emergency," KTR said.

CITY LIGHTS

Don't turn blind eye on any symptoms, says CP Sajjanar

To ensure that the lockdown was enforced strictly, Cyberabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar on Sunday visited different places including Suchitra, Alwal IG Statue, Gohnaka X Road, Allwyn Colony and Dhoolapally X Road. He spent time with the field level police officers and also visited several officers stationed at various checkpoints on roads. Advising them to take all safety precautions while interacting with the public, the Commissioner personally monitored the movement of the vehicles and participated in the checking with other officers. Cautioning the citizens to stay indoors, Sajjanar said, "I advise people not to be careless during the second wave of pandemic. I request all of you not to turn a blind eye on any symptoms and get yourself checked." There are almost 5,000 police officers from Cyberabad Police on the ground monitoring the lockdown situation, he added. During the visit, he was accompanied by Traffic DCP SM Vijay Kumar, CAR Headquarters ADCP Manikraj, Petbashirabad ACP Ramalingaraju, Petbasirabad Inspector Ramesh and other police personnel.



TS to witness thunderstorm accompanied with lightning

The very severe cyclonic storm, Tauktae, over the east central Arabian Sea is predicted to intensify further during next 24 hours. As a result, several parts of Telangana - including districts such as Adilabad, Suryapet, Kumram Bheem Asifabad, Jagtial and Medak - will witness thunderstorm accompanied with lightning at isolated places. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), predicts that the weather in the city will be pleasant between May 16 and 19, with rain or thundershowers towards evening. The city's temperature has dropped by at least 5 degree Celsius due to the cyclone. The experts also add that the temperatures in the northern and north-eastern part of the State will rise in the next few weeks, and a heatwave is likely during the coming time. At several locations in Telangana, the temperature has again breached 40 degree Celsius. According to IMD, the cyclone Tauktae (pronounced as Tau'Te) has moved northwards with a speed of about 11 kmph. It is very likely to intensify further during next 24 hours.



‘Will provide medical services to Maoists if they surrender’

Commissioner of Police, Ramagundam V Satyanaryana assured that medical services would be provided to Maoists if they surrender before the police. Speaking after distributing groceries to tribals in Maoist-affected Narsapur village in Thandur mandal on Sunday, Satyanaryana said that many extremists from the district and working with the prohibited outfit in Maharashtra and Chattisgarh were infected by the deadly coronavirus. He said the police department would offer all medical services if they quit the party. He requested the villagers not to cooperate with the Maoists since they were following outdated ideologies.



JITO ladies wing announces ‘Kalakaar Ki Khoj’ Season-2

JITO Hyderabad Ladies Wing on Sunday announced the launch of Kalakaar Ki Khoj Season-2 in a virtual mode. The organisation announced the various competitions that are to be held as part of Season-2. Kalakaar Ki Khoj Season -1 was held in 2020 and received an overwhelming response, the organisers said. Speaking on the occasion Sarila Bhutoria Chairperson of JITO Ladies Wing (JLW) Hyderabad said, "As part of Season-2 we are conducting five competitions dancing (Dance Ke Devaana), signing (Sur Ke Sartaaj), styling (Style & Beyond), short movie making (Screen Master) and Zayaka - the cooking show (Swad Ki). The competition will be organised in three rounds, two rounds virtually and the finale will be physically in the city once Covid situation subsides." Bhutoria said, "This is not just a competition but it is to empower women by training them by experts and at JLW we are supporting child education every year. We are extending support to 40 students under the Project Roshini." Sudha Kimtee, Chief Secretary of JLW said that the inauguration will be on May 22, 2021, and the process of registration and other details will be revealed then. Some 300 people participated in the competition during season-1, she added.

MLAs,DCs directed to act tough against hospitals flouting norms

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao came to the rescue of beleaguered Covid patients in various parts of Telangana State on Sunday when he directed District Collectors and local MLAs to act against hospitals that were collecting exorbitant charges from Covid patients.

Actor Nikhil Siddhartha tweeted: "Alankar Hospital, Warangal, patient on the way to Hospital. They said Rs.1 lakh for first day and Rs.75,000 per day for remaining days." The actor also shared the patient's attendant's details and contact number. He fur-

ther tweeted "Is this fair? Requesting KTRTRS anna office to look into this."

Responding immediately, the Minister tweeted: "We will have Warangal Collector to act on this."

A similar complaint was raised by Ranvitha Reddy from Mahabubnagar. In a tweet, she shared the images of bills including advance paid to Panchavati Hospital and said: "Still they have to pay Rs.6 lakh and just he is on Oxygen, they are charging this much. Please show your concern and do the needful sir."

Again, Rama Rao was swift in responding, and immediately directed Tourism

Minister and local MLA V Srinivas Goud and the District to intervene and help the distressed Covid patient and family. It was not merely complaints against exorbitant charges by hospitals, the Minister also responded to complaints about atrocities against migrant workers.

Sharing images of injuries suffered by workers, Naveen Kumar, in a tweet tagging the Minister, said: "35 Orissa migrant workers at a brick kiln near Jukal, Shamshabad, Ranga Reddy district were severely beaten by their owner Reddyanayak without paying wages for eight months (Rs.5 lakh).

T'gana records 3,816 new cases, 27 deaths

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana has reported 3,816 new Covid infections and 27 fatalities on Sunday taking the cumulative number of deaths to 2,955 and the total number of positive cases to 5,28,823. The number of active cases in

Telangana as on Sunday evening stood at 50,969.

Between Saturday and Sunday, authorities conducted 44,985 Covid tests of which results of 1,396 samples were awaited. On Sunday, 5,892 individuals have recovered with a recovery rate of 89.80

per cent. So far, a total of 1,40,61,725 Covid-19 tests have been conducted in the State out of which 5,28,823 have tested positive and 4,74,899 persons have recovered.

The Covid-19 positive cases reported from the districts included 18 from Adilabad,

152 from Kothagudem, 658 from areas under GHMC, 135 from Jagtial, 54 from Jangaon, 76 from Jayashankar Bhupallapally, 86 from Jogulamba Gadwal, 25 from Kamareddy, 152 from Karimnagar, 151 from Khammam and 17 from Komaram Bheem Asifabad.

Wild cats pair rescued in T'gana poultry farm

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A pair of wild cats were rescued from a poultry farm in Telangana by a team of veterinarians from the Nehru Zoological Park.

The female and male wild cats were rescued on Saturday and Sunday, respectively, from a poultry farm in Veluguralla thanda in Kadthal mandal of Ranga Reddy district.

According to Kishan, poultry farmer and Pandu Naik, sarpanch Veluguralla thanda, these cats were raiding the poultry farm at night, killing the poultry, and, in turn, leading to financial loss. To counter this, they arranged a trap cage. Nehru Zoological Park Curator VVL Subhadra Devi said that both the cats are

in good health condition and kept at the zoo for observation at the zoo. Later as per the orders by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Telangana, they will be released into the wild.

Meanwhile, as a part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebration, a webinar was conducted on the Malabar Pied Hornbill and wildlife biologist Pooja Powar gave the presentation. About 60 wildlife experts, NGOs, veterinarians, and biologists were among those who actively participated in the webinar which lasted for one and half hours.

The curator thanked the Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi for giving the opportunity for showcasing the successful rehabilitation programme of mouse deer.

Native of TS killed in US road mishap

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A native of Veenavanka, Padi Dayakar Reddy, 71, died in a road accident in Detroit of the US on Saturday.

Dayakar Reddy, who suffered severe injuries in the road accident in Detroit on Saturday, breathing his last while being shifting to hospital.

Dayakar Reddy, who used to stay in Hyderabad, migrated to the US about 20 years ago. He is the son of a well-known landlord in Veenavanka and its surrounding areas.

Revanth Reddy, police locked in wordy duel

K VENKATESHWARLU / DUGGU RAGHU ■ HYDERABAD

Citing lockdown as the reason, TPCC working president and Malkajigiri MP A Revanth Reddy was on Sunday prevented near Hyderabad Public School at Begumpet from going to Gandhi Hospital to provide free food to the poor near the hospital. As a result, there ensued a minor altercation between the congress MP and the police personnel.

Claiming himself to be an MP, he questioned the police who gave them authority to stop him and insisted on the police officials to show reasons for their conduct. Police inspector told the Congress



MP that the rules would not permit providing free food to the poor during lockdown.

Pointing out the freely moving vehicles to the police during the lockdown, the Congress

MP stated that stopping him en route to his destination was questionable. The Congress MP asked the police personnel to implement those rules near Gandhi Hospital but not here.

However, the police said, citing orders from above that they would not be able to allow the Congress MP to proceed further. He asked the police to show him the relevant orders in writing.

Revanth Reddy claims that he is proceeding to a hospital in Cantonment area to give power generators. Irrated at the police stopping him on the road, he said that he would have to go anywhere wherever the poor are in danger. How can the TRS led-state government play politics with poor people's hunger? Is it wrong to feed the poor during lockdown? Revanth Reddy questioned. He described playing politics in social services as

atrocious. There ensued a wordy duel between the MP and the police for over half-and-a-hour. Revanth Reddy called up higher ups in the police department before he left the place to take part in his official activities.

Meanwhile, it may be recalled here that Revanth Reddy started a food distribution programme. He along with his followers distributed food packets to the attendants of the Covid patients and the staff of the Gandhi Hospital, including doctors and nurses. Revanth and his team distributed over 1,000 food packets to the poor and migrant labourers at Gandhi Hospital and Secunderabad railway station.

With series of setbacks, BJP loses it's momentum in state

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The series of electoral reverses in Telangana over last two months have dealt a huge blow to BJP's ambitious 'Mission 2023' which it had set out for itself after the victory in Dubbak Assembly by-election and impressive performance in GHMC polls late last year.

Despite wrestling Dubbak seat from ruling TRS in November and subsequent huge gains in GHMC, the saffron party failed to keep the momentum going.

With the TRS bouncing back after poor performance in the two elections, BJP suffered back-to-back defeats in the elections to two graduates' constituencies of Legislative Council, by-polls to Nagarjuna Sagar Assembly seat and more recently in the polls held for seven ULBs. In Legislative Council elections in March, it lost the only seat it was holding in the upper house of the state legislature to TRS. The saffron party's Ramchander Rao failed to retain MBNR-RR-HYD losing to TRS candidate Vani



Devi, daughter of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

BJP's performance was more disastrous in the other constituency. Its candidate Permender Reddy finished poor fourth in Nalgonda-Warangal-Khammam.

The setback hit the BJP's morale ahead of by-election to Nagarjuna Sagar Assembly seat. The ruling party comfortably retained the seat with its candidate Nomula Bhagat trouncing his nearest rival and senior Congress leader K Jana Reddy. Bhagat polled 89,804 votes while Congress secured 70,932 votes. BJP's P. Ravi Kumar got only 7,676 votes and lost its deposit.

The humiliating defeat in the bypoll slammed brakes on BJP's forward march.

The saffron party's worries did not end with Nagarjuna Sagar verdict. A day after Assembly by-election results, State Election Commission declared the verdict of the polls held to seven ULBs on April 30. The TRS swept the polls to bag both GWMC and Khammam Municipal Corporation and all five municipalities. TRS won 181 out of 248 wards in all seven ULBs. While Congress secured 29 wards, BJP finished third with 15 wards.

According to political analyst Palwai Raghavendra Reddy, after the victory in

Dubbak by-polls, BJP presumed people of Telangana were fast switching over to the saffron party.

He believes that like in any other State or in any other times, there is discontentment among the people of Telangana over the mismatch between expectations and governance but this gap is probably not wide enough to assume KCR-era would end sometime soon.

The analyst is also of the view emerging political scenario in India's youngest State is not in favour of BJP. "While, Modi is being questioned for poor performance to arrest Covid-19 pandemic; deep-rooted Congress is not a pushover in Telangana. And now, the possibility of Eela Rajendra starting a new political outfit will only divide anti-KCR vote further, helping TRS prospects in 2023 elections to the State Assembly."

BJP has had mixed fortunes in Telangana since it became a separate state in 2014. The party had bagged five seats in Telangana in 2014 polls held before bifurcation of AP.

Followers of Eatala booked, lodged in PS

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

The activists of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi and the followers of former Health Minister Eatala Rajender clashed at Veenavanka, in the party meeting on Sunday, leading to elbowing each other when TRS leaders were addressing press meet there.

The police reached there and arrested the followers of Eatala Rajender and whisked them away to police station.

With each passing day, the chasm between Eatala Rajender and top leadership of the TRS is widening further.

The TRS rank and file called a press meet at Veenavanka on Sunday. When the event is in progress, the followers of Eatala Rajender reached there and entered into an argument with the TRS leaders. Activists of the rival groups elbowed each other for sometime before the followers of Eatala were arrested by the police.

BJP sees Minister Kamalakar's hand in Bommakal land mafia

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Minister for Civil Supplies Gangula Kamalakar's hand is alleged behind the land mafia in Bommakal, which gobbled up the land belonging to Hindu burial grounds.

Out of 173 acres government land listed under 32 survey numbers in Bommakal, 80 acres has been encroached by land sharks, said Mahender Reddy. Levelling the allegations against the Minister Gangula Kamalakar, BJP leader Bethi Mahender Reddy demanded Chief Minister to order a probe into the land scam by the CBI.

Thousands of crores changed hands in the deal and the land mafia benefited by the scam, he said. He alleged the hand of Gangula Kamalakar and also the relative of KCR in encroaching Ac 2.20 guntas of land under survey number 724/D by hand in glove with the land sharks with the help of the Karimnagar rural mandal Tahsildar Gaddam Sudhakar. "The land was surrendered by former MLA Nalumachu Kondaiah under the Land Ceiling Act, 30 years ago under survey number 722/B. The



land sharks managed to obtain proceedings from Tahsildar in 2019 with the help of Kondaiah's daughters. Kondaiah's son died in 1994, while his wife passed away in 2006. Kondaiah died in 2009. Nobody applied for inheritance, which should be done in one year or two years. Moreover, revenue authorities have no power to issue inheritance to surrendered lands. For over 10 years, nobody looked towards the land," the BJP leader alleged and stated that the officials received kickbacks in the whole episode.

"Under survey number 724/D, the land was registered in the name of Minister and land sharks' benami holders Mohammad Abul Fazul Zulfikar Ali, Parvez Khan, Feroze Khan, Qhalid Khan by Irukulla Anjani and her hus-

band Irukulla Janardhan and Yamsani Jyoti and her husband Kamalakar. The document was registered at 5.41 pm on July 4 last year. The same document was registered in the name of TRS MLC's benami holder Kanatarapu Siva Anjaneyulu at 6.58 pm the same day through document number 4696/2020," he added.

A complaint has been lodged with Karimnagar Rural Police station against Tahsildar Gaddam Sudhakar and daughters of Kondaiah. When applied under Right to information Act seeking relevant land records, there was no proper reply. When a petition was filed in court bringing it to its notice, the court asked One-Town Police station to probe into it, but the police did not register a case in spite of court's direction. Mahender Reddy said that a case was registered with Human Rights Commission. He also filed a case with Lok Ayukta. He said that notices were received in the two cases.

Similarly, illegal construction is going on in the burial grounds allegedly with the support of the Civil Supplies Minister, he said.

Indrakaran directs officials to ensure strict enforcement of virus lockdown

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

Forest Minister Indrakaran Reddy instructed the district officials to strictly implement the lockdown that is meant for the welfare of the public.

He along with government whip Balka Suman and Zilla Parishad Chairperson N Bhagyalaxmi convened a review meeting over steps being taken for tackling Covid-19 pandemic, here on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, Indrakaran requested the public not to panic over the rapid spread of coronavirus since the lockdown was imposed to check its spread. He directed the district authorities to take steps for implementing the norms relating to the 10-day long lockdown, which was aimed at controlling the disease.

The Minister stated that 1,300 tests were being held in the district every day and medical kits were being given to those who were tested positive for Covid.

'Action against black marketing of Remedisivir'

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

District Collector Hanumantha Rao on Sunday has warned of initiating stern action under PD Act if anyone was found either selling Remedisivir injection at high prices or diverting it into black market. The patients are being given the drug free of cost in Government hospitals.

He told government and

private hospitals to bill the injection at prices fixed by the government and cautioned them not to charge even a penny more.

The Collector issued orders to authorities to book those who were found selling the injection at a higher price or black marketing it under PD Act and Drug Price Control Order of 2013.

He asked the people to inform details of such persons to the control room on 08455-272233. The details of the persons giving tip off, would be kept confidential, said Collector.

He asked the officials to closely monitor stocks of Remedisivir in the district.

Better treatment is being provided to Covid patients in

hospitals like putting them on oxygen, administering Remedisivir injections, providing them with beds and ventilators. The hospitals have stocked all medicines needed by Covid patients, he said.

He asked those who tested positive for Covid give up any doubts and phobias over receiving treatment in government hospitals and avail themselves of free services.

2 killed, 3 injured in lightning strike

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Two persons including a woman died on the spot and three others were injured when lightning struck them at Lingampally of Nuthankal mandal in Suryapet district on Sunday morning.

The five, all agriculture labourers, were plucking red chillies in an agriculture field when lightning struck them, killing two on the spot and the three others suffering serious injuries. The injured were shifted to government hospital at Suryapet.

'Black fungus' case detected in Karimnagar

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Black fungus, the new scourge, is scaring the daylight out of the diabetic Covid-19 patients who are in their recovery stage. Meanwhile, in a short span of a fortnight, the black fungus has spread to Karimnagar as well.

A Covid patient identified as Allam Lingaiah, a government teacher by profession, who hails from Malaya village of Chandurthi mandal, was treated at the hospital for Covid. However, in last leg of his recovery, he developed the black fungus symptoms owing to her pre-existing comorbidities.

His face was swelling up when the doctors at Karimnagar referred her to a hospital in Hyderabad after he was diagnosed with black fungus. The doctors, who were worried with the innumerable Covid cases urge the people of Karimnagar to stay home and stop the spread.

"The problem with this disease is that it progresses very fast and can affect the eye, leading to loss of vision as well," said the doctor.

Satyavathi Rathod leads Corona awareness drive

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Tribal, Women and Child Welfare Minister Satyavathi Rathod said on Sunday that government and private doctors were working in coordination to save the lives of Covid-19 patients besides providing psychological reassurance to the patients.

In an attempt to create awareness among the people on the measures to check the spread of the deadly coronavirus, the Minister along with local MLA Banoth Shankar Naik, Municipal Chairman

Dr Palvai Rammohan Reddy, members of the IMA, district medical and health officials and others, conducted a campaign at the vegetable market, meat market and main junctions in the town on Sunday. Interacting with the people, she said that the government was taking all steps to provide treatment to the Covid patients by roping in private doctors too. "I must thank all the doctors in the district for their readiness to provide telemedicine and home treatment to those with Covid symptoms."

'Prevent paddy from getting ruined by rains'

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

District Collector P Venkatrami Reddy has directed district authorities to take precautions to prevent drenching of paddy and it getting washed away in flood waters at the procurement centres as the weather forecast predicted rains in the next two or three days.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, the Collector asked all Revenue Divisional Officers, Mandal Parishad Development Officers, agriculture officials, who are cluster in-charges, in the district to take precautionary measures to prevent rains



damaging paddy and thereby posing problems to farmers.

Venkatrami Reddy advised the officials and farmers to keep tarpaulins and other paraphernalia ready.

The principal secretary of Agriculture Department Dr B Janardhan Reddy, IAS permitted to use Rytu Vedikas to store harvested paddy, the Collector said and asked farmers to

remain on the alert as there is scope for showers lashing the district and adopt suitable precautions.

He addressed the RDOs, agriculture officers, in-charges at paddy procurement centres, agriculture department officials, cluster in-charges, tahsildars, MPDOs and others has asked them to assess the required number of tarpaulins, gunny bags and vehicles to transport paddy.

He asked RTO Rameshwar Reddy to provide enough vehicles to transport paddy to rice mills. The RDOs should allot vehicles to cluster in-charges depending on the demand.

Man killed over property dispute

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

One person was killed over a property dispute at Siddapur village of Pitlam mandal in the district on Saturday night. The deceased Chiranjeevi, succumbed to injuries while being shifted to Banswada.

Chiranjeevi and Praveen were neighbours in Siddapur village and had a property dispute with each other. They had an argument on the issue on Saturday during which Praveen attacked Chiranjeevi with a heavy stick, causing severe injuries, in this incident. Chiranjeevi's family members shifted him to the Banswada area hospital for treatment on Saturday night. Where Chiranjeevi died, while taking treatment on Sunday morning.

'Ventilator beds increased manifold in govt hospitals'

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Excise Minister Dr V Srinivas Goud has warned private hospitals against overcharging the Covid patients.

He was inspecting the Panchavati private hospital in Bhutpur and went round wards, enquired from doctors about the line of treatment being provided to patients and verified the hospital bills. He enquired from patients on how much have they paid so far towards the hospital bill.

He spoke to attendants of several patients and enquired from them when did they get the patient admitted? How much have they paid towards the bill?

Later, he spoke to attendants waiting outside Navodaya Hospital and sought information about treatment and hospital bills. The patients' attendants told the minister that they are satisfied with the hospital's services.

The Minister warned of initiating stern action against private hospitals over billing the patients. The action would be severe if doctors and lower staff resort to irregularities in billing the patients.

Asking hospitals to provide treatment to patients out of humanitarian consideration at this crisis hour, Srinivas Goud told the managements of private hospitals not to collect higher fees. If necessary, he

asked them to provide free treatment to the poor. As per government rules, 20 per cent of the total beds should be reserved for Covid-19 patients. If there are no vacant beds in government hospitals, then only the patients should be admitted to private hospitals.

To a complaint lodged with him over twitter against Panchavati hospital, the minister sought clarification, but the patients told him that everything is all right now.

There is no shortage of Remedisivir and oxygen in government hospitals, he said adding that the ventilator beds have been increased manifold in district headquarters government hospital.

Konda Surekha meets Eatela; assures her support in future

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

With Congress senior leader and former minister Konda Surekha meeting Eatela Rajender at the latter's residence located at Shamirpet giving scope for speculation, it is said that the Congress leadership has been divided into three factions in regard to their approach towards the former Health Minister.

It is learnt that Eatela and Konda Surekha had two hours discussion on the prevailing political scenario of the state and the future course of

Eatela's action. According to highly placed sources, Konda Surekha assured that she would extend her support to Etela during his future political journey. The sources also said that both Konda and Eatela discussed the chances of Eatela floating a new political party and its timing and the support the new political party is likely to get from the people. All the while, Konda Surekha extended her solidarity to Eatela Rajender during their meeting. Eatela has been making it clear that he will not tender his resignation at the moment and also has given

signals that he will not float a new political party immediately after tendering his resignation to the TRS party. Eatela also revealed that he would contest as an independent in the bye-elections to Huzurabad after he tendered his resignation from the MLA position.

It may be recalled that Konda Surekha and her husband Konda Murali left the TRS alleging that the KCR deceived them. However, Konda Surekha, who rejoined Congress party, didn't win the 2018 election she contested on behalf of the Congress party from Parkal constituency.

People deprived of medical facilities: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Sunday criticised that the pandemic has been plaguing the people due to the negligent rule of TRS led state government.

He was addressing the Core Committee members of the TPCC through the 'Zoom meeting'.

Addressing the leaders, Uttam said that the state government was not bothered about the problems of the people, even after the private hospitals are looting money from the Covid patients. While the patients in the other states



are getting treatment at free of cost, there is shortage for ventilators beds and oxygen beds are not available even though people were ready to pay money, Uttam alleged.

The Chief Minister K

Chandrasekhar Rao did not take steps to add Covid to Arogyasri and implement Ayushman Bharat which would provide free treatment to Covid patients, whereas other states have been seizing the private hospitals to provide free treatment to their subjects, the TPCC chief said lamenting that the people were deprived of basic medical facilities.

"During the Congress regime, Hyderabad was developed into a medical hub for the country, but now, vaccine was not available to the people of TS, though it has been produced here, Uttam said.

He added that Remedisivir injection is manufactured in the state by the Hetero

Company but it was not available to people of Telangana. Though the company has been granted several freebies by the state government it has failed to serve the needs of the people of the state.

He called upon the party workers to take relief works in every village of the state on the 30th death anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on May 21.

Uttam said that there was a shortage for ambulances and party leaders should arrange them. He added that they have procured two ambulances and kept them at Gandhi Bhavan with the financial assistance of MLA T Jagga Reddy.

Collector opens isolation centre

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR
BHUPALAPALLY

People should be aware of this second wave of the coronavirus in the country, said Bhupalapally MLA Gundra Venkataramana Reddy during the inauguration of a twenty-bed isolation centre set up by the government in Tekumudi primary school.

Then he visited Chityala government hospital, inspected Covid patients' wards and inquired about their health condition, available facilities. He congratulated all the Health department staff in the hospital for their services in these pandemic times.

FIRST COLUMN

SHOULD YOU COUNT ON MUTUAL FUNDS?

Research shows that past returns and the age of the mutual fund have an impact on your savings



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Mutual funds are gaining popularity as a preferred investment avenue among Indians over the last decade. Particularly over the last five years, the industry has witnessed a huge increase in the number of folios which grew to 44.2 million from March, 2014 to June, 2019. What makes this growth interesting is the fact that it had largely come from the segment of individual investors, including both retail investors and high networth individuals (HNIs). This segment registered a growth rate of 15.5 percent during this period, which in turn contributed to a 27 percent rise in assets under management (AUM) of individual investors from ₹4 lakh crore in March, 2014 to ₹4 lakh crore in June, 2019. Since mutual funds have become one of the preferred investment destinations or investor, it is important to choose funds that will perform better than others.

One of the ways in which the performance of mutual funds is measured is through net inflows and outflows, which is the net result of the total money that has moved into and moved out of the fund for a particular time period. If the end result is positive, indicating



inflows, it means that more money has been invested into the funds and vice versa. Net flows are important as they provide the performance report of mutual funds. High net inflows are significant as they lead to higher AUM, which in turn increase company's profits. On the other hand, high net outflows, might lead to some tactical changes like changing the fund manager or the investment philosophy. Increase in the collective net inflows also leads to increase in the size of some individual mutual funds and also the size of the mutual fund industry as a whole. In addition, net flows can also provide an insight into the general collective predictive capacity of investors. So, an overall net inflow into any mutual fund may forecast its positive performance. So, if net flows are so important for any mutual fund, what determines that it gets positive inflows? Research shows that factors like past returns, the age of the mutual fund, higher expenses like higher advertising costs, lower fees and size of the fund family. Some strategic decisions, like changing the name of the mutual fund to match the current season trend also bring in extra inflows.

Size plays an import role in the performance of mutual funds. Several studies suggest that younger or new funds have higher performance as they enter the industry with higher skill sets and their relatively smaller exposure to market makes sure that any adverse market movements would have less impact on the performance. In addition, the increasing size of the industry also has an adverse impact on the performance. The larger the industry size, the lesser is the potential of any profitable trades, as adjustments to any anomalies, which may lead to any profit making, quickly happen, leading to less chances of booking profits.

Skill of the fund and the fund manager are an important determinant of mutual fund performance. Fund managers' compensation also contributes its performance. In cases where the compensation depends on performance, such mutual funds, due to an active strategy, end up generally becoming high performance funds and perform better than funds where managers use passive fund management style. So, a fund manager's skill in stock picking helps in generating a higher return.

Several studies show a predictive pattern of mutual fund analysis based on the above discussed determinants. Small investors should take advantage and make use of the skills of the funds and fund managers to beat the benchmark and hope to generate higher returns.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Amity University, Noida. The views expressed are personal.)

Corona: Some real, though some hype

Somehow, the States and the Union Government are passing on the impression that they have been unable to meet the challenge of the virus. But why?

Thoughts of prospective troubles hardly come true, and most people die of visceral fear of spectre or something that doesn't exist. "Ninety per cent of our problems are caused by our own thoughts," says Hilda de la Rosa, a South African popular author and motivational speaker. She says, entrapped in our thought processes, we find it arduous to extricate ourselves from the thinking pattern we have imbibed over years. Unaware of the facts about morbidity and mortality due to Covid or otherwise, most people are caught with the fear psychosis that is taking a larger toll than the pandemic itself. The predicament has shaken people of all description. The pandemic 2.0 is hitting Indians with greater intensity and virulence but a sensible and broader perspective can reduce the hype and assure the implications of the current crisis are not as dismal as being made out.

Certain mystery shrouds the resurgence of Covid 2.0 with new strains. True, the plateauing of Covid cases in India by last fall led to public and government complacency about continuing risks. And the the government toned down restrictions. As the going seemed manageable, shops, restaurants, wholesale and retail markets, malls, schools, public transport, businesses and public establishments tended to function normally. Export of jet fighters, plans to lay 75,000+ stations to charge electric vehicles, supply of domestically produced Covid vaccine to 87 countries and medicines to over 150 countries meant progression towards a vibrant economy and making of "atmanirbhar" nation. Naturally, the Indian buoyancy and optimism was not palatable to arms, oil, and pharma lobbies, as they could lose huge businesses in India; apropos of 5-billion-dollar PPE and masks deals alone came to a naught in one shot, oil companies were next. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who repeatedly said and meant 'desh nahi lutne dunga, desh nahin bikne dunga' was a common enemy who would not bend like Donald Trump of the US. For the global business magnates to flourish in India, Modi's downsizing-with the aid of domestic disgruntled elements appeared the only option. To support them was neighbouring China. Possibility of China-sponsored biological war behind the abrupt rise in Covid cases in India bypassing the neighbouring countries with identical life style during April 10-15 cannot be ruled out. Accompanying this was the opposition's refrain of failure of Modi government to deal with Covid, enthusiastically supported by Western media. On April 20, international media showed 'large scale' cremations and highlighted deficiencies in Indian health care sector. Strangely, at this hour, Pakistan also offered to help India.

The anti-government chorus was endorsed by UNICEF executive director Henrietta Fore on May 4: "The tragic situation in India should raise alarm bells for all of us." Most recent is the editorial in the medical journal *Lancet* summarily undermining the government's efforts in dealing with Covid; the vindictive portion being, "Modi's actions in attempting to stifle criticism and open discussion during the crisis are inexcusable." The statement suggesting the government "own up to its mistakes" is the tone of a hardcore political adversary and in bad taste, unbecoming of a medical publication. Reports about Chinese instigations behind the sordid coverage and observations on India's handling of Covid



AT HOME, DURING COVID 1.0, THE OPPOSITION DECRIED LOCKDOWNS FOR ITS ADVERSE IMPLICATIONS ON LIVELIHOODS. IN THE SECOND WAVE, AFTER THE STATES WERE ALLOWED TO DECIDE AT THEIR OWN LEVEL, THEY CHOSE LOCKDOWN. THEY ALSO CRITICISED THE EFFICACY OF VACCINE, THEN TOOK IT ONE BY ONE

The author is a blogger at www.bluntspeaker.com and writes on health, spiritual, and social issues.



shall be revelatory.

At home, during Covid 1.0, the Opposition decried lockdowns for its adverse implications on livelihoods. In second wave, after States were allowed to decide at their own level, they chose lockdown. They also criticised the efficacy of vaccine, then took it one by one. The purpose was creating a public impression that government is unwilling and unfit to manage Covid crisis, something not in national interest.

Ambiguity in identifying the precise aetiology, genesis and manifestations of Covid 2.0 further tends to destabilise the poise of lay public. The doctors find it expedient to classify routine health issues as Covid in keeping with trends. The head of a prestigious health facility, Dr Arvind Kumar of Medanta, Gurugram: Consider any one of symptoms like sneezing, headache, fever, throat soar, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of smell or taste, skin patches, body ache as Covid case unless proved otherwise, and begin with self-isolation without wait for lab reports - even negative reports with either symptom must be treated as Covid. Such precepts further down the already diminishing morale of the patient and his kith and kin that needs bol-

stering in the nerve breaking era we are passing through.

As for the numbers game in Covid, national morbidity and mortality data across states in specific time frames are subject to wide fluctuations because transmission of Covid is multifactorial in nature involving the vision of the government based on infections and death data of few days, weeks or even months; policies and actions take long to show results. Taking the Covid data of April 28, 2021, though numerically India witnessed largest daily deaths (3647) compared to USA (954), Germany (320), France (344) and Italy (344), the deaths per crore population turns out to be mere 26 for India and 29, 38, 48 and 57, respectively, for these countries (source: worldometers.info). Thus, the narrative that India is worst hit by Covid smacks of foul play to tarnish the image of India.

Doctors are not knowalls in health matters but in a few weeks after Covid 2.0, how do they presume that all non-Covid diseases

have eclipsed altogether. Based on 2017 data, World Economic Forum analysis revealed 25,270 daily deaths in India, second to China at 28,036. The estimated global annual death toll for tuberculosis of all kinds in 2019 stood at 14.18 lakh and 79,144 in India; for HIV-related diseases the annual death toll was 5-9 lakh globally and 69,000 for India in 2017. These figures shall not be significantly different for 2020 and 2021. A fair, comparative assessment of quantitative changes in morbidity and mortality in pre-Covid and it a time frame shows that the Covid death toll as reported is misleading and ignores mortality from classical diseases. The actual Covid toll is not of the level we are told to make out.

The fear against COVID is largely visceral. It is the spectre of COVID that is the real threat, and not the virus itself. The virus with a life of around seven days is an issue only in about three to five per cent cases where specialist handling is required. We are undergoing times when each section of country has to lend a helping hand. Let us face the facts squarely, keep our peace and hope for the best.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THERE WILL BE NO SHORTAGE OF OXYGEN IN THE STATE NOW, AND I ALSO I ONCE AGAIN APPEAL TO THE FARMER LEADERS TO SUSPEND THEIR PROTESTS.
HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER
— MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR



THE SITUATION IN HARYANA IS WORSE THAN THAT OF NEIGHBOURING DELHI. HEALTH MINISTER ANIL VIJ SHOULD RESIGN FOR FAILING TO HANDLE THE SITUATION.
INLD LEADER
— ABHAY SINGH CHAUTALA



Time to take hypertension, a COVID-19 comorbidity, head-on

You can reduce your risk for high blood pressure with healthy lifestyle changes; just stick around with a few simple tips

In India at least one in three adults in India have hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. The ongoing pandemic has revealed how people with hypertension are at greater risk of becoming severely ill or dying from COVID-19. Research indicates that most people are unaware that they have high blood pressure and even if diagnosed, they are either irregular with their medication or discontinue taking it after a while. Studies have also shown that patients with hypertension but not on medications had a significantly higher risk of mortality compared with those on medication, if they got Covid-19.

In the past World Health Organisation (WHO) and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) have issued various warnings and guidelines for people with chronic



VIKAS MAHATME

The author is a Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha

conditions, particularly hypertensives to ensure they continue their treatment - through telemedicine whenever possible and keep taking the prescribed medicines. On this World Hypertension Day, it is critically important for India to pay attention to this silent killer and take adequate precautions.

Dos and don'ts:
Secure your supply of blood pressure medicines. Keep a stock of at least 90 days.
Continue to take medicines for blood pressure and other chronic conditions such as diabetes as prescribed by the doctor.

If possible, regularly measure your blood pressure at home. If it fluctuates, consult your doctor remotely. Do not change your treatment without a medical opinion.

Avail of telemedicine facility if you develop coronavirus



symptoms or feel unwell. In the last one year, 35 lakh Indians have dialled E-Sanjeevani, the government's telemedicine platform for a medical consultation.

Avoid consuming excess salt in your food
Risk Factors associated

with hypertension
Hypertension can lead to severe health complications and increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and sometimes death. It is a primary risk factor for cardiovascular disease, including stroke, heart attack, heart failure, and

aneurysm. Uncontrolled hypertension may affect eyes; leading to Hypertensive Retinopathy which may lead to irreversible blindness. Keeping blood pressure under control is vital for preserving health and reducing the risk of these dangerous conditions.

High blood pressure is often symptomless and quietly damages blood vessels leading to serious health problems. While there is no cure, using medications as prescribed and making lifestyle changes can enhance your quality of life and reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease and more.

You can reduce your risk for high blood pressure with healthy lifestyle changes. If you already have high blood pressure, the same lifestyle changes combined with medication therapy (as recommended by your provider) can also help you control it. Certain individuals are more likely to develop high blood pressure than others if they have a family history of hypertension or consume diets rich in salt, saturated fats, consume tobacco or alcohol and are overweight. Stress

can also raise your risk of developing high blood pressure. Hypertension typically develops over the course of several years. Usually, you don't notice any symptoms. But even without symptoms, high blood pressure can cause damage to your blood vessels and organs, especially the brain, heart, eyes, and kidneys.

The first criteria to deal with hypertension or high blood pressure is early detection. Regular blood pressure readings can help you and your doctor in noticing any change. If your blood pressure is elevated, the health provider may need to keep checking it for over a few weeks to see if the number stays elevated or falls back to normal levels. Treatment for hypertension includes both prescription medication and healthy lifestyle changes.

Q4 earnings, pace of vax, trends to dictate markets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets this week are likely to follow the quarterly earnings outcome of listed companies, pace of vaccination drive in the country and global market trends for further direction, according to analysts. "In absence of any major event, participants will be closely eyeing the performance of global indices, US bond yields, movement of rupee against the US dollar, and crude oil prices.

Religare Broking Vice-President (Research) Ajit Mishra said, "Needless to say, COVID-19-related updates and progress of the vaccine drive will also be in focus."

On the earnings front, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, Indian Oil Corp, Havells, Hindalco and Federal Bank are some of the prominent names who will be announcing their results during the week along with several others, Mishra added.



The quarterly earnings from Canara Bank, JK Tyre & Industries, Havells India, JK Lakshmi Cement, JSW Steel and State Bank of India will also be watched by investors this week. "Going forward, market will track the pace of vaccination, trajectory of active cases curve and management commentary of companies," Shibani Kurian, senior executive vice-president and head

(equity research) at Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Co, said. Investors would also track the Wholesale Price Index-based inflation data to be announced on Monday.

Samco Securities Head (Equity Research) Nirali Shah said, "Indian indices have shown sturdiness despite the increasing number of cases. However, sustainability at high-levels seems difficult if the

situation aggravates."

She added that in addition, this fear of inflation flourishing in developed markets may continue to trickle down to India and keep domestic bourses under pressure. "Stock-specific volatility due to quarterly earnings cannot be ruled out." During the holiday-truncated last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 473.92 points or 0.96 per cent.



FPIs net sellers to the tune of Rs 6K cr in May

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) pulled out Rs 6,452 crore so far in May from Indian markets amid tumbling investor sentiment due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As per depositories data, the overseas investors pulled out Rs 6,427 crore from equities and Rs 25 crore from the debt segment during May 1-14. The net outflow during the period under review stood at Rs 6,452 crore. "The severe Covid second wave, increasing lockdowns and concerns regarding its impact on GDP growth and corporate earnings seem to be behind FPI outflows," said VK Vijayakumar, Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Coal India Jharkhand arm CCL loses 47 personnel to COVID-19

PNS ■ RANCHI

Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL) supplying dry-fuel to the nation's power plants and other projects even during the pandemic has lost 47 of its personnel to COVID-19, an official said.

Many others and their family members are battling for life, the Jharkhand arm of the Coal India Limited (CIL) said.

"Mining activities of Central Coalfields Ltd, a Jharkhand based subsidiary of Coal India, are going on round the clock but around 47 employees of CCL have lost their lives while serving the nation during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," a CCL official said.

This maharatna coal miner claims to have set up around 2,000 beds which include ICU, isolation and covid care beds with oxygen support. While oxygen supported beds are over 750 the ICU beds number nearly 70.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives in the country as well as world over for



more than one year.

"Despite following the protocol of COVID-19 issued by the government from time to time, many executives as well as non-executives, have been affected from the COVID-19 infection. Altogether about 47 employees have lost their lives due to the deadly virus and many are undergoing treatment. It is not only the employees of CCL are affected but there are cases in which many family members too became affected and few of them died

due to the COVID-19," the official said.

CCL which has been allowed mining activities, has recorded a 112 per cent increase in production at 4.84 million tonne (MT) in April 2021 as against 2.28 MT coal output in April 2020.

The surge in infections has led to the re-imposition of severe lockdown in Jharkhand till the morning of May 27 which has imposed many restrictions to flatten the COVID-19 virus curve.

MONEY MATTERS

McDonald's plans Rs 100 cr investment to open 30 outlets

Westlife Development, which operates McDonald's restaurants in southern and western region in India, plans to invest Rs 100 crore to open up to 30 outlets of the quick service restaurant brand in the current financial year. The company, which now witnesses more than half of its sales from convenience channels such as delivery, takeaways and drive-thru, is bullish about growth in FY'22, leaving out the next 2-3 months. "The intention is to open 20-30 McDonald's outlets in the current fiscal year. We will invest Rs 100 crore for opening these outlets," Westlife Development Vice-Chairman Amit Jatia told PTI. In the last financial year, the company had opened five McDonald's outlets. Jatia said COVID-19 has accelerated the shift towards convenience channels and the company is bullish about growth in the current fiscal. "The business has pivoted towards becoming a convenience brand. Having brought all digital channels in place, we have entered this second wave with a lot of strength."



Windlas Biotech Limited files draft papers for IPO

Windlas Biotech Ltd has filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi for an initial public offer that includes a fresh issue of Rs 165 crore. Besides the fresh issue, there will be an offer for sale of shares. The company is into domestic pharmaceutical formulations contract development and manufacturing business. According to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP), the company will also consider a pre-IPO (Initial Public Offer) placement of up to Rs 50 crore. The proposed offer includes fresh issue of Rs 165 crore and an offer for sale of up to 5,142,067 equity shares. The latter will comprise "up to 1,136,000 equity shares by the individual selling shareholder and up to 4,006,067 equity shares by the investor selling shareholder", as per the document. The proceeds from the IPO will be utilised for purchasing of equipment required for capacity expansion of the facility at Dehradun Plant - IV and addition of injectables dosage capability at the facility at Dehradun Plant-III.



34,200 kg of oxygen production raw material lands at Bengaluru

Two Air India flights, carrying 34,200 kg of zeolite, used in oxygen production plants, arrived at the Bengaluru airport from Rome on Sunday, airport operator BIAL said. Zeolite is used in oxygen production plants that are based on pressure swing adsorption (PSA) technology, and its import would help mitigate the acute shortage of medical oxygen in the country. India has been hit badly by the deadly and more virulent second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic with hospitals across the country facing acute shortage of medical oxygen, health workers, vaccines, life-saving medicines, among others. "Two Air India flights, carrying 34,200 kg of Zeolite from Rome, arrived at the Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru, on May 16. This is the first of the many batches of Zeolite that would be imported by the government to generate oxygen," Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL) said in a statement.



Gold import jumps to USD 6.3 bn in April

Gold import, which has a bearing on the country's current account deficit (CAD), zoomed to USD 6.3 billion for the month of April due to a surge in domestic demand, according to the Commerce Ministry data. Silver imports during the month, however, dipped by 88.53 per cent to about USD 11.9 million. Gold import stood at USD 2.83 billion (Rs 21.61 crore) in April 2020, the data showed. The rise in gold imports pushed the country's trade deficit to USD 15.1 billion in April 2021 as against USD 6.76 billion in the same month a year ago. According to industry experts, increasing domestic demand is pushing up imports of gold, however, the second wave of COVID-19 may impact the demand in the coming months. Akshaya Tritiya, a highly auspicious day to purchase gold, also saw muted sales as compared to pre-COVID numbers, with the new pandemic wave and resultant restrictions and partial lockdowns hitting consumer sentiment.



Covaxin effective against India, UK strains: BB

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharat Biotech on Sunday said its COVID-19 vaccine 'Covaxin' has been found to be effective against coronavirus strains found in India and the UK.

Citing a study published in peer-reviewed medical journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, the Hyderabad-based vaccine major noted that vaccination with Covaxin produced neutralising titres against all key emerging variants tested, including B.1.617 and B.1.1.7, first identified in India and the UK, respectively.

The study was conducted in collaboration with the National Institute of Virology and Indian Council of Medical



Research, it added.

"Covaxin gets international recognition yet again, by scientific research data published demonstrating protection against the new variants. Yet another feather in its cap," Bharat Biotech co-

founder and Joint Managing Director Suchitra Ella said in a tweet. She also tagged PMO India, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, among others, in the tweet.

M-cap of 8 most valued firms plummets Rs 1.13 lakh crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Eight of the top-10 most valued companies witnessed a combined erosion of Rs 1,13,074.57 crore in market valuation last week, with Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and HDFC Bank emerging as the worst hit.

Among the top-10 most valued companies, only Reliance Industries Limited and State Bank of India managed to book gains on a weekly basis. During the holiday-truncated trading week, the BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 473.92 points or 0.96 per cent. The valuation of Tata

Consultancy Services tumbled Rs 30,054.79 crore to Rs 11,28,488.10 crore.

Infosys witnessed an erosion of Rs 15,168.41 crore, taking its market worth to Rs 5,61,060.44 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of HDFC Bank eroded by Rs 15,139.12 crore to Rs 7,65,035.49 crore and that of Kotak Mahindra Bank plummeted by Rs 14,398.04 crore to Rs 3,38,358.80 crore.

The valuation of HDFC dived Rs 13,430.38 crore to Rs 4,36,879.75 crore and that of Bajaj Finance tanked Rs 9,844.62 crore to Rs 3,21,592.05 crore.

Power consumption grows nearly 19 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Power consumption in the country grew by around 19 per cent in the first fortnight of May to 51.67 billion units (BU) over the same period last year, showing recovery in industrial and commercial demand of electricity, according to the power ministry data.

Power consumption in the first fortnight of May 2020 was 43.55 BU. The power consumption in the entire month of May last year was 102.08 BU.

During the first fortnight of May this year (from May 1 to 14), peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day touched the highest level of



168.78 GW (on May 6, 2021) and recorded growth of over 15 per cent over 146.54 GW (peak met) recorded in the same

period in 2020 (on May 13, 2020).

The power consumption in April grew nearly 40 per cent

to 118.08 BU. Power consumption in April 2020 had dropped to 84.55 BU from 110.11 BU in the same month in 2019, mainly because of fewer economic activities following the imposition of lockdown by the government in the last week of March 2020 to contain the spread of deadly COVID-19.

The power consumption also fell in May 2020 to 102.08 BU from 120.02 BU in May 2019. Similarly, peak power demand met or the highest power supply in a day also slumped to 132.73 GW in April last year from 176.81 GW in the same month in 2019, showing the impact of lockdown on economic activities.

Tractor sales to be hit due to second wave

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hitting rural areas, tractor sales will be impacted in the short term although in the second half of the fiscal it is likely to pick up to give the industry a mid-single digit growth, according to a senior official of farm equipment major Escorts Ltd.

The company, which has a joint venture with Japan's Kubota, is looking at around 55 per cent growth in exports



in 2021-22 with Europe serving as one of the main drivers

while it plans to enter markets in South East Asia and Brazil

through its partner.

"Unlike in the first phase (of COVID-19) where the impact was not at all there in the rural market, this time it is all very spread out. It is impacting not only the urban area, (but) channel partners and dealerships are also closed because of lockdown in states. Clearly this will have an impact, it is more severe and it is going to have an impact on everyone," Escorts Ltd Group CFO Bharat Madan told PTI.

Covid brings behavioural change in cash usage: Experts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a behavioural change in usage of cash with people withdrawing larger amounts from ATMs but preferring to make digital modes to make payments, said experts.

The ferocity of the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic has scared people, forcing them to withdraw larger amounts from the ATMs with a view to avoid frequent visits. The money thus withdrawn is mostly held for emergency use and often payments are being made through UPI and other digital modes.

Talking about the behavioural change in currency usage, Sarvatra Technologies founder and MD Mandar Agashe said that in view of the lockdown and social distancing norms, people are not venturing out to banks and ATMs as frequently.

"The average ticket size of withdrawals at any given time has gone up by almost 20 per cent, as people withdraw in larger quantities and prefer to hoard, pre-empting medical or any other form of emergencies, which ultimately is not consumed as much."

"The average ticket size of withdrawals which earlier ranged between 2,000-3,000

now has invariably gone up by 20 per cent to Rs 3,000-4,000 across both rural and urban India," Adashe said.

He further said UPI was taking care of small-ticket transactions with the average ticket size constant at Rs 1,000.

Owing to this behavioural shift, daily average transactions on IMPS have now gone up to Rs 9,000 which was earlier in the range of around Rs 6,000-7,000, he said.

"The second wave of the pandemic has had a significant impact on the handling and management of cash."

"This has in turn brought about substantial shift in behavioral patterns among the



masses which will play out in favour of digital transactions in the long run," he added.

Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) is an instant interbank

electronic fund transfer service through mobile phones.

According to the RBI's latest data, the outstanding currency in circulation on May 7 was Rs

2,939,997 crore, up from Rs 2,858,640 crore on March 26.

Care Ratings Chief Economist Madan Sabnavis opined that during these uncertain times, there is a preference for people to hold down to cash. It is more for precautionary purposes because one needs cash for rainy days such as for medical reasons or for any sudden other expenses, said Sabnavis.

PayNearby founder, MD and CEO Anand Kumar Bajaj said the anxiety of lockdowns has forced people to withdraw money and to keep cash handy — both for medical emergencies and basic needs in these dire times.

Looks like the days of motorcycling as the best hobby in town are over. Meet Vamsi and his pet doggo, Bear. The duo has made heads turn as they toured places like Hampi, Goa, Bengaluru, etc. *The Pioneer's* K RAMYA SREE writes about their adorable journey.

THE PAWSOME PAIR AND THEIR ADVENTURES

While biking has become a common scenario these days amongst millennials, who doesn't love involving their furry companions in the adventures of their life? Meet Vamsi Vadam, a 27-year-old music producer based out of Hyderabad riding his own classic 350 through the streets of Hyderabad. His journey to riding with his pawfriend is no less inspiring. Not very long ago, he was performing at a cafe in Hyderabad where adoption drives happen every Sunday. 30 minutes into his performance, a rescuer comes with a huge cage and a tiny little pup in it. Everybody in the cafe went crazy for this puppy and surrounded the cage, but the pup didn't give a care. But destiny got Vamsi and the pup etched — Vamsi decided to take a break from his set and went close to the cage. "I fell in love with her, but it took me a

few days to be okay with me adopting, because it's a huge responsibility. My girlfriend back then was after my life to get it home. Finally, after fostering her for a week at the cafe, we got her home.

He, while motorcycling with Bear, toured Hampi, Goa, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Bagalkot. How does it feel to ride with a pet? He explains, "It's amazing. It is also scary at times but that is inevitable when you're on the road, even though I ride with a pet. Another advantage is that since she is traveling with me, I generally don't tend to ride too fast. I maintain an average of 80KMph."

Pets are a part of our lives. Riding with them physically is no equal to a human because of our body postures. Vamsi shares, "The challenges I face start from storing her food to finding a place for the both of us to rest or halt for the night. It is hard for Bear because she is allergic to packed food. So, I must carry homemade food for her during the



ride. It gets difficult because I must make sure the food doesn't go bad. The next big thing is calling up places to check if they allow pets. Even most of the metropolitans are not pet-friendly, imagine the scenario at a

rural location. It is one of the major reasons why I have not traveled to places where it takes more than a day to ride."

When it comes to riding with pets, training them to adjust to their surroundings and behave is the most crucial process. Explaining how he trained his companion, Vamsi shares, "The training started at a very young age. She started riding on

the bike when she was 29 days old. That's when we adopted her. She would sit in between me and my girlfriend. As she grew bigger, I grew confident about her being able to handle herself and shifted her onto the tank. It took a month for the both of us to get used to riding like this. She sits on my thighs with her forelegs on the tank."

"Every ride we experience



is different from the ones before, because it's at different times of the day and we get to do different things along the way. The best thing about all the rides is the look people have on their faces when they see us cruising at those speeds on the highways," adds he.

How do you take long trips? He answers, "We normally start early in the morning and we ride towards the sunrise. We take a break every two hours or say 70 km, for water and chai. Taking breaks is the most important thing about the ride because I don't want to stress her out a lot. In these breaks, she gets to stretch and do her thing. After she came into my life, my life changed. I suddenly became more responsible and a lot of other things changed. Sure, it was difficult for both of us to understand each other and it is a time-taking process and it is not

an easy one. But we stuck by each other's side to the best we can to have a fun and adventurous life," added the passionate rider whose passion for motorcycling began after watching his uncles (who own a RE showroom in Kumbakonam) ride around to Ladakh and other places.

What is the kind of impact Bear makes in his life? How has traveling with a pet changed him? Vamsi concludes, "She's the best thing that has happened to me. She is the reason why I travel so much — because we both love to travel to places and it's fun to see people watching us while we do that. It's amazing how she can make people smile just by looking at them and I have seen that happen a million times — where they forget everything they are going through, and just smile. Looking at the joy she spreads makes me so happy."

Information being passed via WhatsApp has been considered unreliable, for the right reasons.

Rumours and fake news have ruled the app for more than a year now. But today, a group of IT professionals in the city is doing all it can to receive, pass on, and verify, reliable help amid the pandemic, writes *The Pioneer's* SHIKHA DUGGAL.

City's helpdesk on the forefront in fight against Covid



here to curate data collected through various sources and verify it for you, because we found that 90 percent of information is useless. We validate the information, cross-check the same, and when requests come, we use the data to facilitate their requests," Sandhya Jonnada, who works with Vigilant Tech, tells us.

We also learn of the case of a 45-day old toddler from Chirala, who was in an emergency condition. The child had to be shifted to a better medical facility. With the assistance of the Help Desk, they scouted the best and nearest hospital for the child with all the specialisations available according to the ailing medical condition of the child, and at the moment, the kid is recovering faster than he was expected to. The sense of an unimaginable tragedy could have been prevented if prepared in advance and we had taken the pandemic seriously, misfortune would've become avoidable! Recounting another testimony,

"One night we got an SOS Call for an oxygen concentrator from a 75-year old man living in the outskirts of the city. His saturation levels were going immensely low! The night curfew was on but we somehow managed to connect with the supplier, trying to negotiate a deal. In no time, we facilitated all the clearances from police, fixed up a vehicle, ensured its safe passage, and reached out to the family! This is what we do — we connect the right supplier and consumer along with an expert's advice."

Giving due acknowledgment for the unstinted support from all the volunteers, doctors working round the clock at full covid-care hospitals, admins at the hospital, Hyderabad and Cyberabad police, and GHMC, the organisation is making all attempts to pass over this colossal disaster that is in nobody's control or predict, but can be prevented by deflecting accountability and responsibilities! The firm is also planning to set up an 'Isolation cum Oxygen Hub' for residents below the

poverty line who don't have the luxury of quarantining at home. "They will be treated for fourteen days with all the medicines, food, and nursing care. In case of an emergency, GHMC will shift them to the covid-care hospital! It is a thirty bedded arena coming up at handanagar Community Hall. This is being set up in support of corporate houses like GHMC, IKEA, HARSCO and Zenoti, doctors and the zonal commissioner," concluded the founder. They can be reached on 63093 71600.

Helping women help themselves

Nizamabad-based 30-year-old Latha Nadukuda is a woman donning many hats — she is a housewife, mother to two girls, and a proud business owner and founder of Shree Latha Garments and Ladies Tailors.

Latha — the ever-smiling and hard-working entrepreneur — was part of Project Her&Now's women's entrepreneurship support programme in Telangana in 2020. She's a successful entrepreneur today, but she didn't get here easily. Latha had to discontinue her studies after 7th standard due to financial problems in her family, her zeal to learn and experiment with new things and ideas never died! During school, she had her first lessons in cutting and tailoring as a home skill, which she then perfected and mastered over the years. As an adult, Latha started earning a decent income through this skill, which eventually led to new forming a business idea.

With financial and emotional support from her husband and in-laws, Latha ventured into her own business enterprise around tailoring. She began making women's wear, did well, and as orders kept coming in, she was unable to manage everything on her own, and so started employing local women as employees, and training them to do the work.

Her husband helped her scale the business by getting her multiple orders of stitching uniforms for local government schools. Today, Shree Latha Garments and Ladies Tailors has grown to accommodate over 120 employees — an overwhelming majority of them (at least 100) being women from nearby villages or towns. While around 20% of all the employees/resource persons are currently



working from the store's factory, the rest are working from their respective homes. Latha and her husband have equipped these women by buying each of them a sewing machine and giving them detailed training on the kind of work that needs to be done.

Many have even started replicating Latha's business model on a smaller scale and getting orders on their own (they are not dependent on Latha anymore for the orders)! Essentially, what Latha is doing through her enterprise is creating a "ripple effect" — helping so many local women earn a livelihood on their own and become self-dependent over a period of time!

During the Covid outbreak last year, all of Latha's employees were working from home and having a steady source of income, with some of them earning as much as up to Rs. 1.5 lakhs per month!

Latha started getting orders for making masks from local SHGs and for PPE kits from hospitals and orders for police uniforms too!

Soon, Latha hopes to take Shree Latha Garments and Ladies Tailors beyond the boundaries of Telangana, to various other parts of India, and thereby establish a solid brand name for her enterprise.



consultation via doctors and oxygen supplies. Apart from this, there were around 130 requests in cities like Vizag, Vijayawada, Nellore, Warangal, and Tirupati for ambulance support. Hence, the Help Desk is targeted at people in distress particularly from IT industries while they are not restricted.

Why diets don't work in the long run, lifestyle changes do

For decades, diet conversations globally have ranged from the simple and straightforward to elaborate and convoluted, the latter sometimes even bordering on crazy. In today's digital age, before you can say cheese, a new diet would have garnered a global following, with everyone from a lay person to experts swearing by its efficacy.

However, just a few weeks or months later, the same experts have moved on to another 'miraculous' eight-loss or diet program. That is what you get when you don't follow science, just fads. Health though, is not a fad. It is a lifestyle habit.

Amid all these fads, one cannot help but wonder if each of these programs are a sure-shot way to maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle, why don't they survive the test of time?

According to a study published in the BMJ, most diets help with weight loss and lower blood pressure in the first few months, but the desired effects don't last. So, people keep returning to new fads. But fad diets can be damaging. They often lack essential nutrients and teach you nothing about healthy eating. Excessively restrictive diets also take pleasure out of eating and may lead to eating disorders, slow down your metabolism, causing more harm than good in the long run.

One of the reasons for crash diets to fail is because the body views dieting as a form of starvation. When you eat much below your desired energy intake for a long time, your metabolism slows down and tries to fight back. The hormones that regulate our hunger and satisfaction waver making it harder to sustain the diet and hence weight loss. Further, the idea of taking extreme steps such as quitting certain foods can often lead to one feeling low and disappointed. Sooner or later you bounce back to prior 'unhealthy' eating habits. And a few months later, you are trying another new weight loss diet.

No wonder that the diet and weight loss industry around the world is growing leaps and bounds from \$192.2 billion in 2019, expected to be over \$295 billion by 2027. However, more and more studies show that if you are truly interested in losing weight and maintaining a healthy lifestyle you need a more sustainable plan than a fad diet. We must also understand the difference between weight loss and fat loss. Not all weight



loss might be healthy, you might just be losing muscle or water weight due to crash dieting and doing copious amounts of cardio.

To lose fat, a few components are proven to work: these are eating slightly less than your energy requirements, having adequate protein intake to preserve muscle mass, and strength or resistance training. Doing this regularly, will slowly help manage your weight in a healthy manner, and also boost your metabolism and tone your body.

Consider making these small, incremental changes to your lifestyle to embrace a healthy relationship with food and, indeed, life. Suggested by Habbitt CEO and Co-founder Dhruv Bhushan.

Make healthy eating a daily habit

It is important to be in tune with your specific needs, and not feel deprived. The same plan might now work for everyone. Nutrition need not be complicated, and crash diets are not sustainable. Don't think about giving up the 'bad' foods, instead focus on choosing foods that are holistic, nourishing, and pleasing for the palate. Don't be taken in by jargon-

filled technicalities on nutrients. Opt for easy to use, nutritious products.

Play with your food choices, mix and match ingredients. Health and taste can go hand in hand. Even foods that you crave or are 'addicted to', have a healthier alternative out there. Ensure a balanced diet of fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables for vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants. Balance these with whole grains and healthy fats. Meet your daily protein intake, whether from foods, or supplements using natural proteins. This can't be stressed enough since protein deficiency is one of the leading causes of lifestyle diseases, including obesity. Drink plenty of water.

Add physical activity into your regular routine

Make exercise, activity and movement a part of your daily routine, like brushing your teeth. In case you have very busy schedules, try and exercise first thing in the morning before the day consumes you.

Just like your food, pick activities that you can stick to, and not things that will peter out after a few weeks of initial enthusiasm. You don't need to be spending hours in the gym or hiring a personal trainer. Even a relaxing

walk or jog while listening to your favourite music, a dance class or a yoga session can be a good starting point. Also, stay active throughout the day. Take stairs instead of the lift, walk around while on the phone, contribute to household chores, play with your kids or pets, enjoy a sport, have sex, walk or cycle to neighbourhood areas instead of driving there, just simple choices without the need to take out extra time also go a long way. And for more dedicated individuals looking to burn fat, lose kilos and tone up, research shows that strength or resistance training, and high intensity workouts offer more sustainable outcomes. More than how much or what you do everyday, what matters is that you do exercise everyday.

Start small and stay consistent.

Make sleep a priority

This is one of the most overlooked aspects of our well-being today. We should aim to get adequate restful sleep every night, which may range from 6 to 9 hours for different individuals. It is during this time that the body repairs and recovers. Essential hormones that also aid weight loss are at play only during sleep. Not getting enough sleep can have a detrimental

impact on your physical, mental and emotional health.

If for some reason, you have trouble falling asleep, address it as a priority. Make time to sleep. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine. Unplug your digital devices before bedtime.

Instead, unwind with a bath or some light reading. Create an environment that is conducive and free from distractions, with a bed and bedding that is comfortable.

Manage your stress levels

Stress might feel like a default response to the challenges of a modern lifestyle, but constant stress can pose serious health problems.

Stress causes an increase in cortisol and adrenaline levels which influences blood pressure, heart rate, eating habits, sleep patterns, blood sugar, fat metabolism, and immunity. Long-term stress can also increase your risk of heart attack or stroke and contribute to depression. You can manage stress by adopting some of the above healthy habits, and by making conscious efforts to relax. Breathe deeply, enjoy your favorite activities, spend time with your loved ones. And ask for help, by speaking to those who care for you, or a trained professional.

Eating and living healthy, or trying to manage weight should not be a punishment or a sacrifice. There is no one size fits all definition or path to good health. It is a combination of different small steps that add up to big results over time. Health is a lifestyle. Trusting your instincts with food and actions that feel good, go a long way towards overall well-being. Eat food you enjoy without the guilt, just maintain a balance. With the right mix of natural organic ingredients, an indulgent low calorie Blueberry Crumble wise cream will be better and more delightful than so-called magic fat burner pills.

The next time, someone tempts you with the next-best diet fad, show them your intuitive eating and healthy lifestyle plan. You will develop a better relationship with food when you tune in to your body's needs and cues, and incorporate this into your everyday life.

Remember not to think of lifestyle changes as daunting behavioural changes. They are small steps on a journey towards good health -- ones that combine science, taste, and sustainability.

(Dhruv Bhushan, is the Co-Founder, and CEO of Habbitt)

HOW TO CHOOSE A WORKOUT THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS

The process of staying healthy starts with choosing workout that backs your other healthier habits. It is essential that your chosen workout doesn't just help to make you fit, but also keeps energy levels up and provides an overall energy boost.

There are questions that need to be answered when you pick a suitable workout from the fitness basket. Essentially, the answers need to be very honest to avoid any lasting damages later on. The following pointers can be followed.

Understand the goal of your workout. Unless that's not set, chances of picking the wrong workout are possible. The end result gets reflected in an unhealthy and possible damaged body.

A thorough research of exercise forms, benefits and advantages to be gained needs to be researched in a comprehensive manner. It will be conducive in the picking process.

Following fads is all okay. But the workout needs to suit one's needs and not get influenced by fads.

Now that the basics have been drummed in the minds, the next step would be to choose the suitable workout from the few options out there.

CARDIO



An ideal cardio session allows for burning substantial calories. Running or walking is two good ways to do cardio. If weight loss is the chosen end result, then cardio helps start things and warm up for more intense workouts.

YOGA



This ancient Indian exercise method is perfect for ab overall strong and fit body through a mixture of postures.

PILATES



For stronger cores, Mat Pilates is the proper choice. Along with toning the core and abdominal muscles, lower back, hips and buttocks, this workout is all about focussing on body strengthening and flexibility and lean muscles building. A flexible and controlled body will be quite possible. In fact, machine Pilates combines the benefits of both weight training and Yoga.

HIIT



The workout technique alternates between small episodes of high intensity exercise and less intense rest. The varied exercises depend on the targeted body part for improvement.

WEIGHT TRAINING

This is perfect to build strength with weight training. Weights in workout routine can result in sturdy muscles and bones along with lesser injury threat. But weight training is not body building or creating a bulky body, it's about toning the body and building muscle. Muscle building comes from premeditated practice and requires hardwork complete with weight-gain diet and supplements intake.

Choose the right workout for a healthy body.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



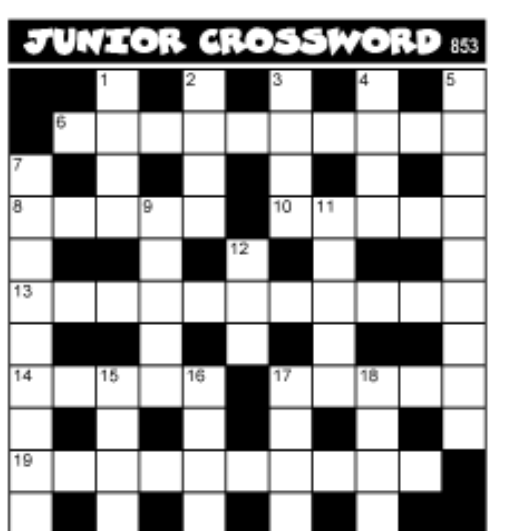
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 6 A two-wheeled vehicle
- 8 Unclean
- 10 Our planet
- 13 A party for something special
- 14 Close-fitting
- 17 Money used in France before the euro
- 19 Cooked too long

- 9 Use these to bite
- 11 Change
- 12 Attempt
- 15 Got bigger
- 16 Mark correct
- 17 You need this to stay alive
- 18 Chopping tools

DOWN

- 1 Number in a quartet
- 2 Replica
- 3 Throbbing pain
- 4 A mark from a healed cut
- 5 Car engine repairs
- 7 Schooling



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU



Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

MAHESH'S GENEROUS GESTURE

Prince Mahesh Babu, who recently got vaccinated for Covid-19 after being under home isolation, has extended his support to two adopted villages of Andhra Pradesh — Burripalem and Siddapuram. The *Srimanthudu* actor arranged for vaccines against Covid for all the people of these two villages.

Until a few days ago, Mahesh Babu was busy shooting for *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* with National award-winning actress Keerthy Suresh, in Hyderabad. The two will be sharing screen space for the first time in the film written and directed by Parasuram and is jointly financed by Mythri Movie Makers, 14 Reels Plus, and G. Mahesh Babu Entertainment.



Ram Charan-Shankar film postponed?

It is known that Mega Power Star Ram Charan is collaborating with Shankar for a pan-Indian film to be produced by noted producer Dil Raju. According to the latest report, the magnum opus may be shot on a budget of Rs 150 crore.

The upcoming untitled film was supposed to go on the floor by the second half of this year. But we now learn that a tiff between the makers of *Indian 2* may affect Ram Charan and Shankar's film.

Kamal Haasan and Kajal Aggarwal-starrer *Indian 2* was just 50 percent into its making before the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic struck. Shankar signed two movies, one in Telugu with Mega Power Star Ram Charan, and the other, a Hindi film starring Ranveer Singh.

Sources close to the film's unit say that the Ram Charan-starrer, which was supposed to commence production in June, stays on hold given the current scenario.

Meanwhile, the controversy surrounding Shankar's directorial venture *Indian 2* seems to be only getting murkier. Shankar will first be wrapping up *Indian 2* before moving onto Ram Charan starrer *RC15*. This would mean that Shankar and Charan's *RC15* will start rolling only in 2022.

On the other hand, Ram Charan will soon be seen essaying a key role in Chiranjeevi's movie *Acharya*.



Khiladi to release in theatres only

After back-to-back successful ventures, Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja is back in full action.

It is known that the actor's next, *Khiladi* is one of the most-awaited films of the year.

Given the second wave of Covid, the film had to be postponed like many others, dampening the actor's fans' spirits.

Recently rumours were

rife that the film will head to an OTT release. Putting a full-stop to all these rumours, the makers of the film on Sunday announced that the Mass Maharaja film will release only in theatres.

"#*Khiladi* has confirmed. This film will release ONLY IN THEATRES. A New release date will be announced once the situation becomes normal."

@DirRameshVarma @idhavis @PenMovies

Wear Mask #StayHomeStaySafe," tweeted industry biggies.

Khiladi, an action thriller film written and directed by Ramesh Varma and jointly produced by Satyanarayana Koneru and Ramesh Varma under the banner of A Studios LLP, will see Ravi Teja in a dual role alongside Arjun Sarja, Unni Mukundan, Meenakshi Chaudhary, and Dimple Hayathi.



LENDING A HELPING HAND



Omkaram Guruj, along with junior artists and TV Artists President Vallabhaneni Anil and Secretary Swamy Goud, donated groceries sufficient for one month, to over 200 members of the cine industry.

KORATALA TO AKHIL'S RESCUE?



Akhil Akkineni, despite making multiple efforts, is time and again failing to impress the Akkineni fans, creating no niche for himself. The three-films-old actor — *Akhil*, *Hello*, and *Mister Majnu* — will next be seen in *Most Eligible Bachelor* under the direction of Bommarillu Bhaskar alongside Pooja Hegde. He will also star in *Agent* under the direction of Surender Reddy romancing Sakshi Vaidya, on which the family has pinned their hopes. We now hear that Akhil's father Nagarjuna is planning to rope in Koratala Shiva for his son to catapult his career.

Koratala is currently busy with Chiranjeevi's *Acharya* and also had his next locked with NTR Jr. Sources say that upon Nagarjuna's request he is reading the script for *Akhil*.

The project may go to floors in summer next year if everything goes according to plans. Akkineni fans are all excited over this news and started speculating as to how Koratala Shiva will show their Prince on the silver screen.



SHILPA SHETTY IN Mahesh-Trivikram's story

Mahesh Babu's project with dialogue sorcerer Trivikram Srinivas is generating tremendous interest. Already rumours started about Mahesh Babu's role and the film's storyline. In the meantime, reports came that the film still is titled

Parthu which sent fans dizzy. It is known that *Parthu* is the character name played by Mahesh Babu in *Athadu* directed by Trivikram Srinivas.

We now hear that Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty will play an important role in the film! This news has excited Telugu fans of the actress.

It is known that Trivikram casts yesteryear heroines in all-powerful roles



and one can cite the examples of Nadiya in *Attarintiki Daaredi*, A Aa, Sneha in *S/O Satyamurthy*, Khushboo in *Agnaathavaasi*, Devayani in *Aravinda Sametha Veera Raghava* and Tabu in *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo*.

Trivikram penned a powerful female role and plans are on to cast Shilpa Shetty in it. Shilpa Shetty earlier romanced top stars like Venkatesh, Nagarjuna, Balakrishna and Mohan Babu during her hey days. Reports also have it that Sumanth, nephew of Nagarjuna, will also be seen in an important role. The film is produced by Radhakrishna on Haarika Hassinie Creations banner.



IGA IS QUEEN OF ROME

AP ■ ROME

If Iga Swiatek continues playing like this, she might have no problem defending her French Open title when the year's second Grand Slam starts in two weeks.

The 19-year-old Pole routed Karolina Pliskova 6-0, 6-0 with what is known as a "double bagel" score in an Italian Open final that lasted just 46 minutes Sunday.

Swiatek lost just 13 points.

"Definitely not the best day for me," Pliskova said. "Iga was playing great tennis today."

It was the first double bagel in a WTA final in five years, since Simona Halep overwhelmed Anastasiya Sevastova in Bucharest.

"I think you have just days like this in tennis where things are not going your way," Pliskova added. "I will just quickly forget about today."

Blasting winners at will with both her forehand and backhand, Swiatek led 17-5 in winners and committed only five unforced errors to Pliskova's 23.

It wasn't always so easy this week for Swiatek, the surprise winner in Paris last year when she was ranked 54th.

She had to save two match points in her third-round victory over Barbora Krejickova then had to win twice on Saturday — beating both two-time Rome champion Elina Svitolina and 17-year-old Coco Gauff — after



her quarterfinal was pushed back a day due to rain.

"It's been a tough week but I'm really happy that I got through everything," Swiatek

said. "I was super focused today so I'm really proud of myself."

Swiatek's third career title will move her into the top 10 of the rankings for the first time on

Monday — to No 9.

Pliskova was playing in her third consecutive final at the Foro Italico, having won the title in 2019. The veteran Czech player

slammed her racket to the clay in frustration early in the second set and received a code violation warning for unsportsmanlike conduct.



Novak vs Nadal in men's final

Maybe the new generation of tennis players isn't quite so ready to end the eras of Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal.

Titles for Stefanos Tsitsipas and Alexander Zverev in the Monte Carlo Masters and Madrid Open, respectively, raised speculation again that the Big Three — including Roger Federer — was expiring.

Well, again, not yet.

Djokovic and Nadal won a total of three matches over younger players on Saturday and will renew their record-setting rivalry in the Italian Open final on Sunday — exactly two weeks before Roland Garros starts.

Coach creating match situations for me in training: Sindhu



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The lack of competitions before the Olympics is a major concern for Indian shuttlers but not so much for PV Sindhu, who trusts her Korean coach Park Tae Sang to create match situations for her in training itself.

Owing to the raging Covid-19 pandemic, the Badminton World Federation has been forced to cancel the remaining three Olympic qualifiers in India, Malaysia and Singapore. These were to be the last set of events before the Tokyo Games in July-August.

Asked if cancellations will affect her preparations, Sindhu said: "Well, we were thinking that Singapore will be the last event before Olympics but now we don't have another option, so I am playing matches against different players and my coach Park is trying to create match situations for me in training."

"Different players have different styles like Tai Tzu (Ying) or Ratchanok (Intanon) have different styles of play but Park is there to guide me, to prepare me for it," Sindhu said.

"Obviously, we will be playing each other after a few months and there will be something new in our games, so I will have to prepare for that."

Sindhu doesn't train with the rest of the Indian Olympic-bound team. She has been training at the Gachibowli indoor stadium in Telangana and does her fitness training at Suchitra academy.

The 25-year-old endorsed BWF's decision to cancel the events, saying while it is sad that competitions could not take place but that life is more important than sports.

"It is sad that the whole world has come to a standstill but before sportspersons, we are human beings and life comes first," Sindhu said.

"If tournaments happen, we don't know if we will be safe, we might think we will be but we can't be sure because we don't know from where this virus will come."

"For the moment, events are being cancelled and I know sportspersons are sad but I think it is good for the people... Organisers take a lot of measures and keep us in a bubble but still we need to be careful."

Sindhu, who had reached the finals of Swiss Open in March after returning to action following a long break, said she is improving as a player.

"It has been a good campaign so far this year. I have been improving as a player. My coach has analysed my game, so really looking forward to the Olympics. My dad also helps me a lot," she said.

Kohli best batsman in world: Paine

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Virat Kohli seems to have left an indelible mark on Australian Test captain Tim Paine, who says he will "always remember" the Indian skipper for being the world's best batsman, capable of also getting under the opposition's skin with his competitiveness.

Kohli and Paine have had a fiery rivalry which goes back to India's 2018-19 tour of Australia. Their on-field spats were an interesting sub-plot during the historic showdown in which India became the first Asian country to win a Test series Down Under.

"For Virat Kohli, I've said many times, he seems like the type of player you would love to have on your team. He is competitive. He is the best batsman in the world," the 36-year-old



Paine said on the *Gilly and Goss* podcast.

"He (Kohli) is challenging to play against and he can get under your skin because he is so good and he is so competitive."

"But yeah, for me from where I came from, sharing a feud with him four years ago. He is certainly someone I will

always remember," he added.

Interestingly, last year Paine had said that Kohli is "just another player" in the Indian team who "doesn't really bother me."

He had also stated that the Australian team "loves to hate" the superstar for his awe-inspiring abilities with the bat.

Finally, Hussey leaves for home

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Having recovered from Covid-19, Chennai Super Kings batting coach Michael Hussey left for Australia on Sunday via Doha, a top official of the IPL franchise said.

Following an RT-PCR test, the former Australia batsman had returned negative for Covid-19 on Friday, paving the way for his departure in the early hours of Sunday.

"Yes, Hussey has left for Australia via Doha by a commercial flight. He left in the early hours of Sunday," CSK CEO K S Viswanathan said.

Hussey, who had first tested positive for Covid-19 during the now-suspended IPL, is expected to reach home on Monday.

Hussey aside, the other Australians involved in the 2021 edition of IPL took a detour to Maldives and quarantined there before heading back to Australia.

India Eves likely to tour Oz in Sept

New Delhi: The Indian women's cricket team is set to travel to Australia in September.

Australia pacer Megan Schutt dropped a hint that India will be visiting in September though Cricket Australia is yet to announce the schedule. The tour is expected to comprise ODIs and T20Is.

"We have got a tour against India in mid-September," Schutt said on *No Balls: The Cricket Podcast*, hosted by Kate Cross and Alex Hartley.

"So, there's a couple of camps. I believe we are doing one in Darwin, which will be really cool... And then the tour against India. And then pretty much from there things get crazy with Big Bash, WNCL, Ashes, World Cup, and hopefully the Commonwealth



Games."

The BCCI, in its last Apex Council meeting, had also approved the tour of Australia ahead of the World Cup in New Zealand next year. A home series against the Windies was also cleared.

The tour of Australia was originally planned for January this year but was postponed after the World Cup was put off to 2022 amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

PTI

shortpasses

BREMEN SACK KOHFELDT

BREMEN: Werder Bremen on Sunday sacked head coach Florian Kohfeldt and replaced him with club legend Thomas Schaaf for their final league game this season after the club slipped into the bottom three of the Bundesliga. After four years in charge, Kohfeldt has been shown the door with just next Saturday's home game against Moenchengladbach left as Bremen fight to stay in Germany's top flight.

ZIZOU IS LEAVING REAL

MADRID: Spanish media claimed early Sunday that Zinedine Zidane has already told his players that he intends to quit as coach at the end of the season. According to Onda Cero radio and Goal online, the Frenchman, who has a contract until 2022, informed his squad a week ago that he was going to leave when the season ends next week.

TEJASWIN CLINCHES GOLD

NEW DELHI: Indian high jumper Tejaswin Shankar has claimed a Gold medal at the Big 12 Outdoor Track and Field Championships in Manhattan, USA. Representing Kansas State University, Tejaswin cleared 2.28 metres on Saturday, making a facility record.

SPOTIFY BID TO BUY ARSENAL

LONDON: Spotify co-founder Daniel Ek said Saturday a formal offer to buy Arsenal had been rejected by the Premier League club's American owners. In a statement on Twitter, the Swedish tycoon said the club's owners, Kroenke Sports and Entertainment (KSE), had rebuffed his bid.

N KOREA OUT OF WC QUALIFIERS

SEOUL: North Korea have pulled out of next month's qualifying matches for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, the AFC said on Sunday. No reasons were given for the withdrawal but South Korean media reported earlier this month that Pyongyang had said it would skip the qualifiers over coronavirus fears.

KAYLEE NARROWLY MISSES WR

SYDNEY: Australian Kaylee McKeown narrowly missed the 50 metre backstroke world record on Sunday while setting the year's best time in the 200m individual medley as she ramps up preparations for the Tokyo Olympics.

TEAM SELECTION ON JUNE 15-16

NEW DELHI: The Indian para-athletics team for the Tokyo Paralympic Games in August-September will be picked during a to-day trial to be held in New Delhi on June 15 and 16, the national governing body Paralympic Committee of India said on Sunday. Agencies

2018 sandpapergate monumental mistake: Sekar

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former Australia bowling coach David Sekar, who was with the team during the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, on Sunday said it was a "monumental mistake" which could have been prevented and for which fingers can also be pointed at him.

"Obviously a lot of things went wrong at that time. The finger-pointing is going to go on and on and on. There was a lot of people to blame. It could have



been me to blame, it could have been someone else. It could have been stopped and it wasn't, which is unfortunate," Sekar told the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

"Cameron's (Bancroft) a very nice guy. He's just doing it

to get something off his chest ... He's not going to be the last," he added. Sekar lamented that the incident is going to be associated with Australian cricket forever and there is nothing one can do about it.

"You could point your finger at me, you could point your finger at *Boof* (then coach Darren Lehmann), could you point it at other people, of course you could," he said.

"The disappointing thing is it's never going to go away. Regardless of what's said. We all

know that we made a monumental mistake. The gravity wasn't as plain until it all came out," he added.

The 54-year-old Victorian made the statement after Bancroft made a startling revelation that Australian bowlers at the time might have had some knowledge about the plot.

While Cricket Australia issued a statement saying that it was open to a re-investigation into the incident, Sekar said he was not sure what could possibly come out of it.

Spurs still in Europe race



Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg, left, celebrates with teammates after scoring Spurs second goal

AFP ■ LONDON

Harry Kane scored his 22nd Premier League goal of the season as Tottenham Hotspur beat Wolves 2-0 on Sunday to maintain their hopes of a top-four finish. England captain Kane fired Spurs ahead on the stroke of half-time before Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg doubled their lead in the 62nd minute. Victory left Spurs in sixth place, five points behind fourth-placed Chelsea, with a maximum of six points available

to them from their final two league games.

The top four in the Premier League are assured of a place in the 2021/22 Champions League.

Kane gave Spurs the lead running onto Hojbjerg's through ball behind centre backs Conor Coady and Romain Saiss.

The Spurs star side-stepped Coady's challenge and rounded goalkeeper Rui Patrício, before curling the ball into the corner of the net.

Hojbjerg made it 2-0 just

after the hour when he followed up Gareth Bale's shot and tapped the ball in after Patrício could only parry.

Earlier, Crystal Palace twice came from behind to beat Aston Villa 3-2, with Tyrick Mitchell's first goal for the club sealing victory six minutes from time.

John McGinn's third goal of the season put Villa ahead in the 17th minute at Selhurst Park before Christian Benteke equalised against his former club with a 32nd-minute header.

But Palace fell behind again two minutes later when Anwar El Ghazi scored from close range.

The Eagles equalised for a second time in the 76th minute when Wilfried Zaha grabbed his 11th goal of the season with low shot deflected in off Ahmed Elmohamady.

The comeback was complete in the 84th minute when the 21-year-old Mitchell followed-up from close range after team-mate Eberechi Eze had miscued. Victory lifted south London club Palace to 13th.

IPL helped Shami get his rhythm back

New Delhi: Veteran India pacer Mohammed Shami found his "rhythm" during the now suspended IPL and feels the UK tour will be a successful one for the team if it is able to replicate the stellar performance of the last six months.

India will leave for the UK on June 2 for three and half months during which they will play six Test matches starting with the World Test Championship final against New Zealand in Southampton from June 18.

With the Covid-19 wreaking havoc across the globe, the soon to be 31-year-old Shami said that too much of planning in these times is of no use.

"See, there is no point in planning too much as certain things are not in our control. Who would have thought that the pandemic would virtually destroy two years of our lives — hence I prefer to take it by each series or tournament as the case may be," the pacer told *Gulf News*.

"We have played some extraordinary cricket in recent times as an unit and naturally, the confidence level is high on the eve of our departure for England."

"If we can reproduce some of the form which we did over last six months, I am confident it will be a great summer for us," said the man, who has 180 wickets from 50 Tests.

Archer's elbow injury resurfaces

PTI ■ LONDON

England's star pacer Jofra Archer's participation in the upcoming Test series against New Zealand was thrown into doubt after his longstanding elbow injury resurfaced during Sussex's county championship game against Kent.

The 26-year-old fast bowler has a history of elbow injuries that saw him miss two Tests against India and the currently-suspended IPL earlier this year as



well as games in South Africa at the start of 2020.

Turning out for Sussex in his first competitive game after the injury lay-off, Archer registered figures of 2 for 29 in the first innings. However, the pacer could only bowl five overs in the second essay and complained of a sore elbow.

"If you saw today he's not going to bowl tomorrow. You'll have to ask the ECB," Sussex head coach Ian Salisbury told reporters on Saturday.



Napoli keep CL hopes alive

AFP ■ FLORENCE

Napoli moved third in Serie A on Sunday with a 2-0 win at Fiorentina to keep their push for a Champions League return alive.

Lorenzo Insigne missed a penalty but send in the rebound after 56 minutes with a Lorenzo Venti own goal 11 minutes later sealing an important win for the visitors.

Napoli are third, two points behind Atalanta who assured a third consecutive season of Champions League football, with a 4-3 win at Genoa on Saturday. AC Milan, are a point behind Napoli, occupying in the final Champions League berth, and play 16th-placed Cagliari later on Sunday.

Juventus are fifth, one point behind Napoli, but still in the running for a top four finish after a 3-2 win over newly-crowned champions Inter Milan on Saturday, with one match left this season.

Napoli's final game will be at home against midtable Hellas Verona, as they look to return to elite European football after missing out last season.

Juventus play their final game at Bologna desperate to avoid missing out on the Champions League for the first time in a decade.

Lazio will not play among the European elite next season after a 2-0 derby defeat to Roma on Saturday. Sixth-placed Lazio are eight points behind Juventus having played a game less.